

Social Studies Collection

No. 27

The rural population in Spain

From disequilibrium to social sustainability

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Presentation

There is certainly no consensus on what «the rural» is today. The idealised vision, basically urban, which associates life in rural villages and towns with authenticity, direct contact with nature and calm and tranquillity has to be contrasted with other visions, which are more faithful to the reality of Spanish rural life and probably not so idyllic.

Current life in rural areas has nothing to do with that of just a few decades ago. The spread of communication among persons and of goods (through improved roads and highways) as well as information (through access to information and communication technologies) has reduced the traditional isolation of the rural world in comparison with the urban.

The changes have been so great that the rural exodus produced in the middle of the last century is now being offset by the arrival of new residents, who are establishing themselves in rural areas for diverse reasons. There are individuals who work in large urban centres but live outside of them, either to improve their quality of life or because of housing difficulties in the cities where they work. There are also new residents from other countries who have settled in rural Spanish towns upon retirement, or that arrive in our country searching for work.

Just as it is not possible to compare the rural life of the 21st century with that of fifty years ago, neither is it possible to speak of only one rurality today. The reality of rural Spain is diverse: from small villages that populate the northeast interior of the country, to villas on the Mediterranean coast, to the outskirts of the major urban centres of the country; in each case we find unique features that prevent a uniform account of this reality.

The long term inhabitants of rural areas are also heterogeneous. There is an aging population and, often, a dependent one, which faces difficulties of mobility, using resources that tend to come from informal or family networks. There is a young autochthonous population, which continues to look toward the city, either for career or educational goals. And there are women facing gender inequalities which condition their possibilities for both personal and professional development.

There is, therefore, no single definition of the rural in Spain. And this is, specifically, the purpose of this study: to clarify the current characteristics of the rural Spanish population and to reveal the range of specific problems that this population is facing. Only through a comprehensive approach, to which this research hopes to contribute, will it be possible to address the challenges of creating sustainable rural development, not only in economic and environmental terms, but, and above all, in social terms.

Jaime Lanaspá Gatnau

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Barcelona, september 2009

Introduction

Since the mid-1980s, rural areas and populations have become an important part of the political agenda, and the term *rural* has become associated with the issue of development. As «development» refers to the future, the resulting combination, rural development, reveals a certain uncertainty and preoccupation regarding the present. *Rural*, today, means difficulties, continual social change and, also, continued political, economic and social intervention.

This book is intended to be part of current reflections on the present and future of rural areas and, more concretely, on the populations that reside in them. The transition from industrial economies to post-industrial, the growth of the information society and the new framework for economic and social relations in a context of globalisation are different expressions of the social changes taking place. Changes which are affecting rural areas as they increasingly participate in them with greater intensity.

In Spain, as in many of the countries of western Europe, we have seen substantive transformations in recent decades which have redefined the characteristics and roles of rural spaces within global society. The direct dependency on urban development and the past homogeneous character of rural areas – defined by the importance of primary economic activities as the basis for subsistence and social organisation – are progressively dissolving.

In effect, for some time now, agriculture has not been the principal source of economic activity in a good part of the rural world. Gradual deagrarianisation⁽¹⁾

(1) The concept of deagrarianisation refers to the loss of the economic importance of agricultural activity in an area and the consequent weakening of social institutions tied to that activity and which organise different aspects of social life (for example, family agricultural operations, ownership of the land as the basis of social stratification, communal systems for the management of agricultural resources, etc.).

has meant, not only, the decline of the farming population but also the modification of social structures that were unique. On the one hand, we see that deagrarianisation has led to the loss of the family character of agricultural activity: agriculture is no longer only, nor principally, an exclusively family based economic activity. Thus, agriculture often becomes a part of the economic activity of some family members. Therefore, not only do rural towns diversify their productive activities – now centred on construction, retail trade, hotel and restaurant trade and industry – but also families do. Deagrarianisation, in addition to provoking a decline in the farming population, involves, in particular, the loss of the importance of agriculture as the central core of the social organisation of rural areas. The economic diversification of rural areas is, today, very high, and as a result the traditional social segmentation that ownership of the land produced within rural societies is also reduced.

It also changes the nature of the secular rural dependency on urban evolution. This was anchored in the singular dedication to the extraction and production of primary materials, and in the provision of labour for industrial areas through rural emigration. Today, in rural production, quality and food safety are valued over productivity, while other non-productive uses of rural areas are also demanded, particularly those related to the environment. As within the risk society, the demands of production change and new demands are added, such as the protection of the environment and food safety.

The information society also permits new forms of settling in rural areas that go beyond the traditional division of city/country, creating more complex and interrelated forms. What is called counter urbanisation, *sprawling* or city regions is nothing but the expression of the spatial expansion of settlements and their growing interconnection. Up to the point that, since the end of the past century, rural areas have converted, in net terms, their negative migratory balances into positive migratory balances. Residential and environmental quality and opportunities for new social groups are increasingly valued and aid in constructing a positive, and to some extent, idealized representation of rural life, known as the «rural idyll».

In short, this is the process of rural transition: the change from a situation of isolation to one of high interdependence and the constant interchange of goods, persons and signs. Said process of transformation reveals an enormous economic and social plasticity across the country. Changes in economic

activities, modes of organisation, transformation of values, etc., today, determine a very heterogeneous and diverse rurality. And it is precisely for this reason that, despite being in a very deagrarianised society, as Spain is today, the rural has not disappeared, nor can it be avoided: there is a reason why over one fifth of the population lives in rural areas.⁽²⁾

As a result, in the context of the changes and the interdependence of today's societies, the definition of who constitutes the rural population is particularly problematic. Usually two criteria are used: one traditional, based on culture, according to which rural populations are those that have been opposed to the change; in other words those that continue differentiating themselves by maintaining their own values and lifestyles. Rural sociology rejected this definition some time ago. Rural and urban populations do not have to be considered different *a priori*, in this way we distinguish the rural and the urban through more pragmatic criteria such as the size of habitat, assuming that size can be associated with different forms of sociability. Large habitats are urban and small places are rural. Obviously, there is no clear and objective border which tells us at what size of habitat do we leave rural territory and enter into urban. The problem is even more complicated in that one thing is the settlement or the town, and the other the administrative area or municipality. In general, statistical sources available only differentiate data on a regional scale regarding administrative units or municipalities and, therefore, we cannot arrive at a precise definition through the real settlement units (towns or villages). In this context, the limit of the rural in Spain is usually established as municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants. This distinction is made for two reasons. The first because the diversity among settlement units and administrative units is enormous. For example, in Galicia, the settlements are small, the municipalities, in contrast, are large: thus, only 4 percent of the population in Galicia lives in municipalities of less than 2,000 inhabitants, while approximately half of the population resides in population centres (singular entities) of less than 2,000 inhabitants. Therefore, although 10,000 inhabitants could appear to be a large number for defining the rural, it is

(2) According to the municipal register for 2007 of the INE [National Statistics Institute], 21.8 percent of the Spanish population lives in municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants.

not so large in practice.⁽³⁾ The other reason has to do with statistical data: when municipalities are below this size, the municipality is not identified in the statistical registry, and therefore, classifications below this size cannot generally be used. In this study we have situated the conventional «border» between the rural and the urban at 10,000 inhabitants, although in some cases we have analyzed municipalities of even smaller size.⁽⁴⁾

Despite all these changes and problems, and surely because of them, the difficulties and development of rural areas are increasingly talked about. Certainly the changes have produced many effects, especially in the area of interest in this study, the social. In the 1980s, the European Union document, *The future of the rural world*, offered a pioneering formulation of rural development as a problem. In it, they began with the recognition of a substantive improvement of agricultural productivity, at the same time that, paradoxically, an insufficient development of the general conditions of rural life could be seen. The changes taking place had not, in general, managed to stop the decline of rural areas. The situation today is not very different.

As we will see in what follows, over-aging, masculinisation, dependence, gender inequalities and employment vulnerability are some of the principal problems that rural inhabitants have to live with. The principal question that this study wants to answer refers to the conditions for the sustainability, the social sustainability, of rurality. Because, perhaps now is not the moment to reflect only on the changes that have taken place; perhaps it is the moment to think about how the distinct changes are, or could be, not only compatible with the development of rural areas, but also in harmony with the new framework of urban/rural relations. It is very likely, as will be seen, that the (social) sustainability of rural areas is not only a product of economic growth, of improvement in the material conditions of production, but also of the difficulties in the reproduction of social life. That there are no young people, that women

(3) For example, in Murcia the municipalities are very large and contain a number of settlements. Thus, in this region 1.3 percent of the population live in municipalities of less than 2,000 persons, while one in six live in actual settlement units (towns or villages that are part of a larger municipality) of less than 2,000 persons. 5.2 percent of the population resides in municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants, a very low figure with respect to the degree of dispersal of the population. While in Galicia the totality of municipalities below 10,000 inhabitants takes in much of the rural population – a third of Galicians reside in such municipalities – , in Murcia this population threshold is a very restrictive definition of the rural.

(4) In the cases that use other sizes this is indicated in the tables. In other words, when not specifically specified, the rural population refers to residents in municipalities of below 10,000 inhabitants, while urban residents are those that live in municipalities of more than 10,000 persons.

leave, that labour markets are not very dynamic, are resounding indicators that socioeconomic changes have produced new difficulties and inequalities or, have not, at least, eliminated already existing social inequalities.

This team of researchers has been studying these issues for some time.⁽⁵⁾ One of the most striking conclusions which has come out in the process of research and reflection is that, as a result of the strong demographic disequilibriums in rural areas, there is a generation – a group of men and women born in the same period – that constitute a centre of gravity in rural areas. A collective which, because of its life cycle, is found in that complex stage when the obligations and commitments of production are as important and intense as those of reproduction and the care of others. This group of men and women that were born between 1958 and 1977 make up a large generation in contrast to the smaller contingent that came before them (those between 50 and 65 years of age who were the protagonists of rural exodus) and those that came after (that generation under 30 years of age, of decreased numbers due to loss of population and the fall in fertility). This group constitutes a generation which is at the centre of rural populations and which has responsibility for an aging population and one with a low birth rate. For these reasons we refer to this generation as the «support generation».

With all these elements, this study is organized around three epistemological breaks that permit us to tell a dramatic story through defining a setting, actors and a plot, relatively different from the usual story.

The first of these breaks, which redefines the setting, conceives the analysis of rural populations beyond the strict framework of local relationships, situating the subjects in their own dynamics of interaction in a total society. It is about going beyond studies which define the rural as a distinct category of society. The setting can be no other than society overall, referred to today by different labels: informational, postmodern, etc., with very different meanings but with

(5) The research done here has been conceived as a result of previous research projects: «El trabajo invisible de las mujeres rurales» [The invisible labour of rural women] (07/2003 of the Instituto de la Mujer) and «Trabajo invisible, arraigo femenino y masculinización rural» [Invisible labour, female settlement and rural masculinisation] (VA081A05 of the Regional Government of Castilla and Leon), studies that were continued in other projects: «Indicadores de género: movilidad espacial, inserción en los mercados de trabajo rurales y conciliación de la vida laboral y familiar» [Gender indicators: spatial mobility, integration in rural labour markets and balancing work and family life] (026/07 of the Instituto de la Mujer) and «Movilidad espacial, mercados de trabajo y sostenibilidad social en áreas rurales» [Spatial mobility, labour markets and social sustainability in rural areas] (CSO2008-01286/SOCI of the Ministry of Science and Innovation).

an element common to them all: the growing interaction of social actions in time and space.

The second break is the discovery of the actor: the support generation. For its position in the life cycle, this is the most active generation, as so many productive and reproductive activities depend on it; these last for its being at reproductive ages and for its support of the elderly population. And if this were not enough, as the most numerous generation, the maintenance of local life depends on it. The members of the support generation are authentic protagonists.

Finally, we arrive at the third break, which concerns the plot: we try to reflect what rural residents do in their daily lives; how they combine work and domestic life. Our interest was in looking at those aspects which, although they are important to the subjects, are not generally taken into account despite the real consequences they have on rural development.

This plot contains the last intention of this study, which is nothing more than studying the reality of rural areas avoiding the typical assumptions and tautologies; for example, that which sees rural populations as different from urban ones for their very nature. Our objective is to offer a useful analysis for the many different social actors and institutions that want to intervene in the reality of rural areas from distinct spheres of action; and in such a way that we can offer new information and, at the same time, distinct paths for reflecting on rural areas. To achieve this, particular care has been taken so that the data and the facts make sense, so that the ending is not presumed in advance. If the reader will grant us the liberty, in the process of our inquiry we have reproduced the elements that constitute any dramatic action and condensed them in a synoptic manner – protagonists, plot and setting – for thinking about social sustainability in rural areas.

The result is the following acts and intervals or chapters. The initiative and the effort that the European Union has dedicated to the rural question and recent debates around the sustainability of rural areas make up the first chapter which introduces the reader to the continuing reflection that social agents and actors make on the delineation of and intervention in rural areas.

Following, the important demographic disequilibriums that afflict rural areas, principal symptoms of the change that rural populations have undergone,

are examined. In this second chapter how this situation has come about is analysed in detail, revealing the importance of the support generation and the important regional fractures – the «social landscapes» – which compose Spanish rurality.

The third chapter focuses on showing what might be called the «Achilles heel» of the evolution of rural populations: rural masculinisation; consequence of the selective exodus of women from rural areas to urban areas, and an issue which has begun to be incorporated, although timidly, into development agendas. The deep changes in the forms of family life and residency that rural regions have experienced are related to this process. Changes which follow the logic of the contemporary transformation of forms of cohabitation, but which, in the rural world, are, in addition, fuelled by the impact that demographic imbalances – aging and masculinisation – have on the formation and composition of households.

The aging, or better said, «over-aging» of rural populations, as well as the enormous dependency that this generates, constitutes, along with masculinisation, two characteristic elements of the social landscape of rural Spain. The fourth chapter is concerned with analysing in detail this situation which conditions, in a substantive manner, the life trajectories and the organisation of daily life of the support generation.

This analysis leads us to the sphere of reproduction. Thus, in the fifth chapter, the efforts of the support generation in providing assistance and care to dependent populations are examined. The significant effort dedicated to the care of both the elderly and young children conditions the employment and family strategies and trajectories of the support generation.

Within the sphere of reproduction, gender inequalities are also an object of study. The reading of these inequalities from the perspective of women, regarding not only the domestic sphere but also the productive and public spheres, constitutes the sixth chapter.

In the seventh chapter, the new rural residents, those gradually being incorporated into the rural world, make an entrance. The new residents are a central element in the broadening of the social heterogeneity that characterises rural areas. The text focuses principally on the arrival of immigrants and the important social differentiation that is established in rural areas as a result.

Following, rural labour markets are examined. The fragility of said markets and employment activities in rural populations reveals a panorama characterized by high segmentation in access to different jobs. The relationship between local and extra local employment is closely examined, revealing the importance that mobility has in strategies for labour market integration. In this sense, the eighth chapter exhaustively analyses the issue of mobility. The importance of mobility, although announced at the beginning of these pages, increases as our analysis of the data advances through the different chapters.

The last chapter, the ninth, draws conclusions based on the path followed. The different discoveries are discussed through the framework of social sustainability in rural areas, with the intention that the reader be able to identify the principal spheres of inequality, both their origins as well as their consequences. The answers? The reader hoping to find definitive answers will perhaps be disappointed, but we are sure that the reading of this study will encourage something we think is even more important: the formulation of new questions, awakening new concerns. A methodological appendix is included which explains how this study was carried out, what instruments were used to analyse this reality, from in-depth interviews – qualitative techniques that were developed in the form of conversations – to techniques based on a wide representative statistical survey of the protagonists of this book: the support generation in rural areas of Spain.⁽⁶⁾ The search for the meaning of their actions and practices, without renouncing the observation of hidden social processes, has been the difficult equilibrium maintained by our research team during this research.

(6) Survey of the Rural Population abbreviated with the acronym EPR-2008.

I. Rural development: European Union initiative and the issue of social sustainability

As was stated in the presentation of this study, rural regions in Spain have, in recent decades, gone through numerous and important transformations. These processes of change, full of contradictions, have led to significant advances in the quality of life, but also demographic, socioeconomic and regional imbalances. In the social representation of development processes there is a tendency to naturalize these phenomena, seeing the destiny of a region and its development as the result of a succession of uncontrollable, almost natural, events. However, one of the aspects that we want to emphasize in this text is the role of agents of organized civil society – associations, trade unions, etc. – and that of public policy in the construction of the development of the regions. The transformations that have taken place in the rural world in recent decades are very important, in both material-productive aspects and symbolic ones, and although these processes are not exclusively the result of the actions of those social agents and public policy, they do have an important part of the responsibility. For this reason, we want to sketch out here the course that is being followed and the challenges that it presents; principally in reference to the construction of sustainability in all its complexity, but particularly in reference to social sustainability.

The European Union, before the difficulties of the traditional rural productive model in the context of a global economic market, has been increasingly active in rural areas, designing and implementing experimental programs and policies for development that are not free of contradictions. It has also been trying to direct rural development toward a model of sustainable development in a process in which the very conceptualization of «the rural» is being questioned and reformulated, as the consideration of perspectives that are increasingly

more complex as a result of productive and socio-cultural diversification is necessary.

At the end of the 1980s a fundamental milestone was produced regarding possible visions of the countryside, something that would signal a true paradigm shift and represent a turning point in the policies directed at Europe's rural regions. Until then, the countryside had only been perceived as an area of agricultural and livestock production, and all activities and identified needs revolved around agriculture from a clearly sectorial perspective. Rural life was agrarian by definition. But at the end of the 1980s, as a result of successive economic crises, with the growing globalization of economies and the difficulties of European agriculture competing in the global market, other aspects of rural reality began to be seen. Rural development policy that was not solely agricultural began to be developed. Therefore, although not without contradictions and conflicts, in the last twenty years there has been a significant change in the policies and perspectives, as well as their effects, aimed at rural regions. We are still very far from the goals that the European Commission proposed for the construction of sustainable rural development; community guidelines reflect clearer support for sustainable development than can be perceived in the actual social practices and policies in rural regions. The specific policies for rural development raise sustainability as a goal; however, the majority of economic policies in the European Union, including those related to agriculture, continue to reinforce a development model centred on production, already shown to be unsustainable and leading to the exhaustion of resources and the depopulation of the countryside. The vulnerability of the countryside and the results of «developmentalist» economic policies are increasingly being recognized, but there is still a long road to establishing a sustainable direction for the development of future rural and urban societies.

1.1. Sustainable rural development: the issue of sustainability

Approaches regarding sustainable development emerged with concerns over the environmental degradation of the planet and with the possibility of the exhaustion of natural resources, which would also mean the collapse of the economic system. In 1972, the Club of Rome came out with its report, *The limits to growth* (Meadows *et al.*), which was the first study at the global

level that bore witness to the environmental consequences of population growth and economic growth and identified them as threats. Concerns over the threats to the environment, which until the 1980s were considered to be exaggerated by environmentalists, have, in the last two decades, coinciding with changes in the approach to rural development, become a part of global policy agendas. In recent years, with widespread debate over climate change, these concerns have materialized in diverse global summits and international meetings promoted by the UN and by different groups of countries.

There are diverse definitions of the term *sustainable development* and much debate, but the most widespread is that which tries to combine economic growth with environmental conservation. In the emblematic Brundtland Report (1987), commissioned by the UN, sustainable development is considered a «process of change through which the exploitation of resources, the orientation of investments and technological and institutional changes are in harmony and strengthen the current and future potential of human beings» (Latouche, 2007: 47).

As in neoliberal thinking, development is directly identified with economic growth; in the majority of approaches for sustainable development the core idea is economic growth together with the preservation of the environment, with a particular emphasis on the environmental dimension. Despite other dimensions, such as the ethical or social, being mentioned, in reality they receive little attention. In a good part of the literature on sustainable development, sustainability is reduced to environmental approaches, as well as the relationship between economic and ecological systems (Constanza, 1992). As an example, is the «Stern Review: The economics of climate change», a study on the impact of climate change on the economy commissioned by the British government and directed by the economist Nicholas Stern and published in 2006. The conclusions of the study forecast grave economic problems throughout the world if we do not invest now to stop climate change and global warming (Stern *et al.*, 2006).

Thus, the relationship between economic development and environmental sustainability is increasingly evident and, in current approaches sustainable development is primarily defined by two basic principles: first, the impossibility of unlimited growth on a finite planet with limited resources, emphasizing the limits and ecological implications of production models; and secondly, the stress on solidarity with future generations and the need to preserve natural

resources to safeguard the quality of life of all those who are still to come (Cruz, 2007). This is an approach based on long-term responsibility which weighs the consequences of current actions on the future of the environment. But Latouche (2007), with a very critical perspective on sustainable development, also stresses that basic approaches to sustainable development limit sustainability to the sustainability of development itself; in other words, sustainability is limited to guaranteeing that economic growth can continue and that the future of economic development is not compromised.

In the majority of approaches we can see that sustainability, when taken into account, is reduced to two dimensions: environmental sustainability and economic sustainability. Environmental sustainability is understood as the guarantee of the conservation of natural resources for future generations, and economic sustainability as the viability and durability of development itself, in other words, economic growth. However, what the fragility of the reality of the countryside reveals, is that despite policies and programmes for rural development such as, for example, LEADER, sustainable development is not possible if other dimensions of sustainability are not taken into account in development processes, in particular, social sustainability. This is because the countryside continues to lose population and the causes are not limited to the economic situation or the lack of employment. Sustainable development demands, first of all, that population centres in rural regions are maintained, but with a quality of life according to the parameters of development of European societies. However, our research reveals continuing social discrimination and situations of inequality in access to resources and services which push people toward the large urban centres.

1.2. Social sustainability in rural development

The weak impact of development policies in really stopping rural depopulation, one of the most pressing problems in rural areas, is evidence of the need to identify and be more involved in the human aspects of development processes and in the construction of social sustainability as the motor for development. For Alario and Baraja (2006), there is «a sustainability that is essentially social and which has a principal objective: focus on the population in spaces that are defined by their demographic stagnancy, decline and gradual aging,

and that, in many places do not have their survival guaranteed beyond one or two decades if current demographic dynamics are maintained» (p.273).

In analysing the Community Initiative LEADER II in Castilla and Leon, Alario and Baraja (2006) consider it «indicative to assess the evolution of the population in the municipalities affected by LEADER II through a comparison of the population figures from 1996 and 2004. Overall, the results are discouraging, as they reveal a population loss of more than 27,000, which is more than 9 percent of the 1996 population. This data, however, masks diverse realities, from population losses of a third of the population in some places to municipalities that doubled their population. A little more than 10 percent of the LEADER II municipalities managed to maintain or increase their populations between 1996 and 2004» (p. 283). Regarding job creation as an element of social sustainability, the authors state that «within the framework of LEADER II actions employment was also created, but it does not seem to have been sufficient or attractive enough to maintain local population or attract new residents with skills» (p. 284).

In what Bourdieu (2003) and Latouche (2007) have defined as the economic colonization of our symbolic imaginary, often, the possibility for social sustainability is hidden by economic sustainability, or rather, social sustainability is understood as being part of the economic, even, at times, being confused with the simple creation of employment in the countryside. To begin to systematize a theory on social sustainability, Felix Guattari's (1996a) idea of «three ecologies» seems useful; in reality, the French philosopher draws attention to the articulation of three ecological dimensions: *the environmental, social relations and human subjectivity*. «The only true response to the ecological crisis is on a global scale, provided that it brings about an authentic political, social and cultural revolution, reshaping the objectives of the production of both material and immaterial assets. Therefore this revolution must not be exclusively concerned with visible relations of force on a grand scale, but will also take into account molecular domains of sensibility, intelligence and desire» (p.9). These dimensions are key in the transformation and construction of more sustainable models of development. Social relations, human subjectivity and the context in which these develop are the very fabric which sustains the real development of a region.

Usually, social relations and particularly human subjectivity are not considered in processes of development, or are only considered as externalities, secondary factors, over which we do not directly intervene. However, both the abandonment of rural life as well as urban lifestyles based on indiscriminate consumption of goods and services form part of human subjectivity in current post-industrial society. The internalization and naturalization of the ideals of consumption and of urban-industrial lifestyles lead to a growing dependence on cities and the deterioration of traditional mechanisms of social regulation (Guattari, 1996a).

Sustainable development will only be possible if we understand rural regions as settings for life, and, in this sense, only to the extent that it is based on the different dimensions of the sustainability of life, understood in the broadest sense. In this study we draw attention to the need to examine the social dimension of sustainability as well as the environmental and economic, because beyond changes in productive systems, development is also related to the construction and strengthening of social networks, which make the ways of life of populations possible, with greater or lesser quality, in both rural and urban settings.

We understand social sustainability as the existence of a diverse and equitable human social fabric, sufficiently active and articulated to generate social and economic dynamics capable of satisfying the material and subjective needs of all the collectives that form the population of a region. It is what we call, using a term from Guattari (1996a), «existential territories»: spaces of life, of meanings, of human relations, where economic processes are oriented toward a decent standard of living, in harmony with the dynamics of the long-term conservation of the environment. «It seems to me essential to organize new micro political and micro social practices, new solidarities [...]» (Guattari, 1996a: 48).

Existential territories are spaces of coexistence and not only of production and consumption; a society is not built only on the foundation of economic relations. «[T]oday the huge subjective void produced by the proliferating production of material and immaterial goods is becoming ever more absurd and increasingly irreparable and threatens the consistency of both individual and group existential territories» (Guattari, 1996a: 40). A society fundamentally of consumers is a society without consistency, without social

cohesion. Sustainable development tries to create new settings for productive and socio-political relations of quality that are lasting and respectful of the environment.

The massive and selective depopulation (by young people and women) and accentuated aging of the population in the countryside, generates stagnation of the structures and social and economic dynamics, which must be revitalized to prevent the complete disappearance of many towns or the existence of others with no dynamism. People no longer live in isolated territories, spatial mobility and new technologies bring the same desires and needs to any place in Europe, and practically the whole planet. Economic initiatives also need a sufficiently dynamic social fabric to generate synergies for mutual enrichment. Businesses are sustained by individuals that want and need to live in a satisfactory environment, in which the social dimension is determinant.

According to the OECD, based on different studies on partnerships and the participation of new actors in rural policy, «the impact of partnerships on rural development reported by the researchers has been considerable, notably a genuine value added in the process of local endogenous development. While research is still not conclusive on the impact of partnerships in terms of jobs created, businesses supported or services provided, the significant measured impacts relate to capacity building in the community, community involvement, innovation and the better integration of development initiatives» (OECD, 2006: 146).

In addition, in a study done by Gómez Benito and González (2008), after having interviewed one hundred administrators of rural development programmes (LEADER+ and PRODER) in Spain, regarding the causes of success of these initiatives noted by the 66 administrators that most positively stressed the results of the projects, the authors emphasize «the importance that the administrators give to factors which, in a generic manner we could identify as social capital: participation, associationism, trust, identity [... and] which rank first in the diagnosis of the administrators. These types of factors are even more important if we include them together with responses of the type “change in mentality, awareness”...» (p. 106). Thus, processes of rural development also involve construction of a social fabric that is sufficiently dynamic and cohesive.

Promoting social sustainability involves the creation and strengthening of material and subjective conditions which permit an acceptable standard of living for the majority of residents in rural regions, with the construction of settings that are attractive and socially valued. For this, another fundamental factor that has to be stressed is the participation of women under equal conditions in sustainable development and the construction of equality between men and women in rural areas. Different studies point to gender inequalities as one of the factors which influences the exodus of women from rural areas (Camarero *et al.*, 2006; Camarero and Sampedro, 2008; Cruz, 2006; Díaz and Dávila, 2006; Sampedro, 1995 and 2008, among others), in the sense that women are «choosing» contexts that facilitate their personal development, education, integration in the labour market, etc.

Although gender inequalities are equally present in urban settings, in the cities they seem to be counteracted by the availability of services and jobs and by the conveniences of and ease of access to current consumer lifestyles. In addition, one of the aspects most emphasized by women themselves, above all among young women, is that the social control exercised over them is much weaker in large cities than in rural centres (Cruz, 2006).

The economic colonization of the human imaginary means that paid productive work is recognized and valued, while reproductive work is hidden and undervalued. Thus, the sexual division of labour is perpetuated by assigning women domestic and care giving tasks, and above all, responsibility for the reproductive sphere, limiting their participation in the public and productive sphere. The dynamic of women's financial dependence continues and the invisibility of reproductive work and its importance in quality of life also. As Camarero (2006) reminds us, «development projects are centred on productive activity as the motor for improving the standard of living, and reproductive work is not a part of development projects, but evidently is important in improving living standards and, essentially, the central factor in social sustainability» (p. 186).

In Spain, the new Law for Sustainable Rural Development seems to integrate some of these central elements of social sustainability in conceding «preferential attention to women, young people and seniors, as population groups that are fundamental to the future of rural areas [...] together with special attention given to diverse social collectives specifically cited in numerous sections of

the law [...]» (Regidor and Navarro, 2008: 178). Nevertheless, it is still to be seen how the development and operation of the law will serve in supporting the construction of social sustainability in rural areas of Spain.

For social sustainability to be possible there is the need to influence, among others, the following dynamics and processes:

- attraction and establishment of population in dispersed rural areas;
- strengthening of family and non-family social support networks;
- application of a gender perspective on policies and projects for rural development;
- creation and maintenance of quality services;
- improvement of access to existing resources and services for the dependent population and for caregivers;
- organisation of economic and social agents in local and regional systems of production, distribution and marketing;
- organization of strong social networks, consortiums, projects and collective initiatives.

Collective conquests reinforce social cohesion among groups and engage individuals with projects in local society. Social sustainability is constructed through a receptive context and entrepreneurial initiatives, and with the perception of support and security that economic development in a region provides. Despite the depopulation of rural areas, environmental conservation and economic initiatives can function better there, where social dynamics, ecological consciousness, associations and networks of services, the satisfaction of expectations of well-being and the valuing of the rural image are strengthened. In such a setting of enriched sociability, the complementarity and interdependence between rural and urban areas is highlighted, although with their territorial, functional and organizational differences.

To conclude, the construction of social sustainability is not an easy or obvious task, but it is indispensable. The social reality in rural areas is complex and cannot be reduced simply to the economic or the environmental, or to a dilemma of economic development versus environmental preservation – , or as the relationship between the economy and the environment. Both possibilities

are reductionist and the rural reality is much more complex, a broad fabric made up of the landscape and nature, in a historical and cultural framework, local and, at the same time, global, in which personal and collective needs and expectations are in play. Constructing sustainability means facing this complexity and the different dimensions which compose it.

Our analysis of sustainable development and social sustainability must go deeper and our research further if we are to broaden the discussion and facilitate the work of the social agents and politicians involved. But, returning to European policies and programmes for rural development, there are good examples of projects which focus specifically on the construction of social sustainability⁽¹⁾ in rural areas of Spain. However, there will have to be much greater involvement in making the results of these programmes and policies and the fragility of the rural social fabric and its relationship with productive systems visible. It can be seen that the impact of the EU on policies of rural development is significant, both on the local level in rural areas as well as on national policies of different member states. Thus, there is an increasing consolidation of a regional focus on rural development, although there are also contradictions and conflicts among different models for economic and social development and the conditions for real sustainability in all its dimensions. Precisely for this motive, the thread of the argument of this study leads us to recognize the principal scenarios where rural social sustainability is defined. This is a review of and reflection on the conditions that have led to the fragility and vulnerability of rural areas, but also point to new spheres of opportunities.

(1) A good example of intervention and of rural-urban complementarity is the Interterritorial Cooperation Project «Abraza la Tierra» [Embrace the Land], with the participation of 18 Local Action Groups in five Spanish autonomous communities (www.abrazalatierra.com). Another interesting example is the Interterritorial Cooperation Project AVANZA, which works from the perspective of gender and for equal opportunities for women in rural areas in five other autonomous communities. Both projects fall within the framework of the Community Initiative LEADER+.

II. Demographic disequilibrium and the support generation

Generations, those groupings of persons, who during their whole lives share age as a common characteristic, are social actors. The members of a generation act throughout the life cycle from identical positions: whether they are children, young people, adults or seniors, they will live through these stages at the same time. They share age and, through this, a specific position in the demographic structure, a place between those that were born before and those that came after. To the extent that individual life cycles are parallel, the members of a generation share interests and face similar conditions. The history of a generation, and that of all those that are a part of it, is determined by the moment that the society they belong to is passing through. It is not the same to be young in the developing Spain of the 1960s as in the 1980s during a recently formed democracy; nor to be old in 1900 – and, therefore, member of a minority group – or in 2008 in the midst of an aging society.

In the recent history of rural Spain there are many generations that have been prominent at different times. The analysis that follows is concerned with those who were born around the 1960s in villages and small towns. And also, with those of the same generation, that came to live in rural areas. As we will see, this generation is a key group in rural development and the current life of these towns. It is an important group not only for the mature age in which it currently finds itself, but above all, for the strategic position it occupies as a large generation within the irregular generational composition which characterizes rural areas.

Therefore, as an important support for rural life, they are the subject and principal protagonist of this book about the social sustainability of rural areas. We will look at the historical formation and composition of this support

generation and analyze how its presence or absence expresses, at the same time as it defines, the distinct social landscapes that form Spanish rural life.

2.1. Genesis of the support generation

In Spain, one of the keys to the modernisation of the economy, which left the post-war situation behind, was the intense emigration of population from the countryside to the city. The decade between 1955 and 1965 was characterized by rural exodus and urban transformation. In those years, Spain left its agrarian and rural past definitively behind and became an urban society economically oriented toward services.

This exodus was very selective and it was principally young people from rural areas that fed emigration. It would result in a rapid transformation of rural demographic structures, which in a short time would lose most of a complete generation. This process, when analyzed in detail, reveals the following characteristics:

- In some cases the transfer of population from the countryside to the city was not direct and definitive settlement in a Spanish city occurred after a migratory stage in European cities. A typical path for the protagonists of the rural exodus was to abandon their villages or towns during the 1950s and head to one of many European centres undergoing rapid industrial development and to subsequently, in the 1970s, return to one of Spain's urban areas.
- The young people who were the protagonists of this rural exodus formed a generation of reduced size, as a considerable part of this generation was born during the period of the civil war. The decline in the birth-rate during the war and the high rate of infant mortality produced a smaller generation which, around 1960, reached young adulthood and played a leading role in this exodus. Those few born between 1936 and 1940 were, in 1960, the young people of 20 to 24 years of age who immigrated to the cities.
- These young people from rural areas that immigrated to the cities contributed to overcoming the decline in the birth-rate during the civil war

period. This young and active generation fed the expansion of industry and services just then commencing in urban areas.

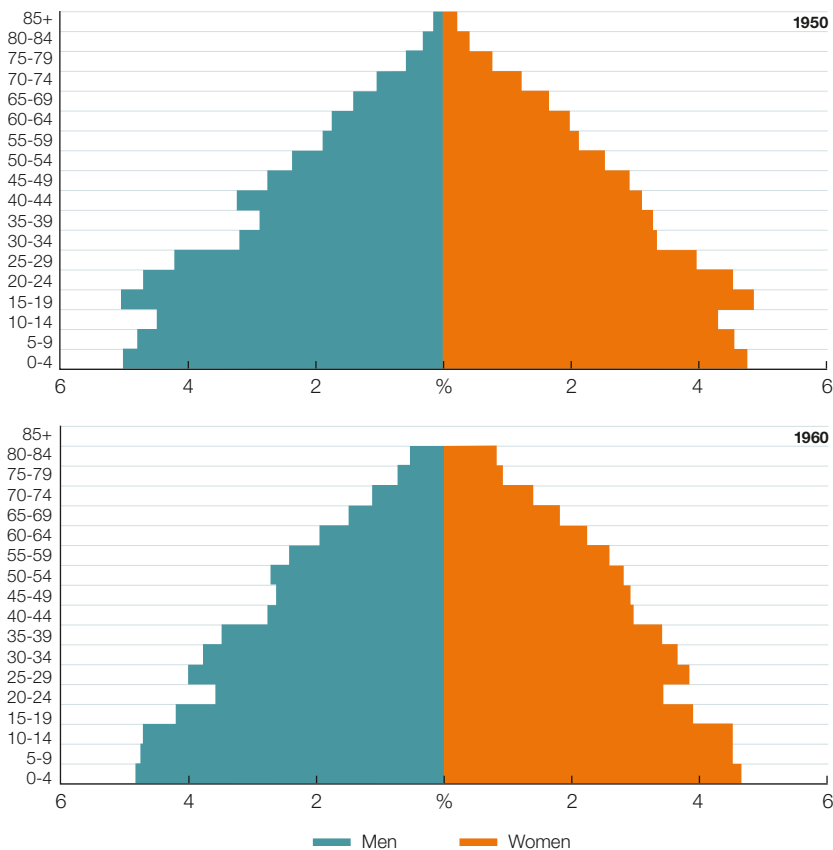
In short, the countryside lost a great part of a generation through the dual paths of a declining birth-rate and an increase in emigration, and the city recovered from the demographic decline resulting from the war at the expense of young people from rural areas. The city maintained its equilibrium and found the vitality necessary for its development at the cost of the countryside.

Graph 2.1 shows the selective evolution of rural emigration in rural demographic structures. At the beginning of the 1980s we see the rural population is aging, the emptying out of the central and fundamental generation – the most active generation – and the resulting gap this leaves, visible in the reduction of births. In contrast with this panorama, the relative importance of young people in rural areas in the 1980s – those from 15 to 19 years of age – should be stressed. This generation, although not large in absolute terms, as a product of parents from the *baby boom* (born between 1961 and 1966) was of a significant size in comparison with previous and subsequent generations. In rural regions this generation is composed of the children of those who did not leave and continued to reside in rural villages and towns. Said generation, in the context of the exodus pointed out, is more numerous, situated between the demographic gaps of the previous generation, the generation that emigrated, and subsequent, smaller generations, that produced shrinking reproductive groups as well as declining rural birth-rates. The generation of children of those that did not leave would become, today, the support generation. We can define this generation as those born between 1958 and 1977, constituting the most numerous cohorts. The term «support» is due to their current central position in the demographic structure, to their numerical importance in comparison to previous and subsequent generations and to their role as caretakers of older persons and children, and their involvement in the economic activity and social dynamic of rural areas. The term support generation has a certain similarity to the term «sandwich generation», a popular expression in Anglo-American regions, and which refers to those that are taking care of both their children and their parents. In this case, «support» adds the character of an almost unique generation, because of the smaller presence of the immediately prior and subsequent generations in the daily life of rural populations.

The image of the last decade of the 20th century is captured in the population pyramid of 2001 (graph 2.2). The changes that can be seen with respect to the previous decade (1991) are few. The most important is the progression in the fall in the birth-rate, the age cohorts at the base are increasingly smaller. As a result, the rural population has been shrinking and the cohorts, which today would be the support generation, have acquired numerical importance for the decline that, first, emigration and then, the falling birth-rate has produced in older and younger groups. The loss of the base means that aging is greater. If

GRAPH 2.1

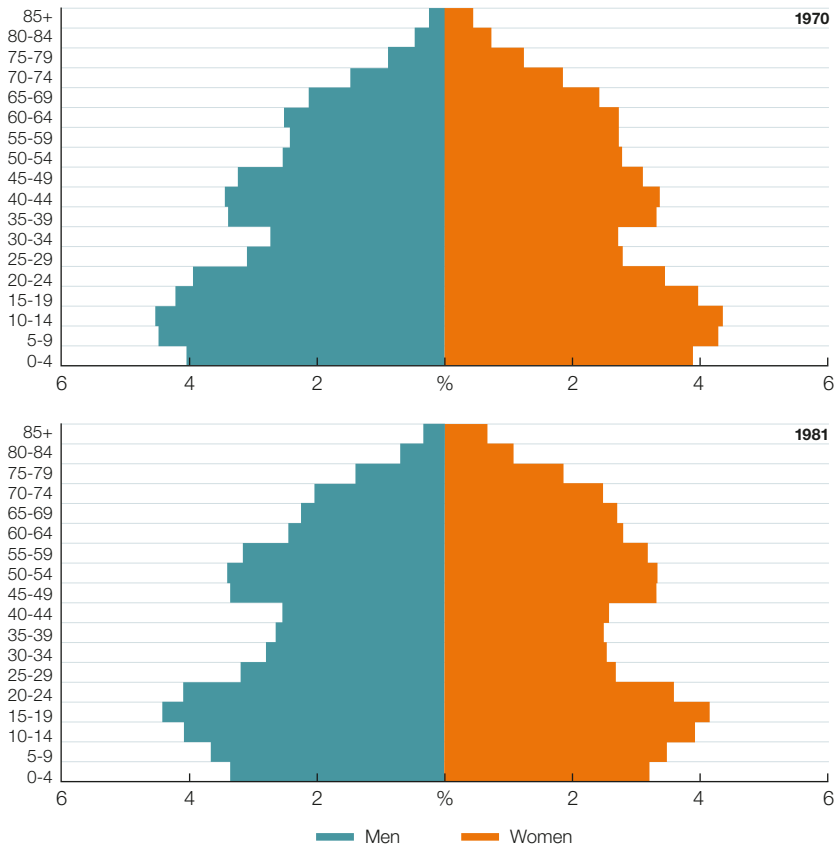
Evolution of rural population pyramids between 1950 and 1981



Note: Rural: individual settlements with population under 2,000 inhabitants.
Sources: Population census of 1950, 1960, 1970 and 1981. Author elaboration.

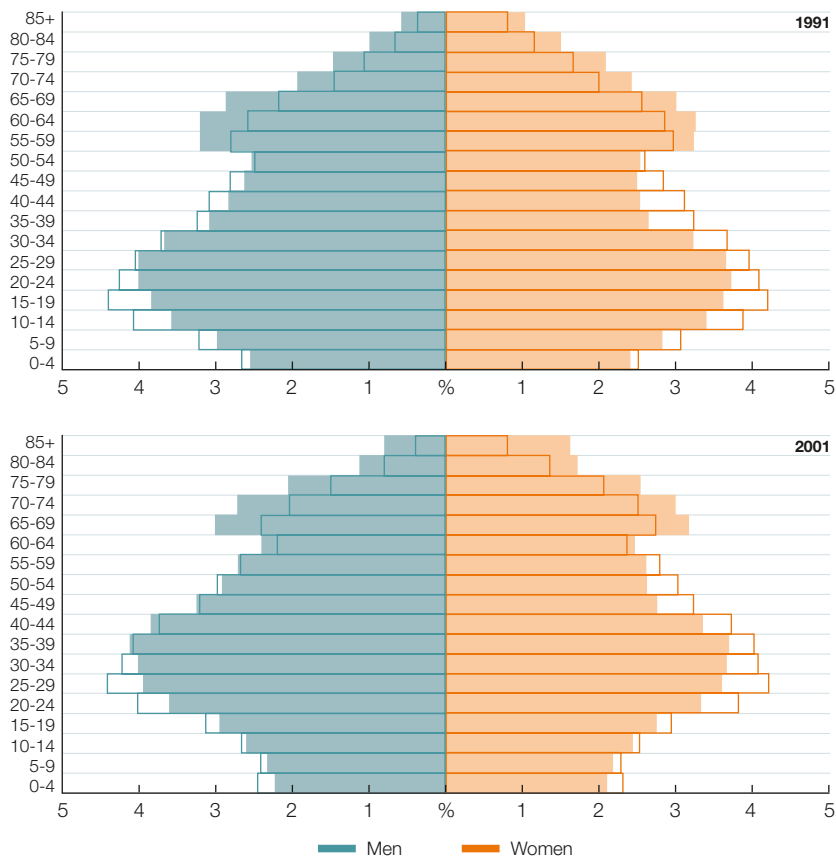
we consider that the Spanish population is aging, we can describe the rural population as «over aged». Basically, rural residents are elderly, over 70 years of age, or they belong to the support generation.

This sequence of processes has been altered during the first years of this century. Thus, we have arrived at the current situation (graph 2.3), a highly contradictory one, as we will see. The rural population is «over aged», but at the same time the relative weight of older generations is reduced. This is a result of a series of processes. On the one hand, smaller generations, a result



GRAPH 2.2

Rural population pyramids 1991 and 2001



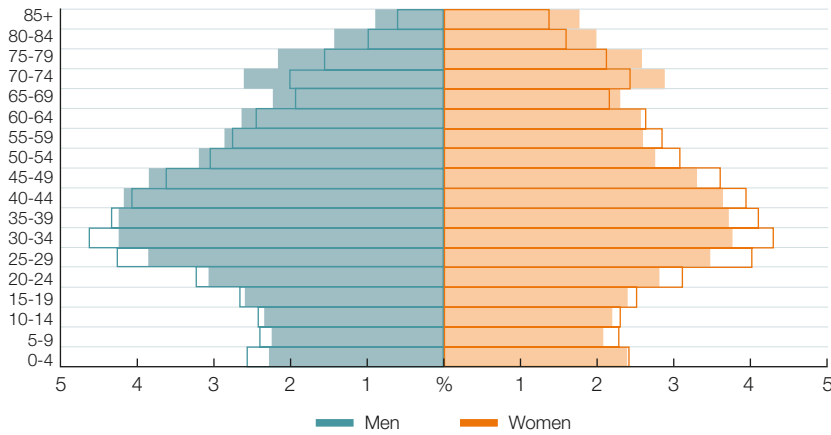
Note: The demographic structure for all of Spain superimposed (without colour).
Sources: Population census of 1991 and 2001. Author elaboration.

of rural emigration, are now entering old age. And on the other hand, the generation born between 1958 and 1977, the support generation, has grown because of the arrival of new rural residents who reinforce the population at intermediate ages.

The impact of new rural residents can be seen in graph 2.4. New residents are concentrated in the age cohorts from 20 to 34 years of age, which correspond to the central generations. The aging of the autochthonous population is

GRAPH 2.3

Rural population in 2007



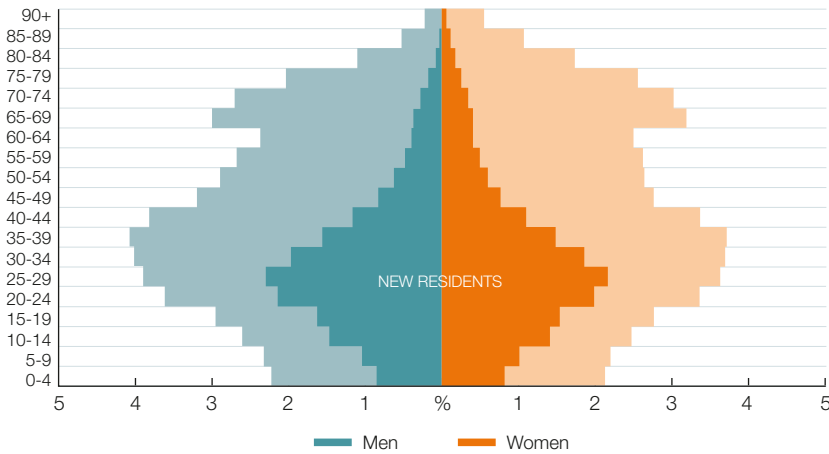
Note: The demographic structure for all of Spain superimposed (without colour).
Sources: Municipal register for 2007. Author elaboration.

moderated by the size that the middle generations acquire. Another important effect is that the birth rate has not grown, even though the weight of generations at reproductive ages has increased, which means that rural fertility continues to decline.

It is important to emphasize that the majority of new residents are, on average, five years younger than the support generation, which not only adds numbers to this generation but gives it continuity. If it were not for these new residents, the rural population would essentially be an elderly population and, also of importance, the support generation would be much smaller. The number of new residents affects generational structures. On the one hand, the size and range of the support generation maintains the relative dynamism of rural populations; it is now the centre of the economically active population. In this way, new residents neutralize the secular tendencies of rural decline. On the other hand, the fact that they are new residents means that they also have no ties, no family connections with older generations and in this sense their commitment and assistance to an aging and dependent population is probably also less than their rural neighbours. Although new residents are central to the maintenance of the life and activity of rural centres, perhaps their function

GRAPH 2.4

Composition of the rural population by origin, 2001



Sources: Population census. Author elaboration.

as support to the dependent population is only partial, to the extent that such support takes place fundamentally through the home and family.

2.2. The support generation in the rural environment in Spain

The portrayal up to now of the support generation is an overall picture. However, rural regions are not homogeneous. In the heterogeneity of rural areas many factors intervene which reflect the existing socioeconomic differences in Spain. In addition, other factors intervene which have to do with the very size and structure of the rural environment. In small areas size is important. It is clear that very small places do not have the same conditions for development that places with greater populations have, nor do remote villages have the same opportunities as places which offer better conditions for communication.

The following graph (graph 2.5) shows the population structure by size of municipality. The difference between municipalities of less than 5,000 inhabitants and those between 5,000 and 10,000 are not great. Municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants have a composition which follows the

patterns observed before for the totality of rural municipalities, with an added pronounced imbalance between the sexes.⁽¹⁾ We have to look at municipalities with less than 1,000 inhabitants⁽²⁾ to observe greater differences in regards to the general model. In very small municipalities, of less than 1,000 inhabitants, aging is more evident and rural masculinisation increases. Nevertheless, the support generation continues to stand out, although it has narrowed a bit, restricted to the age group of 40 to 49 years of age. This indicates that in very small municipalities we see a support generation in its «pure» state, in other words, a generation that has not been reinforced with the arrival of new residents. In these very small municipalities the social importance of the support generation is even greater, if possible, than in rural areas of greater population size. If it were not for the importance that this generation has, the population pyramid would be completely reversed.

As can be seen, the support generation is a characteristic of rural areas. The chart also presents the population structure of urban areas, in municipalities with a population of more than 100,000 people. The urban population has a balanced structure starting at 30 years of age; there are more economically active than inactive persons and a constant gradual adjustment in generational size from the intermediate to the oldest ages. Below thirty years of age a decline in birth-rate is noticeable, corresponding to the cohorts born after 1975, the moment in which the fall in fertility toward the historical minimums reached at the end of the 1990s began. Although the form of urban populations is not a pyramid, the structure is fundamentally conditioned by trends in the birth-rate, growing until 1964, sustained until 1975 and declining until the beginning of the present century where a slight upturn can be seen.

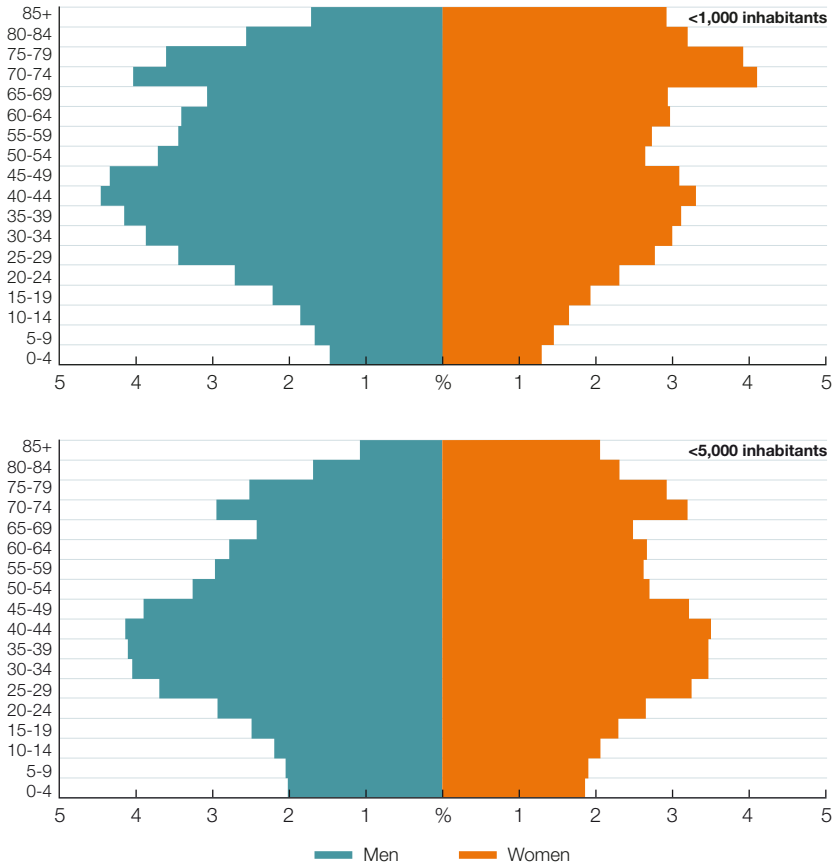
In rural zones, the strong demographic imbalance caused by rural emigration and the effects of the declining birth-rate and decline in fertility are the factors that have brought about the appearance of the support generation, which, now seen in perspective, is a vital social strategy for demographic sustainability

(1) The following chapter explains in detail the masculinisation which characterizes rural areas and is another significant source of population imbalance.

(2) It is important to remember that municipalities below 1,000 inhabitants have a very irregular distribution across national territory. They are essentially concentrated in the northern interior of the peninsula, Castilla and Leon, Aragon and La Rioja. In other regions the municipal administrative structure, in general, combines various settlements, so that, for example, in Galicia and Asturias municipalities of less than 1,000 inhabitants are an exception, as they are in other regions in the south of the peninsula such as Murcia. In this sense, we must interpret how, as the size of the municipality goes down, the data is affected by these regional differences.

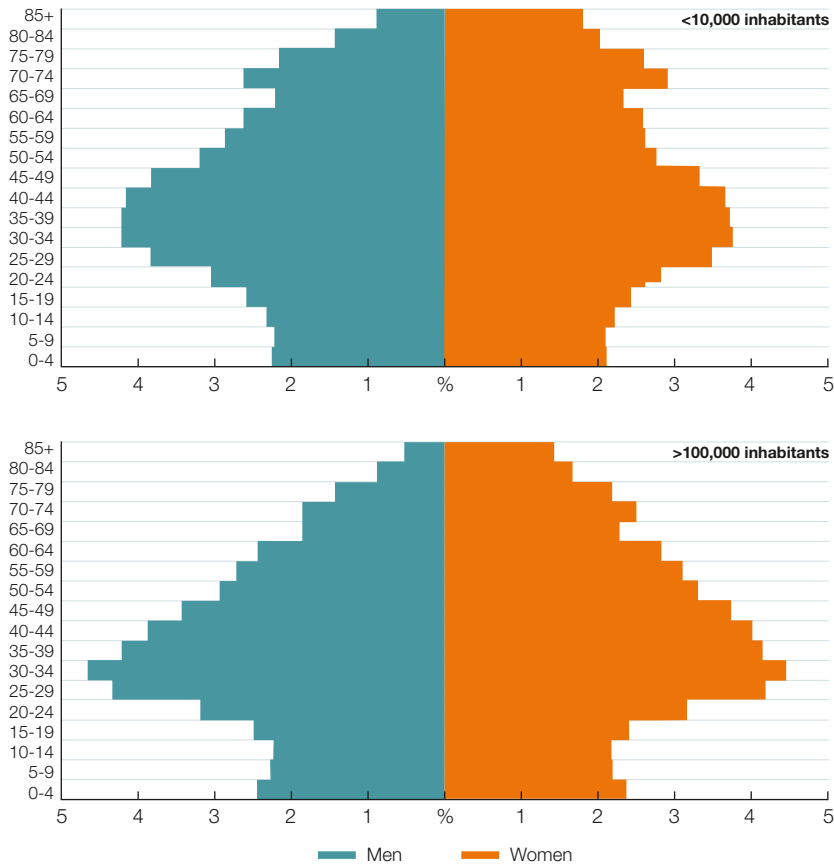
GRAPH 2.5

Demographic structures by size of settlement



Sources: Municipal register for 2007. Author elaboration.

in the broadest sense. This large generation is «trapped» between smaller generations and has, thus, acquired the function of supporting the life of rural areas. As we will see in what follows, it is not that there are great differences in the relative size that this generation has in rural or urban areas – in both places it makes up about a third of the population –, rather, its importance in rural areas stems from the position that it occupies between previous and subsequent generations.



The following table (table 2.1) allows us to make a quick reading of the weight of the support generation in Spain. In the current demographic context, of aging and low birth-rates, the support generations is about one third (32.5 percent) of the Spanish population. There are no great differences regarding this proportion across Spain. In the archipelagos and in Madrid the proportion is a bit higher (34-35 percent) while it is somewhat less (31-32 percent) in the northeast communities and the northern interior of the peninsula, which are

areas with a more elderly population. However, if we look at the data by the size of the municipality, we do find noticeable differences. Thus, the proportion of one third of the population that this generation represents is reduced to one fourth in municipalities of less than 1,000 inhabitants. As was pointed out earlier, the weight that new residents have is the factor which modulates the importance that the support generation has in rural areas.

TABLE 2.1

The support generation (30-49) by different size settlements

By percentage

	<1000	<5000	<10000	TOTAL	>10000	>100000
Andalusia	28.6	29.7	30.5	32.1	32.5	32.0
Aragon	27.1	29.6	29.9	31.5	32.3	32.2
Asturias	26.2	27.5	28.6	31.1	31.5	32.0
Balearic Islands	32.2	32.9	33.2	34.1	34.3	33.9
Canary Islands	30.7	31.2	33.8	35.3	35.5	33.9
Cantabria	28.3	31.6	32.4	32.4	32.4	30.5
Castilla y León	26.6	28.7	29.6	30.5	31.2	30.5
Castilla-La Mancha	26.1	29.5	30.3	31.5	32.5	33.5
Catalonia	30.5	32.2	32.8	33.0	33.0	32.1
C. Valencia	27.9	30.5	31.4	32.5	32.7	32.9
Extremadura	26.6	28.1	28.7	30.4	32.3	32.6
Galicia	23.4	24.9	26.8	30.3	31.9	31.7
La Rioja	28.3	30.1	31.4	32.4	33.1	33.2
Madrid	33.4	35.8	37.0	34.4	34.2	33.5
Murcia	32.6	31.2	31.1	32.7	32.8	33.0
Navarra	30.8	31.5	32.4	32.5	32.5	31.7
Basque Country	33.2	34.0	33.9	32.7	32.4	32.4
Spain	27.8	29.9	30.9	32.5	33.0	32.6

Sources: Municipal register for 200. Author elaboration.

2.3. Social landscapes of rural Spain

Regional variations in demographic structures hide distinct forms of rurality. Demographic structures are merely a reflection of the different socioeconomic processes which organize the ways of life in the country. Models permit a synthetic approach to these processes. We can interpret the models as generating forms which, although not real, constitute basic or «pure» forms of social processes. We call them landscapes for their power as structures, as elements which characterize the social environment in which the rural population develops daily life.⁽³⁾ To extract these models we have used age distribution (five-year age groups) and sex of the rural population in each of Spain's provinces,⁽⁴⁾ starting from this group of 36 variables (the 18 age groups for each sex), an analysis of hierarchical classification⁽⁵⁾ was done of these structures. The result of this grouping can be seen in graph 2.6.

From this analysis we can distinguish five structural types⁽⁶⁾ among rural populations (graph 2.7), which cover to different degrees the transition which exists between a recessive model of extreme disequilibrium because of emigration and an expansive model because of immigration. In this sense, analysis of the results must be done thinking of how the real structures, as images of processes of social change, go from one model and move toward another. In other words, the models obtained constitute intermediate images of the transition process of rural areas from progressive deagrarianisation to incorporation in socioeconomic spaces at a regional level.

The regional representation of the structural types permits us to also observe some regional patterns (map 2.1), which reaffirm the validity of the analysis. However, it must be taken into account that these regional patterns are not well delimited, given that data aggregated by province is used. For example, the territorial limits of the so-called «disconnected» model also reach places in the interior of Asturias and Pontevedra. Parts of Guadalajara and Segovia pertain to the «dense» model, while the rest of these provinces are closer to the «transition» model.

(3) For a discussion of the concept of social landscape see Oliva and Camarero (2002).

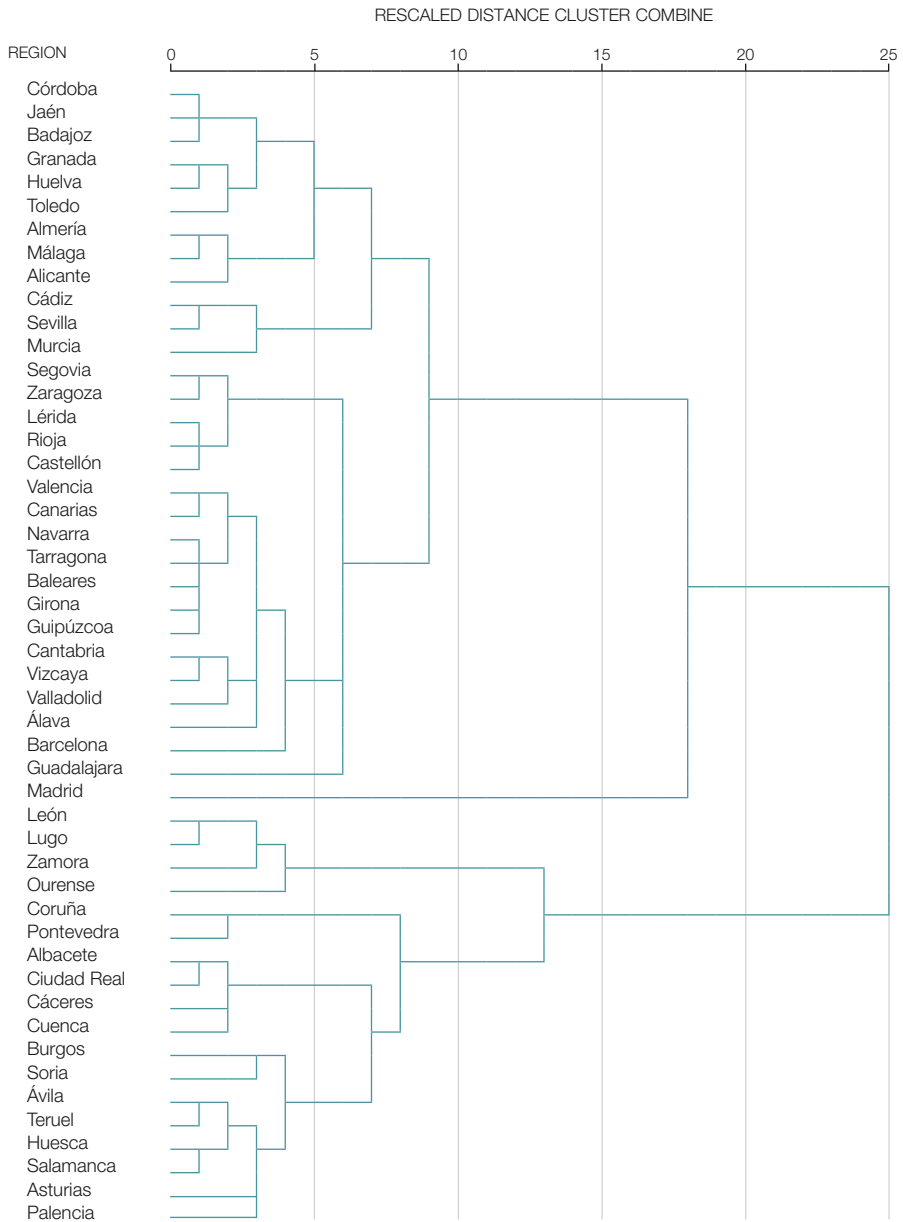
(4) Given the peculiarity of the Canary Islands, we have opted for considering its two provinces as one. As a result, the analysis is based on 49 regions.

(5) Method: between groups. Metric: squared Euclidean distance. Through this method the intention is that the differences between the groups formed are the maximum possible.

(6) Through the calculation of average values for the regional units belonging to each group.

GRAPH 2.6

Similarities in rural demographic structures by regional units

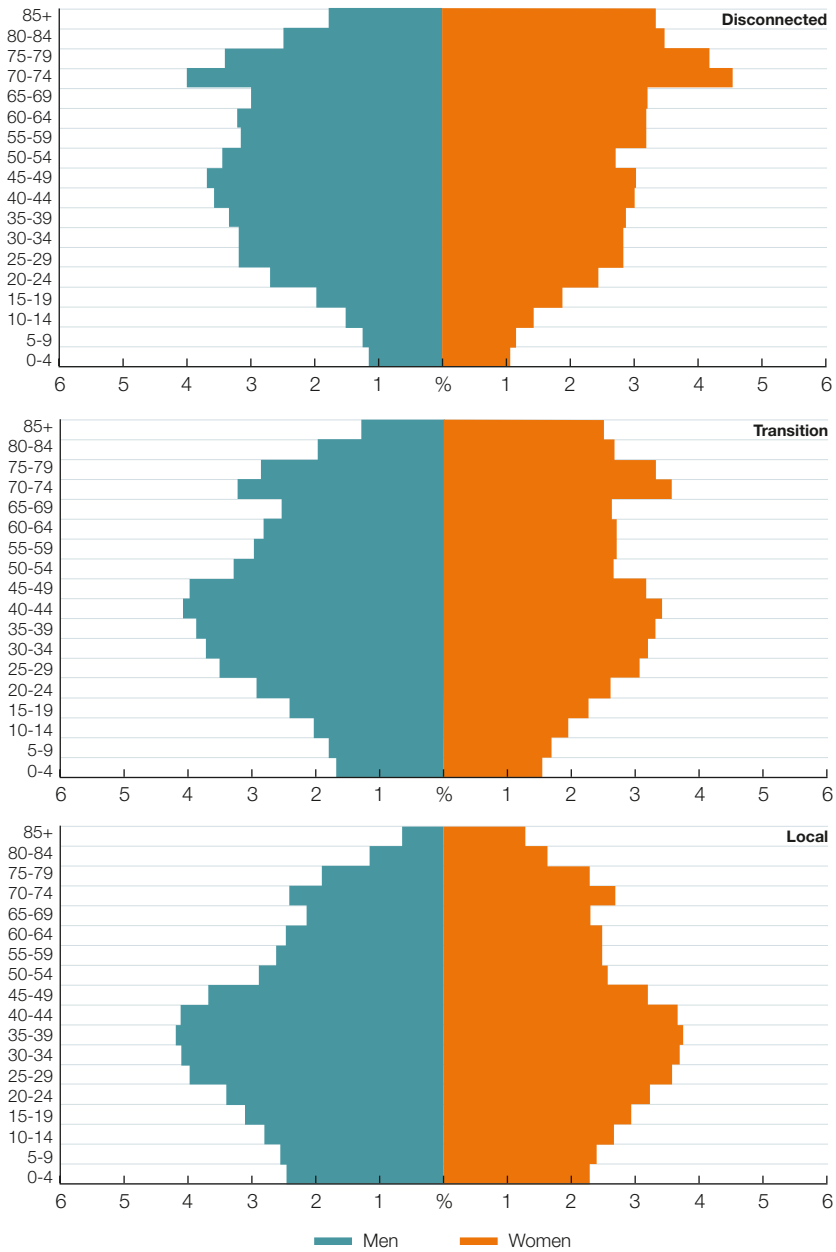


Sources: Municipal register for 2007. Author elaboration.

GRAPH 2.7

Models of rural demographic structures

(1 of 2)

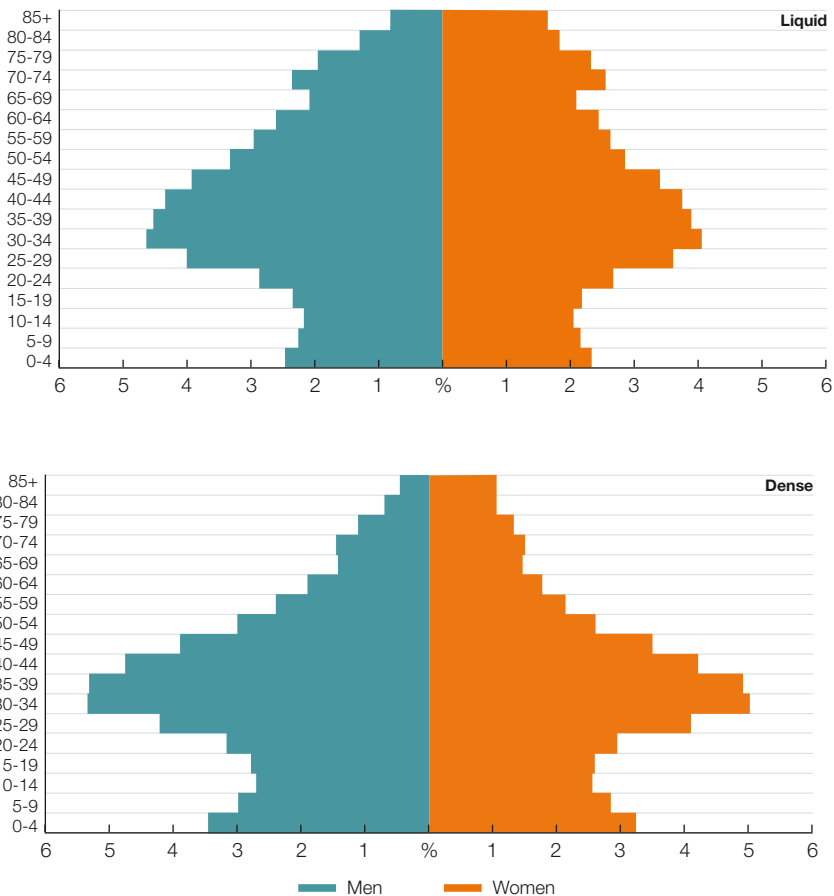


Sources: Municipal Register for 2007. Author elaboration.

GRAPH 2.7

Models of rural demographic structures

(2 of 2)

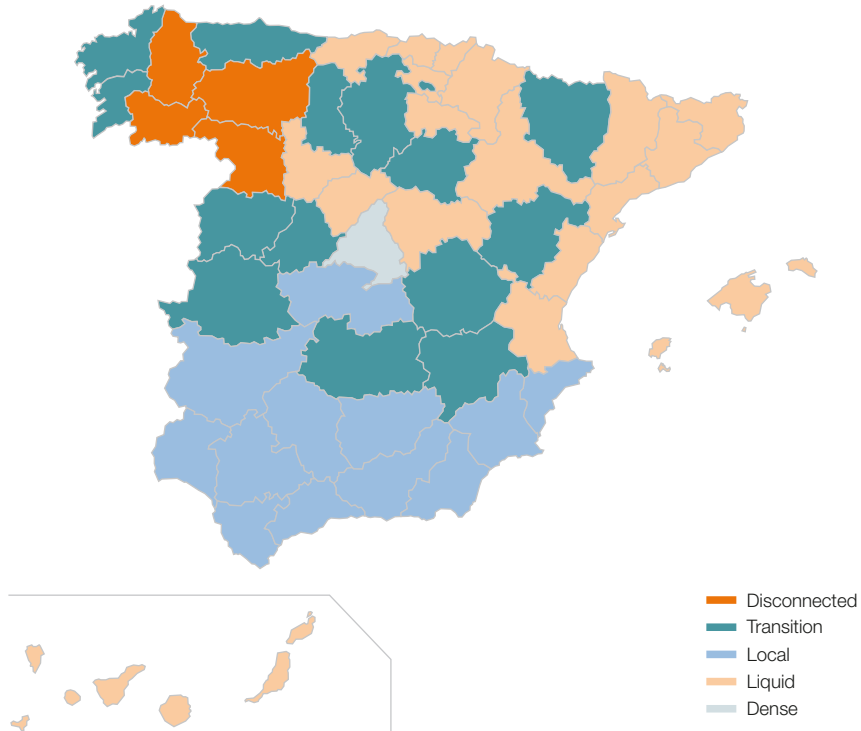


To aid in the description of the phenomena that the resulting demographic structures entail, rates of provincial *commuting*⁽⁷⁾ and of new residents:⁽⁸⁾

(7) The term commuter is applied to those workers that travel a significant distance every day to jobs outside of their place of residence.

(8) The indicators of commuting are based on the percentage of the rural population of 30-49 years of age whose place of work is outside of their municipality of residence. The indicator for new residents is defined as the proportion of rural residents from 30-49 years of age that a decade before lived in a different municipality. Both indicators refer to the year 2001.

Models of rurality

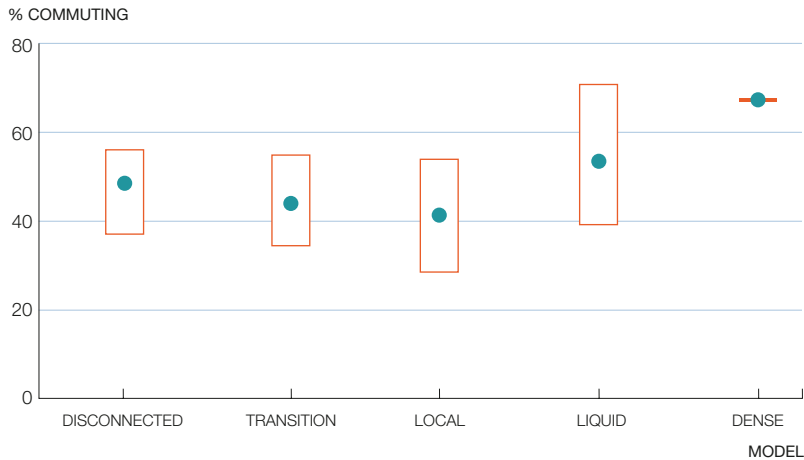


have been calculated, (see graphs 2.8 and 2.9). Through a close look at the graphing of structures, cartographic representation and the range of variation of the indicators of mobility (commuting) and origin of the population (new residents), we can describe and situate the support generation within the distinct types of rurality.

- **Disconnected.** On one pole we find the area of Galicia and Leon (Leon, Zamora, Lugo and Orense) which presents significant aging and a drastic reduction of the generational base. The support generation is reduced to the maximum and there is significant masculinisation of the youth population. These areas constitute the most «extreme» rurality in terms of living conditions. These are places which are often remote with

GRAPH 2.8

Variation in rates of commuting (30-49 years of age) by model of rurality



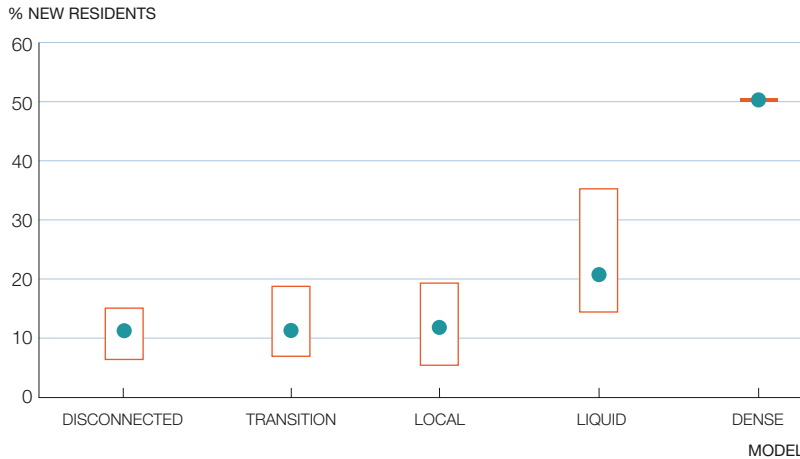
Sources: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

difficulties in overcoming a traditional model of development closely tied to family farming and livestock production. It is a disconnected rurality, not only because of the remote location of villages, but also because there are no adequate places for new modes of development. Paradoxically, this situation of disconnection means that commuting is important to the functioning of the limited labour markets. These areas do not attract population and the depletion of the population sketches a social landscape in which the traces of the past take precedence over future opportunities.

- **Transition.** The interior of the peninsula maintains a structure similar to the previous model: high level of aging population, masculinisation and decline of the base. But in this case the support generation maintains a position of relative vitality in these populations. The strong imbalance is counteracted by the vitality of the support generation, which sustains local life and the dependence that is generated by the aging population. There are no new residents but processes of reconversion can be observed in a context in which the locality continues having importance; commuting

GRAPH 2.9

Proportion of new residents (30-49 years of age) by model of rurality



Sources: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

and agricultural activities coexist with other local activities which the relative dynamism of the area permits. These are regions that have defended themselves better than the previous group from the effects of deagrarianisation but with important problems to confront in the future. The support generation is a protagonist in the restructuring process, but the strong masculinisation of the population is the principal obstacle to social sustainability.

- **Local.** An intermediate model and geographically very homogeneous as it constitutes the south of the country: Andalusia and neighbouring regions. This model has a solid support generation and a less elderly population. It is an interior model with the exception that in these regions fertility was traditionally higher and the decline also began later. It can be seen that it is a model which favours a stable population, thus there is a marked balance by sex among young and intermediate age groups. Low commuting and a wide spectrum of situations attractive to new residents show that it is a model sustained by the local environment.
- **Liquid.** The opposite pole to that of disconnected landscapes is constituted by a diffuse territorial model where villages form a very

interrelated network, to such an extent that we can talk of a diffuse city or, more precisely, of diffuse territories. High pendular mobility, *sprawling* and the development of a wide spectrum of new activities across the territory – shopping malls, maintenance of infrastructures, environmental management and industrial parks – permit a structure of expanding settlements which reach rural zones. Basically, Catalonia, the Levant, the Ebro Valley and the regions adjacent to Madrid, in addition to the Canary Islands make up this model. As the significant population that it attracts shows, this is a rurality that has been fully integrated into the socioeconomic changes. However, the significant masculinisation that exists in intermediate ages indicates an important source of heterogeneity. It is a liquid model not only territorially, but also in its social composition. In this context, the support generation does not sustain local activity – commuting is the principal mode of integration into labour markets –, or dependency, as it is more disconnected from other generations, as the diversity of the origin of the members of the support generation shows.

- **Dense.** The extreme case of the previous model is constituted by the rural area influenced by the metropolitan region of Madrid. In this region the pressure of new residents converts rural areas into a landscape which is the patrimony of active and young generations. The support generation is a uniquely active generation and supports the dependency not of older generations, but rather younger ones.

In short, important regional variations regarding the composition of the population reveal, in synthetic form, the different situations which condition the future of rural areas and thus, suggest different scenarios in relation to social sustainability. Focusing on the support generation, we go from areas in which their opportunities, as a generation, are limited by the important responsibilities of maintaining the population – aging and dependent, to those in which they are strongly committed by their generational responsibility to the economic and social dynamism of rural zones. What this indicates, is that, in no case, can we reduce their role as protagonists in the scenario of contemporary rurality in Spain.

III. Rural masculinisation and the structures of family life

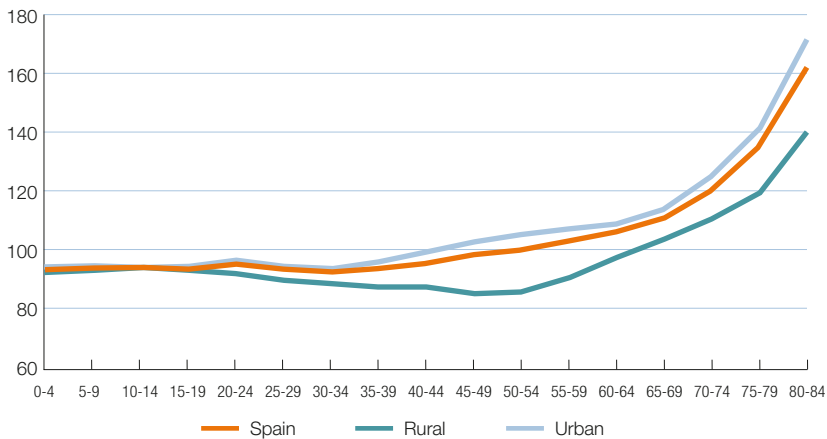
3.1. Territories of masculinisation

One of the principal characteristics that characterize rural populations is their considerable masculinisation. When we talk about rural masculinisation we are referring to a demographic imbalance based on a deficit of women in proportion to that which should exist naturally or for biological reasons between the two sexes. We can visualize this imbalance in graph 3.1, in which the ratio between the sexes can be seen in rural and urban zones.

GRAPH 3.1

Rates of Masculinity

Women per one hundred men



Sources: Municipal Register for 2007. Author elaboration.

This demographic disequilibrium can have important social consequences when it is present, as it tends to be, at reproductive ages, in other words, when individuals form relationships and have children (20-34 years of age), or in its impact on what we have defined as the support generation (30 to 49 years of age). As we saw in the previous chapter, the support generation comprises the majority of the working population – both in the productive sphere as well as the reproductive – and «sustains» the majority of the dependent population, whether they are children, adolescents or the elderly. The lack of women at these strategic ages has a tremendous impact on the *social sustainability* of rural communities. This is due, first, to women being an indispensable element in the formation of families, and to the importance that the formation of families has not only in sustaining the population through fertility, but also in the emotional equilibrium and social well-being of individuals. Secondly, for the role that women traditionally play in the provision of care and attention to the dependent population and for their own economic activity within the support generation.

3.2. The causes of rural masculinisation: from biological phenomena to social relations

Rural masculinisation is not a new phenomenon. In reality, it has been tied to processes of industrialisation and urbanisation, up to the point that from the theoretical approach of the *rural-urban continuum* developed by Sorokin and Zimmerman in 1929 – an approach which argues that the differences between rural and urban societies are not qualitative but rather gradual, there being no point of rupture between them – one of the empirical facts which shapes the rural-urban differentiation is the greater feminization of urban areas in comparison to rural ones. In principle, the expected situation would be exactly the reverse; as the population of rural areas is older and feminization increases with age, as a consequence of gender differences in mortality, it would be logical to think that rural areas would be more feminized than urban areas. The reality is just the opposite.

The search for explanations for this demographic peculiarity also has a long tradition. At first, the focus was on biological or «natural» causes, understanding

these as having to do with the natural changes in the population from the effects of birth and death rates. Adna Weber in his classic book, *The growth of cities in the nineteenth century*, from 1899, pointed to higher masculine mortality as a cause of urban feminization. This higher mortality was caused by certain dangerous and unhealthy jobs, as well as by unhealthy habits tied to urban lifestyles (here the author refers to vices, crime and excesses of all types). Weber also mentioned the greater feminization of births in urban areas, due to there being higher infant mortality among male babies.

Sorokin and Zimmerman, mentioned previously, discarded these biological causes in the 1920s and tied urban feminisation to the different migrating behaviours of men and women, behind which there are motives related to social order. In other words, demographic processes are expressing *social relations and identities*. These authors defined what they considered the principal factors that attract or repel women from urban or rural areas (*push and pull*): among the first, on the one hand, is the specific demand for feminine labour in urban areas, both in manufacturing sectors and service sectors; on the other hand, feminine psychology provokes a greater «attraction» for women to the colourful and bustling urban life. Among the second, we find the family character of agricultural activity which only permits women in rural villages to participate in family and domestic labour, as well as the system of land inheritance, which favours the masculine path and consequently, the setting down of roots by men.

For a long time very little was added to the explanations for feminine uprootedness in rural areas and, in general, for the different migratory patterns of men and women when referring to migrations between countryside and city. The structure of labour markets and accessible jobs in both spheres became the key issue. In the 1970s, the work of the economist Ester Boserup about the role of women in economic development in countries of the Third World confirmed that, essentially, the masculine and feminine link to agricultural work and non-agricultural urban jobs is behind rural masculinisation or feminization – a feminization which is also produced in the African case, for example. In addition, Boserup (1970) pointed out the existence of cultural restrictions on the mobility of women which must also be taken into account.

3.3. Rural masculinisation, gender and education strategies: «educated flight»

In the 1980s, the studies done from a gender perspective introduced a new approach to investigations on feminine uprootedness in the rural world. It is specifically the absence of young women – and the resulting number of men in rural areas without partners – which stimulated the application of this perspective, which made strategies of «flight» and feminine rejection emerge before patriarchal schemes that hid the work of women based on the family in the rural economy and reduced their areas of influence and decision-making to the strictly emotional and the private (Whatmore, 1991). In a telling expression, Sarah Whatmore said that rural women «voted» with their feet – in other words, they expressed themselves politically – in abandoning the countryside in search of new opportunities, beyond the narrow range of old options that the rural community offered them (Whatmore, 1990).

Interest arose, therefore, on focusing on the *strategies* which individuals and families put into place to achieve specific objectives. In this sense it must be pointed out how the process of deagrarianisation of rural areas and the passage from agriculture based on small farms to a modern and professionalised agriculture in the 1950s and 1960s, were accompanied by processes which were, at the least, paradoxical for the demographic structure and social sustainability of the countryside. At the same time that traditional forms of the transmission of skilled trades and assets in agriculture and other family businesses were maintained, the social devaluation of such assets in comparison to the urban wage model converted the heirs of those assets into bad matches in the marriage market.

In *El baile de los solteros* [The Bachelors' Ball] Pierre Bourdieu masterfully portrays how these heirs become the sad guardians of family assets, incapable of finding wives that maintain and provide them with social sustainability (Bourdieu, 2004). The matrimonial strategies of women gave precedence to those men that could assure them access to the condition of «housewife», still presented in the 1970s as the ideal state for the married woman, at the same time that, for many rural women, education became both a means for getting away from the village and for entering the labour market with skills and with the expectation, for the first time, of an authentic professional career.

These educational strategies, which are behind what in our country has been called «educated flight» (Camarero, Sampedro and Vicente-Mazariegos, 1991), are especially linked to families with agricultural assets. It is this family agriculture which most dramatically suffered the social paradoxes of modernity. The different family strategies deployed by sons – prepared to inherit the estate, now converted into a modern business, though still a family run one – and daughters – endowed with education, as basic capital for social ascent –, will end up having perverse effects for the very reproduction of the family business, leaving without wives many of the owners of professional and modernized businesses who are increasingly devalued in the marriage market (González, 1993).

These educational strategies are also responsible for a spectacular change in the academic profile of rural Spanish women who, in just a few years, have not only overcome their historic educational disadvantage with respect to men, but have reached educational levels even higher than men. In fact, today, one of the few characteristic features of rural youth is the considerable academic gap that exists between boys and girls (González and Gómez Benito, 2002). This greater inclination of rural women toward training and education is also seen as a principal cause of their progressive distancing, in regards to values and life expectations, from their potential rural partners (De la Fuente, 1987), of their connection to skilled jobs that are generally not available in their villages and, in short, of a greater «valuation» of urban life, considered a key element in their uprootedness. In this sense, it must be stressed that many writings on rural development share a critical and ambivalent vision of «education» which is accused of promoting the abandonment of rural life and sacralising the values and forms of urban life. The duality, education and rural uprootedness, has been considered for a long time the fundamental cause of the flight of young people from the countryside, and especially of the flight of women, and therefore the key element of rural masculinisation.

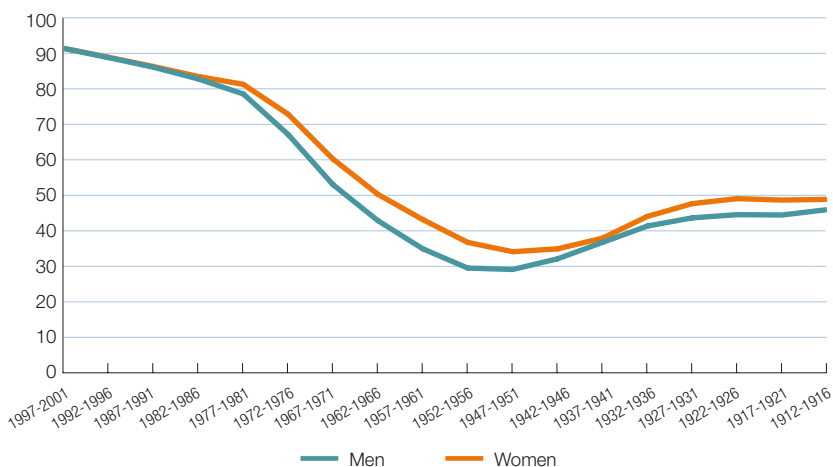
3.4. The recent evolution of rural masculinisation in Spain

If we look at the historical evolution of rural masculinisation in Spain, it must be pointed out that its peak period corresponds to the 1970s (graph 3.2), a period in which feminine rural emigration reached its greatest volume.

GRAPH 3.2

Rates (percentage) of permanency for the Spanish population born in rural municipalities

Rural municipalities <5,000 inhabitants



Sources: Population census of 2001.

It is a period in which the rural exodus was slowing down because of saturation in the economic sectors that had been the motor for emigration: mining, steel and metal-working industries, and those related to construction, which needed male labour power in urban areas; and because of the economic crisis which would especially affect heavy industry at the end of the 1970s. In those years, however, *feminine rural emigration would be maintained*, coinciding with a change in the productive structure of the Spanish economy toward the greater weight of tertiary activities, and especially toward jobs requiring intermediate and higher level skills in administration, as well as in education and health, jobs which demanded accredited qualifications.

In short, it is the generations born in the 1950s, who emigrated in the 1970s, which present the most accentuated gender imbalances in rural areas. In the 1980s and 1990s rural masculinisation was moderated, in part because of male emigration among young people, produced as a reaction to feminine rural emigration. It should be stressed that we are looking at demographic and social processes that feed on themselves, continually transforming the social landscapes of the countryside and the material conditions in which the rural

population perceives different opportunities and develops different strategies. The considerable disequilibrium between the sexes observed among young people in rural areas had immediate consequences on the imbalance in what could be called the «matrimonial market». However, in a short period of time, and in a process which we could link to the ecological equilibrium of population, a masculine exodus took place that tended to balance out the differences.

Despite these processes of ecological re-equilibrium of the population, migrations from the countryside to the city continued to leave marks in rural demographic structure, resulting in absent generations: those born in the 1940s and 1950s; and reduced generations: the children of the few from these absent generations that stayed, born in the 1960s and 1970s, who make up the majority of a reduced support generation. Masculinisation, although attenuated in comparison to previous generations, continues being an additional source of vulnerability for the support generation in rural areas. As we can see in table 3.1, masculinisation is particularly important in the smallest villages, although it continues to have significance in the population centres of rural areas (municipalities of 2,000 to 5,000 inhabitants, with 89 women for each 100 men in the support generation, and municipalities of 5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants with 92 women for each hundred men of this same generation).

The most recent studies on rural masculinisation have been focused on the structure of rural labour markets, increasingly extra-local and based on the

TABLE 3.1

Rates of masculinisation in the support generation

SIZE OF MUNICIPALITY	WOMEN PER 100 MEN IN THE 30-49 YEAR OLD AGE GROUP
Less than 2,000	80.1
From 2,000 to 5,000	89.0
From 5,000 to 10,000	92.0
From 10,000 to 30,000	93.9
From 30,000 to 50,000	95.6
From 50,000 to 100,000	98.0
More than 100,000	100.1
Total	95.6

Sources: Municipal Register for 2007. Author elaboration.

pendular mobility of workers – the previously mentioned rural commuting – and on gender differences associated with mobility (Camarero and Sampedro, 2008).

The lack of mobility, tied to family roles, severely limits the range of job options within the reach of women, in a context in which there is a marked segmentation of rural labour markets, between jobs and local workers, and jobs and non-local workers. A recent study shows how rural women's employment profiles changes significantly upon reaching ages critical for the formation of families; as their employment becomes more local, they are less likely to be part of the wage earning population and more likely to be tied to family business (Camarero *et al.*, 2006). This transformation is connected to a considerable increase in the precariousness of employment, both in the sense of employment being temporary and in the irregularity of employment. It is the women with the most education and training – those that have educational levels above basic education – who are the most dramatically affected in this sense, which explains the loss of rootedness that education and training brings. This is not to say that women with less education are in a better situation in relative terms, in other words, with a labour market which is sufficient or more adequate to their expectations. Quite the contrary, the excess emigration of women is especially notable in the population with less education; in other words, men and women with more education tend to emigrate more, but at the same time, women with low educational levels emigrate at much higher rates than do men with equivalent levels of education (Camarero and Sampedro, 2008). This suggests that staying in rural zones penalizes women with low educational levels more than their male equivalents in terms of employment, which can reasonably be associated with the differences that exist regarding mobility by gender. In this sense, the excess emigration of women is nothing more than the correlate, among women, of the greater work-related masculine mobility or *commuting*.

3.5. Rural demography and the structures of cohabitation: families and rural households

In this section we will look at the principal characteristics of the composition of rural households and the principal tendencies that they have followed in recent years, in line with the factors that have already been pointed out in

relation to the structure of the rural population and its dynamic. In effect, the composition of rural family households, as in the case of any society, responds as much to the structure of rural populations in function of sex and age as to its dynamics, either as product of the life cycle (rate of natural increase) or of movement in space of the population (migrations). The processes of aging and masculinisation, together with migratory dynamics, determine, to a great extent, the situation of the current rural population and are key explanatory factors for interpreting the reality of rural areas.

We will begin pointing out the principal trends in the composition of Spanish households, according to size of habitat, using the most recent census data, as can be seen in table 3.2.

In general, the immense majority of homes are composed of individuals linked by ties of kinship or marriage, who form a family or in some households, even more than one. In 2001 the households that included at least two persons with family ties were almost 79 percent of the total, while those that grouped together individuals that were not related were not even 1 percent, while single person homes were around 20 percent.

The modal composition of Spanish households follows the classic family pattern, which gathers together individuals of only one family (exclusively

TABLE 3.2

Composition of households in Spain

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD (LARGE GROUPS)	URBAN	RURAL	URBAN (%)	RURAL (%)
Total	9,343,648	4,843,521	100	100
Single person households	1,828,165	1,048,407	19.6	21.6
Multi-person households that do not form a family	103,681	35,545	1.1	0.7
One family without other persons	7,185,823	3,671,190	76.9	75.8
One family, with other unrelated persons	178,906	71,153	1.9	1.5
Two or more families without other persons	33,108	13,603	0.4	0.3
Two or more families with other unrelated persons	13,965	3,623	0.1	0.1

Sources: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

single-family households). More concretely, nuclear families, in other words, formed by a couple and their children, constituted, in 2001, 39.1 percent of households, while households formed only by a couple were 17.3 percent.

In brief we would say that the changes in the composition of the family have, since the 1970s, been in the direction of a reduction in the size of households (from 3.9 members per household in 1970 to 2.8 in 2005), and a greater plurality in the forms of cohabitation. Graph 3.3 shows some of the principal trends in family composition in the decade of the 1990s, trends that continue and that will surely be accentuated in the present decade.

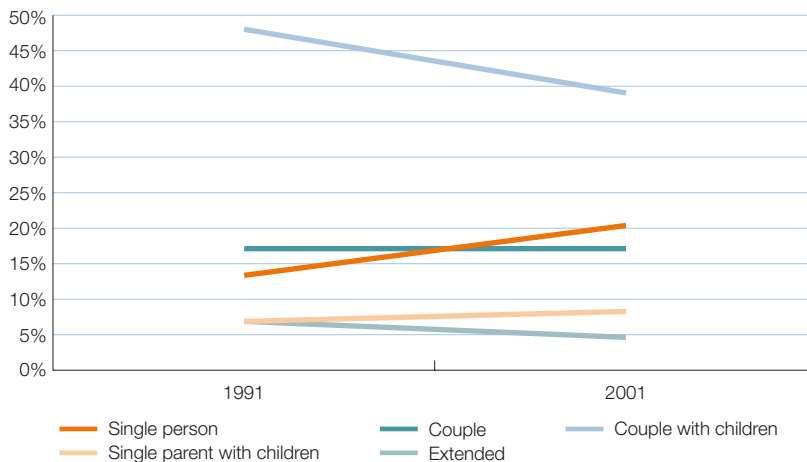
In general terms, the household dynamic, both rural and urban, reveals the following characteristics:

- There has been an increase in single person households. The aging of the population and the increase in life expectancy have led to an increase in single person households. In general, single person households are, in their majority, the result of the end of previous nuclear families, whether for break-up of the family or for the death of a partner. The increase in life

GRAPH 3.3

Households by type

Spain 1991-2001



Sources: Population census of 1991 and 2001. Author elaboration.

expectancy means that such situations are increasingly frequent and last for more time. In addition, the atomization of family forms, within the process of individuation, means that living alone is also increasingly seen as an alternative for emancipation.

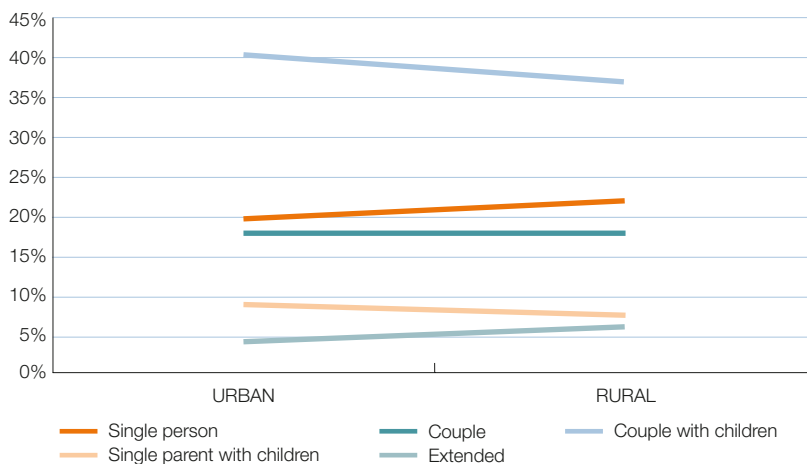
- There has been a significant decline in households constituted by couples with children. In addition to their decline in proportion to the growth of single person households, the processes of residential transition and the formation of households by persons within the large age cohorts born during the *baby boom* have been delayed and diversified, with a subsequent decline in the formation of new households. In addition, there is a certain diversification in the forms of households, with a slight though significant increase in multiple person households that are not families.
- In addition, the greater possibilities for the breakup and recomposition of families that have taken root in Spanish society since the 1980s have led to a significant increase in single-parent households, particularly those led by women. Although the graph only includes exclusively single-parent households which are the majority of such households, there do exist a variety of forms of single-parent households, in which the single-parent nucleus lives together with other families or other unrelated individuals. In general, these strategies for the recomposition of the family have increased the diversity of the composition of households.
- Finally, we continue to see an increase in the nuclear family in contrast to the extended family.⁽¹⁾ Although this is a process which began some decades ago and is practically finished, there is still a decline from census to census in the proportion of extended family households.

Rural households follow the general pattern that we have pointed out, even though this pattern is determined by the quantitatively superior weight of urban households. However, if we look at the differences between rural and urban households (graph 3.4), we see that rural households stand out in relative terms for the high percentage of individuals that live alone, for the

(1) Extended family is understood here to refer to households which are formed by a family with one or more units which gather together individuals of at least three generations. This definition does not exactly coincide with the classical terminology of Laslett, who distinguishes extended families (a unit with other related persons or not, that extends vertically or, in the case of relations, laterally) and multiple family households (formed by two units with filial ties), but it is operable for the analysis of the Survey of the Rural Population that we present.

GRAPH 3.4

Households by type and habitat



Sources: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

lower weight that couples with children have and for the significant increase in extended families of more than two generations.

In reality, a good part of the overall differences between rural and urban households is related to demographic composition and, particularly, to demographic differences in sex and age. A masculinised and aging population constitute, in this sense, a field fertilized by single-person households, fruit, on the one hand, of the breakup of nuclear families or the death of a partner, and on the other hand, by the difficulties which emerge in the context of a relative lack of women for the formation of new couples.

3.6. The forms of family cohabitation among the support generation

From the point of view of the life cycle, the support generation should be linked to family structures in the phase of consolidation or already consolidated, in which the members of the generation form part of the original nucleus of the family unit and are, to a large degree, in the reproductive phase or the phase of bringing up children. In this sense, it is logical that almost 60 percent of the

members of this generation in 2001 would form part of the households made up of couples with children, well above the average for the overall population in rural zones. However, if we compare this data with that of the same generation in urban areas we see that there exists less of a link with nuclear families and a greater prominence of extended families.

As we have already mentioned, aging and masculinisation are the principal factors which explain the different composition of rural and urban households. However, when we limit our analysis to the support generation, thus eliminating the effects of age differences between rural and urban areas, the consequences of the imbalance by sex in rural areas is seen more clearly. As we will see in what follows, men and women of the support generation in the countryside are linked to a greater or lesser degree to the different forms of family cohabitation.

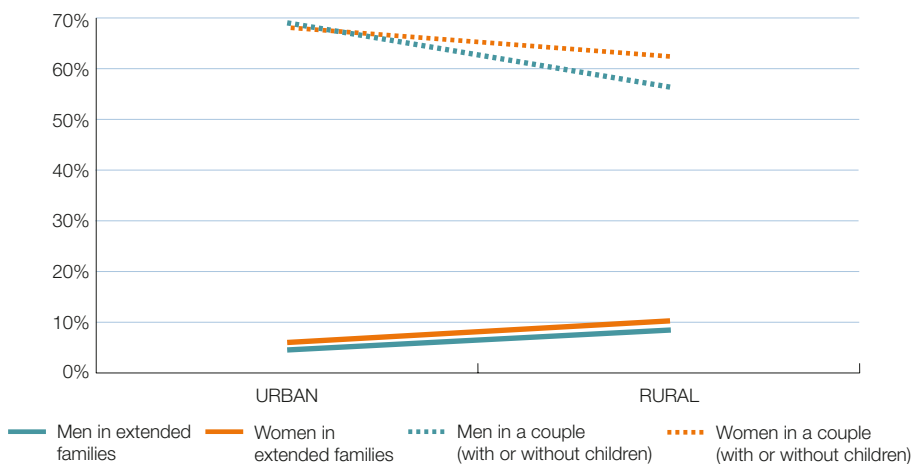
First, women are linked with greater effect than men to the forms of family life most characteristic of the life cycle. Graph 3.5 shows that women of the rural support generation have a slightly reduced participation in nuclear families (couples or couples with children) in comparison to urban women, a reduction which is compensated for and overcome by their inclusion in extended families. The men, however, who also have increased their participation in extended rural families, suffer an important decline in participation in nuclear families, to unusual levels in a generation which, for reasons of age, corresponds to the formation or consolidation of new households.

This greater relationship between women and the formation of families is sharpened when we compare the units formed by couples and those that are formed by couples with children (graph 3.6). In the case of women, belonging to nuclear families of couples with children is significantly higher than among men, while in the case of family units formed only by a couple, the differences are much less. This indicates that in the connection of women to rural areas, family forms have a lot of weight and, particularly, having a family with children. This relationship is not the same among men, whose permanence in rural areas does not depend on their involvement in the formation of new family units.

If we analyze the presence of single-person households in the support generation, we again find significant differences by sex. In general, the

GRAPH 3.5

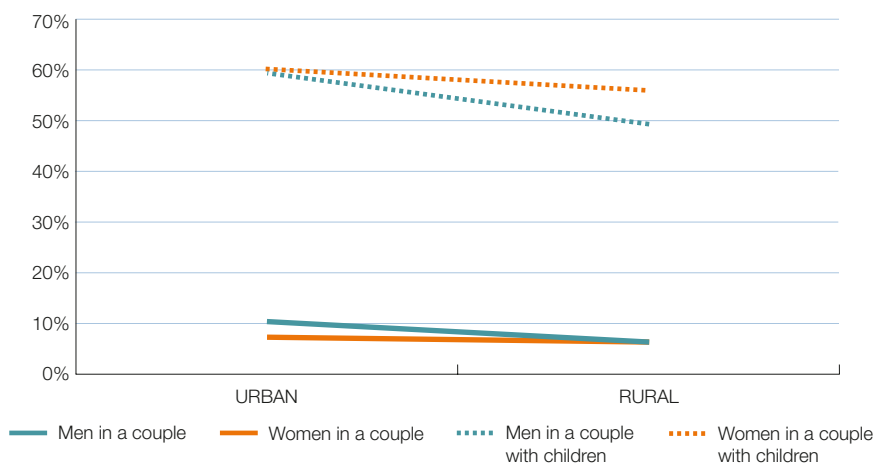
Persons of the support generation by household type, sex and habitat (extended and in a couple)



Sources: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

GRAPH 3.6

Persons of the support generation by household type, sex and habitat (in a couple and in a couple with children)



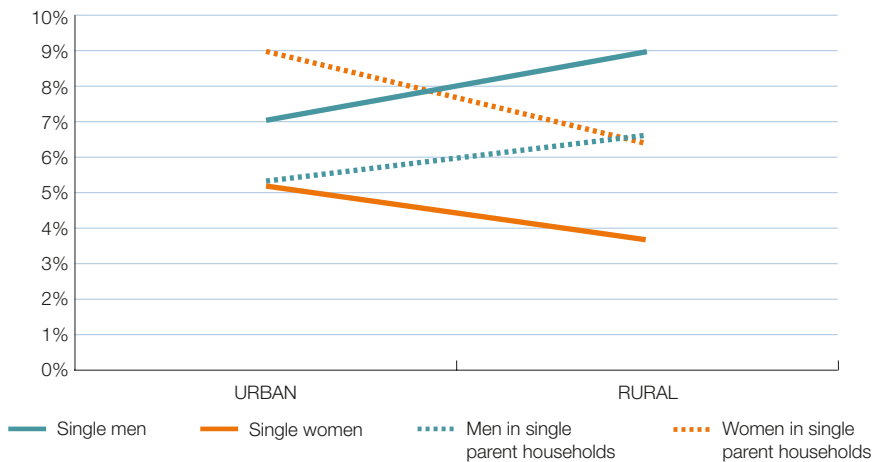
Sources: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

percentage of persons of this generation that live alone in rural areas is not much different from that of urban areas (around 6 percent). However, analysis by sex is very revealing in understanding the nature of the process of residential isolation. In graph 3.7 we can see that a greater percentage of men tend to live alone regardless of rural or urban habitat. But while the differences between men and women who live alone are small in urban areas, the proportion of men living alone in rural areas is much greater than that of women. Apart from the greater liberty that men have enjoyed in establishing independent homes alone, which would explain the overall differences between men and women, the explanation of these differences in rural areas has to do with the masculinisation of the population, which favours the constitution of single-person households on the part of men who cannot find partners. As we will see, the integration of this surplus of single rural men in other family forms reinforces the singularity of this situation.

Continuing with graph 3.7, we refer finally to exclusive single-parent families: those formed by a parent and children. This category, whose quantitative weight is similar to that of single-person households, reveals the paradoxes

GRAPH 3.7

Persons of the support generation by household type, sex and habitat (single persons and single parents)



Sources: Population census of 2001 and author elaboration.

characteristic of rural family composition with respect to sex. In general terms, the figures show that in urban areas women between 30 and 49 years of age are more likely than men to form a part of single-parent families, while in rural areas, men and women form part of this type of family equally. These differences must be understood in relation to the position that members of the support generation occupy in these families, in other words, if they are situated in these families as fathers/mothers or as sons/daughters. Single-parent families have two origins. They are the product of the break-up of a couple, through separation or divorce, or they result from the end of a partnership because of the death of one of its members. The first group responds to a contemporary family situation, where the break-up of a partnership is socially acceptable as a solution to problems of cohabitation, and which, in general, results in the mother having primary custody of the children, establishing in this way new single-parent families. The second model responds to a traditional situation, in which the rupture of the partnership is a result of the death of one of the partners and the children, while they are young, remain under the custody of the surviving partner. However, once the emancipation of the children arrives, the existence of these single-parent households depends not only on the life trajectory of the parents, but also on the creation or not of new households by the children. All these factors, in other words, the formation of single-parent households through rupture or death and the permanency or not of the children within the home, intersect in single-parent homes in the support generation. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the position that the members of this generation occupy within single-parent families.

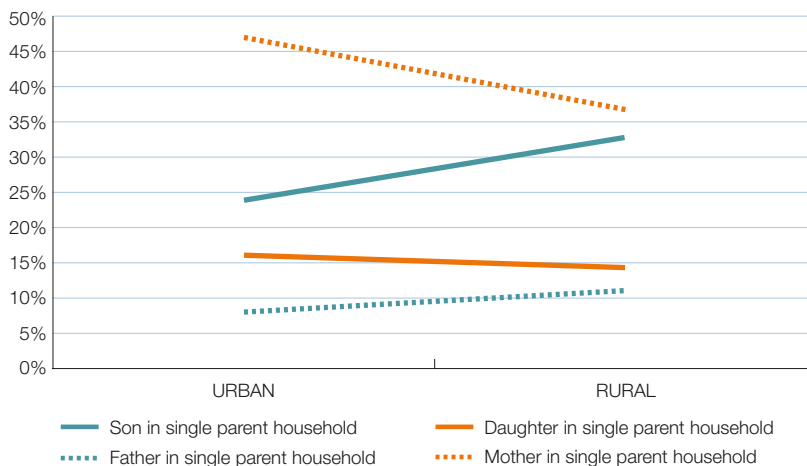
Graph 3.8 shows the existing differences by sex and habitat, according to family position in single-parent families. While the members of the support generation that live in exclusively single-parent families tend to be, in urban households, women who occupy the place of «mothers», in rural areas single mothers decrease significantly, while the place of men occupying the role of «sons» grows. In other words, it is the sons, not the daughters, of this generation that remain living together with their fathers or mothers.

Rural single-parent families, therefore, do not completely reverse the urban schema, but they do offer a change in the direction pointed out in the present analysis of family structure. We find, in short, rural women of the support generation linked to reproductive family forms – couples with children or

GRAPH 3.8

Persons of the support generation by sex, habitat and position in the family

Percentage in exclusively single parent families



Sources: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

extended families –, while men appear to be much more linked to single-person households and single-parent families where they occupy the place of children.

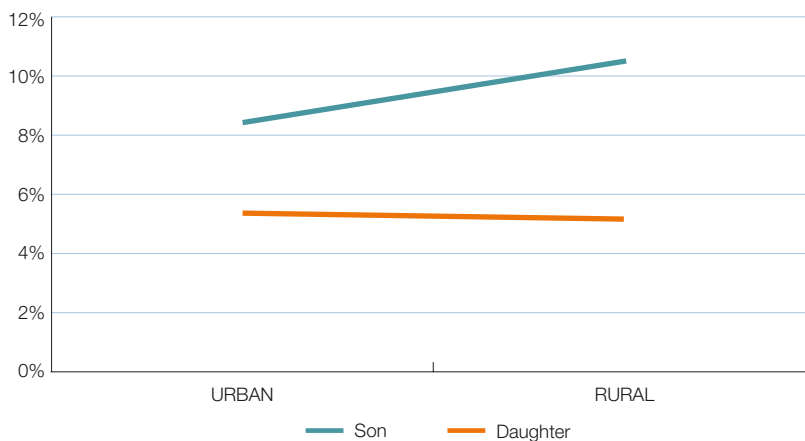
Something similar can be said of the position of the members of the support generation in nuclear families (graph 3.9). Although in this case the great majority of this generation are parents, it is interesting to observe differences by sex and habitat, as it again reveals that it is the male children at these ages that are more likely to stay with their parents, particularly in rural areas.

In short, despite the natural connection, based on the life cycle, with family structures related to reproduction, the characteristic of the forms of rural cohabitation of the support generation which most stands out is, specifically, the high percentage of individuals that live outside of reproductive structures, either through the prolongation of their residential ties to their parents, or through the constitution of single-person households.

GRAPH 3.9

Persons of the support generation in the position of child in exclusive nuclear families by habitat

Percentage in these families



Sources: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

3.7. Family dynamics and trajectories of emancipation by sex: the persistent effects of rural masculinisation

We have just looked at the families of the support generation of 2001, the year that corresponds with the latest census data available. The generation we've just analysed is now eight years older, being from 38 to 57 years of age (born between 1952 and 1971). While the generation which we will analyse in what follows, using the data from the 2008 Survey of the Rural Population, had at the time of the last census between 23 and 42 years of age (born between 1959 and 1978). In this sense, there is a large overlap between both generations, 12 of the 20 years that form the generation. However, from 2001 to now two important changes have happened which must be introduced into the analysis.

On the one hand, the support generation has been nurtured by the last large age cohorts of the *baby boom*, constituting a homogeneous generation as those born in the decade of the 1950s did not form part of this process. On the other hand, as already mentioned in the characterisation of this generation, during this first decade of the 21st century, new dynamics in the relationship between

urban and rural spaces have emerged, which have resulted in the incorporation of new residents in rural areas. The arrival of new residents is not only due to the search for the rural ideal on the part of disenchanting urbanites or retirees, but is also due to the search for new residential opportunities and economic activities in a diffuse territorial framework, in other words, population size or distances do not have as much influence as the availability of opportunities and the management of time.

Thus, in relation with the evolution of family structures during the beginning of this new century, the composition of the rural households of the support generation follows new dynamics that seem to reflect some of the principal changes analysed in this study. Namely, that along with the structures dependent on and strongly linked to the dual process of the aging and masculinisation of the population, there are currents of change which blur the boundaries of rurality and situate it within the society which harbours it, not as an isolated space or one functionally related with the urban space of modernity, but rather as an interdependent reality, linked to the general social currents of the post-industrial era. In table 3.3 we can see the evolution of the first seven years of this century from two disparate sources: the census and the 2008 Survey of the Rural Population, which, reveal the direction of change which the rural family of the support generation is undergoing.

TABLE 3.3

Persons of the support generation by household type

In percentages

	EPR-2008	CENSUS 2001
Living alone	4.3	5.9
Living in a couple	9.2	7.2
A couple with a child < 6	20.7	15.5
A couple with a child > 6	36.0	38.5
Single parent with a child < 6	0.5	0.6
Single parent with children > 6	2.1	2.4
Single living with parent(s)	8.9	7.5
Single with parent(s) and sibling(s)	3.6	
Extended family	8.8	9.2

Note: In both cases the support generation is defined as those from 30 to 49 years of age. Only the principal household categories are included in the analysis, for this reason the percentages do not add up to 100.
Sources: Population census of 2001 and EPR-2008.

Thus, there is a sharpening of the modernizing elements of family structure, for example, the decline of the extended family, understood as the cohabitation in the home of at least three generations of a family.

We can also appreciate the effects of masculinisation and the difficulties of reproduction in some residential strategies. Single-person households continue at relatively high percentages despite their experiencing a significant decline. What is more surprising, in this regard, is the growth of persons who stay in their household of origin with their parents, either alone or with their siblings. This phenomenon reveals a certain stagnancy in processes of emancipation and, in addition, seems to also indicate the support role that we have been observing in this decimated rural generation. The comparison with the data from the census indicates a large increase of these family forms – from 7.5 percent in 2001 to 12.5 percent in 2008 –; however, this data must be explained with greater detail. Although there is no doubt that there has been a significant growth of individuals in the support generation that continue being «children» in two-parent or single-parent households, we can only offer an approximate percentage, given that the survey does not distinguish between siblings and in-laws, so that we cannot distinguish the cases which refer to the existence of a new unit in the household, which would make these joint-family households.⁽²⁾

Finally, and perhaps most remarkably, a regeneration of households can be seen, with an important increase in families with young children. This indicator shows that not only are these changes happening in a generation which, as we have seen, lacked a certain dynamism in the renovation of households, but also, points to the change being, effectively, recent, as many of the children are young. The analysis of the protagonists of this change will be done later.

These new family dynamics are not enough, however, to erase the effects that the masculinisation of rural areas has on the forms of family life among the men and women of the support generation. As we can see in table 3.4, around three fourths of women live with a partner and, of these, the great majority

(2) Joint family households in the survey have been encompassed mainly among extended families and other types of families. For a comparison with the census – which distinguishes through other categories the families with more than one unit –, table 3.3 offers the percentage of «only with parents and siblings» reduced through an estimation of the maximum of joint-family households that could have entered in this category, based on the percentage of families of this category which include at least two siblings of different sex in the family. Said estimate reduces by 20 percent the percentage of «Alone with parents and siblings», which provides the percentage of 3.6 percent. This estimate is only used in this table for comparative purposes.

TABLE 3.4

Persons of the support generation in a couple or with children, by sex

In percentages

	MEN	WOMEN
Couple	51.6	76.8
Children	45.4	70.2

Source: EPR-2008.

have children, a situation which contrasts with that of men, as only half of men live with a partner.

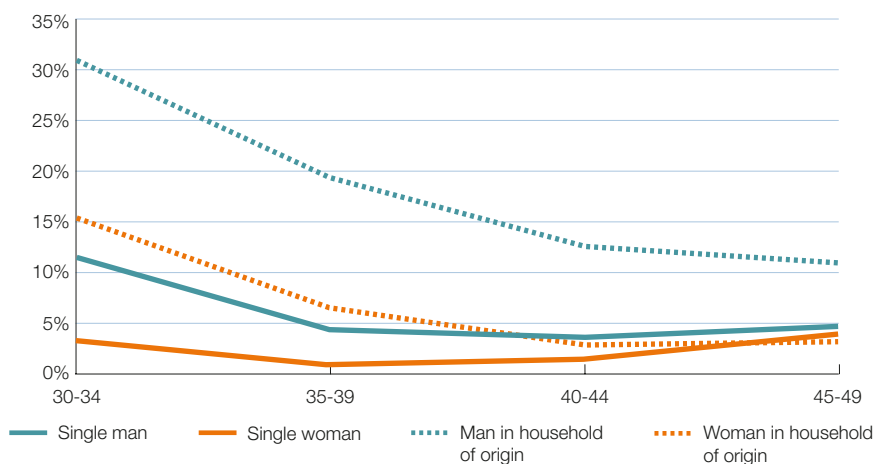
The data shown regarding the formation of households has its correlate in the fact that women and men stay in their households of origin in very different percentages. For both sexes the proportion that continues living with their parents declines, for the effect of the life cycle, throughout the generation. The connection of rural males to their homes of origin is noteworthy; their participation in work does not seem to have an immediate relationship to residential emancipation and, anyway, this emancipation is delayed with respect to the process of emancipation of women, as can be seen in graph 3.10, and never reaches the level of women. The case of solitaries is particularly interesting in the study of these differences. Despite being a residential strategy for emancipation, as it is the form of household for a significant percentage of men up to 34 years of age, it represents an intermediate step between the household of origin and the household of destination, ideally formed with a partner in her thirties, as shown by the older cohorts.

The differences pointed out have as background the strategies for emancipation by gender and, particularly, the pace and form with which these processes are carried out in rural areas. Emancipation has three basic components: economic independence, residential independence and the formation of new households. However, residential independence and the formation of new households go practically hand in hand, since the immense majority of homes are single family households.⁽³⁾ The difference in the pace of both processes, that of economic

(3) This direct relationship between family and residential emancipation is not as clear in other European countries. In Scandinavian countries, for example, residential emancipation normally precedes the formation of nuclear families. But in Spain, despite there being a significant increase in homes without a family nucleus in the 1990s, the immense majority are constituted by nuclear families.

GRAPH 3.10

Persons of the support generation by age, sex and type of family (single and in household of origin)



Source: EPR-2008.

independence and that of family formation, is typical in advanced societies, as the delay in the formation of families, linked to the prior consolidation of economic position has been noted for decades; and it is now not only men but also women, who enter the labour market with expectations of autonomy and a professional career very similar to those of their male partners.

Rural areas, deagrarianised and diversified, masculinised and aging, constitute a unique field for the adoption of strategies of emancipation differentiated by sex. Two circumstances have made a particular contribution to shaping this panorama. The first is that labour markets are segmented and are fundamentally extra-local for women, so that the objective of economic emancipation distances women from their places of origin and links them to urban centres. The second is a consequence of the first; the demographic situation of this generation from the start, involves a numerical imbalance between men and women. Such circumstances have an important impact on reproductive aspects as we have explained. If potential couples are reduced in number but the employment situation permits individuals to stay in the towns and villages, the surplus (in this case, of a male majority) adopt strategies of staying in

the nuclear family of origin or, at best, they follow a path of emancipation in steps, as the households of solitaries seems to indicate. If, on the other hand, the marriage market is favourable in numeric terms but the opportunities for employment exist outside of the town or village, the strategies revolve around mobility or, in the case of those who stay, tend to be linked to the formation of a family. In other words, the predominant process of emancipation has become, for both men and women, economic, based on labour markets and wages, as corresponds to an advanced society. In this way, men appear to be more closely connected to rural areas because these constitute their productive sphere, while women emigrate to assure their economic independence.

If economic emancipation for men is not threatened by their connection to the local, residential emancipation is, because of the difficulties they have in forming new households as a consequence of the demographic structure. In the case of women, whose principal strategy for economic emancipation has, for decades, been emigration, we find a support generation whose strategy for emancipation is based on the establishment of households and, therefore, on residential emancipation, even at the cost of reducing their participation in extra-local labour markets.

Under the weight of a still persistent masculinisation and with the tools of this present generation of men and women who use complex strategies for economic survival and social reproduction, a good part of the social action which sustains life in rural villages and towns, with all its problems and advantages, is developed.

IV. Aging and dependency in rural populations

Spanish society at the end of the 20th century, like most of Western Europe, is an increasingly aging society. Currently, 12.6 percent of the Spanish are over 70 years of age, a figure which is even higher in the countryside. The degree of aging of a population impacts directly on the size of the dependent population. The problem is not that there are too many elderly, nor that they live longer, but rather in the gradual deterioration of their personal autonomy as they age. This is particularly important in Mediterranean societies such as Spain, where the care of dependent persons rests primarily on the family and even more so in rural areas. Dependency becomes a problem when the response to it generates a chain of dependency involving other individuals, often the women who make up the support generation.

The aging of the population depends principally on fertility. The decline in fertility increases the weight of the elderly population. In addition to the effect of low fertility, the increase in life expectancy is today an important factor in the aging of the population. Today generations live longer and therefore the probability of reaching adult ages is increasingly greater. But not only has life expectancy at birth increased, but so has average lifetime. Life expectancy at birth is the average number of years that a generation will live if mortality rates by age stay as they currently are. Historically, life expectancy has increased fundamentally because of the decline in infant mortality. In recent years, however, greater life expectancy is related to the increase in the average lifetime to higher ages. In Spain, since the 1970s, the group that has undergone the greatest increase in life expectancy has been those over 65 years of age.⁽¹⁾

(1) A detailed review of this process in Spain can be found in Gómez, Génova and Robles (2007).

They are increasingly living longer. The increase in life expectancy at birth means that there are more elderly, but the growth in the average age of the different generations means that the elderly live even longer than those who were elderly in previous generations.

In Spain, the fall in fertility was significant during the last third of the past century, reaching historical minimums in the decade of the 1990s and low rates in comparison with other countries. In addition, the indicators of life expectancy have been gradually increasing until being situated among the highest in the world. In this context, the aging of the Spanish population has reached high levels.

4.1. The aging of rural populations

If Spain is aging, the countryside is even more so. In the countryside fertility has also fallen, life expectancy is even higher than in urban areas⁽²⁾ and, in addition, the size of intermediate generations has been reduced as a consequence of the intense rural exodus. In other words, in rural areas, along with what has happened in Spain as a whole, we must add the out-migration of young people. As has been mentioned in previous pages, the support generation, product of the demographic imbalances of the last part of the 20th century, is the result of the concentration of the capacity for the development of productive and reproductive activities in one generation. The conclusion is that the rural population is *over-aged* and that this increases the pressure that the resulting dependency generates on the support generation.

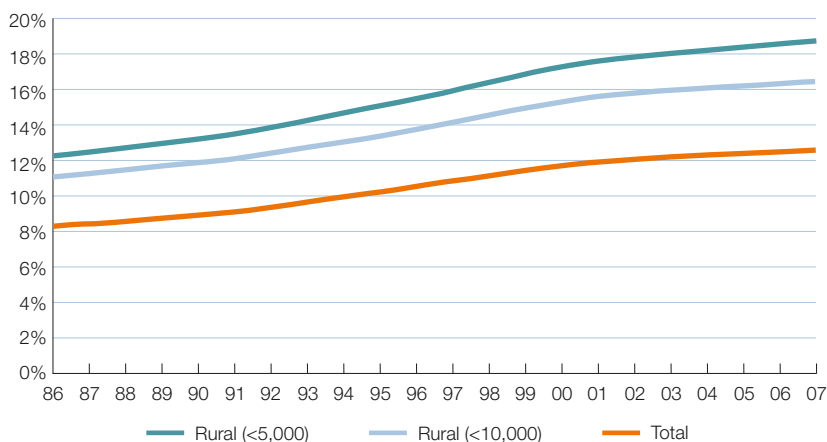
The following graph shows the recent evolution of the aging population in Spain (graph 4.1). In it we can see that the highest growth took place during the 1990s. At the beginning of the 21st century, although the number of elderly has continued to grow, their weight in the overall population has been moderated for two reasons. One is the arrival of immigrants at active ages, which contributes to a relative rejuvenation of the population. The other is the slight rise in the birth rate, which means that the population base is no longer narrowing. However, in the countryside, although the tendency is similar to that for Spain as a whole,

(2) Differences in mortality by habitat have been little studied. However, the studies done reveal significant differences in life expectancy, especially in the case of men. In the period 1990-1992, the data on life expectancy at birth for rural men was 74.52 years of age, and for urban men, 72.85. For rural women it was 81.04, and for urban women, 80.53. See Camarero, Gómez and Jiménez (1999).

GRAPH 4.1

Evolution of aging

Percentage of population over 70 years of age



Sources: municipal register for 1986, population census of 1991, municipal register for 1996, population census of 2001 and municipal register for 2007. Author elaboration.

the slowing down of the aging of the population is not the same as for the lesser impact that the arrival of immigrants and the rise in the birth rate have had on the rural population.

The impact of aging in rural areas can be summed up in one statistic: in 2007, more than one of every six rural inhabitants was over 70 years of age (16.4 percent in municipalities of less than 10,000). This figure is even higher and reaches almost one of every five inhabitants in municipalities of less than 5,000 inhabitants (18.8). It is above all in these smaller municipalities where the differences are greatest in comparison with the national average. Moderation in the increase in aging has been principally in urban areas because of the impact of immigration, while in smaller rural municipalities such a slowdown has not even begun.

The aging of the rural population and particularly the increase in the longevity of the elderly population has two important effects. The first is the progressive feminisation of the population at higher ages because of the differences in life expectancy by sex, greater among women than among men. The second is the greater dependency of the population. Greater longevity means that the average

age of the elderly is higher. Said in more graphic manner, the elderly are more elderly.⁽³⁾ As a result, as age increases, the likelihood of being dependent also increases, and this increase is sharpest among the most elderly. Dependency therefore increases, but not only because the number of elderly increases but also because the likelihood of the elderly being dependent increases.

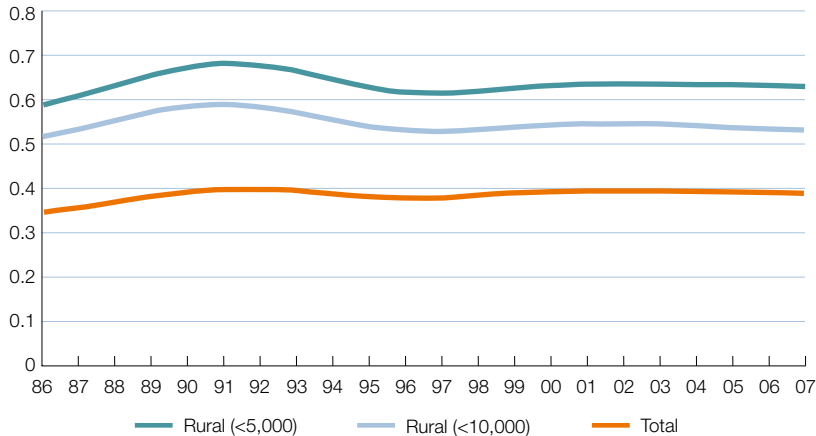
The impact of aging on the support generation varies over time, as, although the proportion of elderly is continually growing, the weight of the generation that acts in each period as support is also variable in function of the size that the different generations of rural inhabitants have. Graph 4.2 helps us to understand this situation.

An almost constant relationship can be seen in the dependency index for the overall Spanish population since the beginning of the 1990s. However, in rural areas there are greater variations, with higher rates at the beginning of

GRAPH 4.2

Dependency index

The ratio of those over 69 years old to the group from 30 to 49 years old



Sources: municipal register for 1986, population census of 1991, municipal register for 1996, population census of 2001 and municipal register for 2007. Author elaboration.

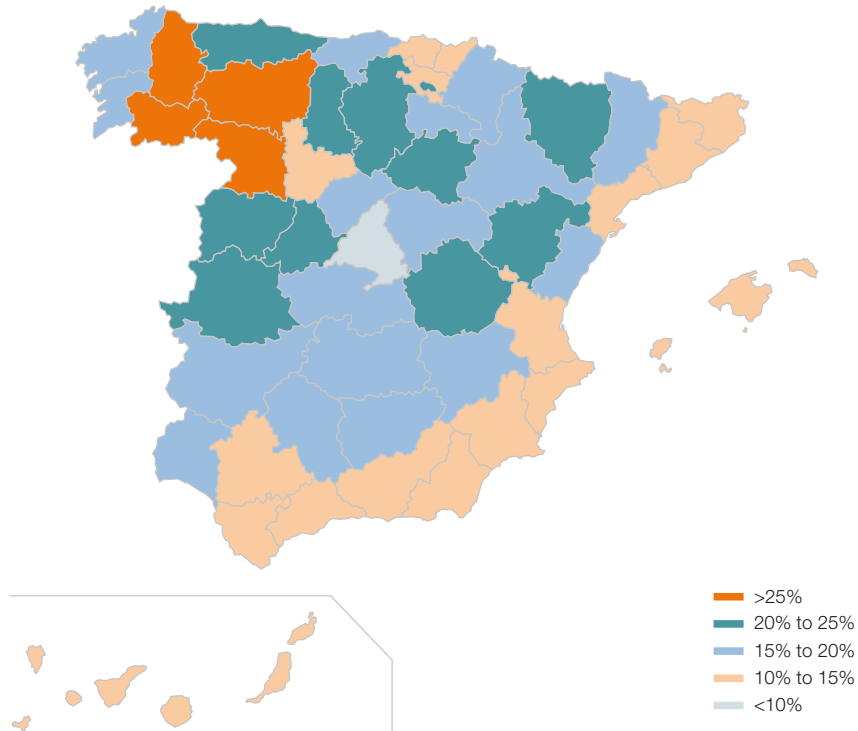
(3) We will see that the probability of dependency increases considerably among the oldest. In 1991, in rural areas, individuals of 85 years of age and older were 13.4 percent of the population over 70 years of age and in the year 2007 they were 16.4 percent.

the 1990s. It is precisely in 1991 when the 30-49 year old age group was very small. At this time, in the central ages of the population were those who did not participate in the rural exodus. In general terms, what the dependency indicator shows is that, for the Spanish population, the ratio is two elderly persons for every five persons as support ages, while in the rural population this ratio is one of three support persons for every two elderly. The current situation, despite the heavy burden that the dependency indicators reveal, has returned to values near to those of twenty years ago. This data confirms the crucial importance that the current support generation has. The situation of rural aging is today relatively moderated by the size of the support generation.

The differences in the size of the support generation produces the elevated differences in rural aging that currently exist in rural areas. For example, while in Orense 28.3 percent of the rural population is older than 70 years of age, in the rural areas of Madrid this figure is only 8.8 percent. Map 4.1 details the great diversity that exists.

The mapping of rural aging reproduces the models of rurality that were commented on in chapter 2. Thus, in the disconnected landscape that corresponds to the Galician-Leonese interior where the situation is extreme, more than one fourth of the rural population is more than 70 years old. Surrounding areas, which make up a transitional landscape, also have elevated values, more than one in five inhabitants being over 70 years of age. To this landscape we must add the mountainous regions of Aragon, both the Pyrenees as well as the mountains of the Sistema Central. In general, the population in the south is not as old because fertility has been at higher levels than in the north; nor is that of the Mediterranean coast, where the impact of new residents and the very dynamics of rural development produce a more «liquid» social landscape. The dense rurality of Madrid and the impact of other city-regions, such as in the case of the Basque Country, moderate rural aging.

Percentage over 70 years of age in the rural population



Sources: Municipal register for 2007. Author elaboration.

4.2. Disability and dependence

The problem of rural over-aging is even greater, if possible, for two fundamental reasons. First, because of the great dispersion of the population in rural areas, which implies a need for greater mobility. Remote habitats, greater dispersion of healthcare and other service centres and a lack of transportation infrastructure means that the need for private transport is high. This situation means that the elderly must generally rely on family for transport, something which is not as necessary in urban areas.

Secondly, because of the strong relationship that exists between aging and disability, as disability increases with age and in many cases leads to

dependence. The situation regarding disability in rural areas has hardly been examined, but available indicators, as we will see, show that the rates of disability are higher in rural areas than in urban ones. In addition, problems of mobility and situations of disability, both elements which generate dependence in the population, are closely related. We will look at this issue with some detail, using data from the Survey on Disabilities, Impairments and State of Health (Spanish acronym: EDDES, 1999).⁽⁴⁾

The distribution by age of disabilities continues a tendency of exponential growth, typical function of those processes that follow biological patterns (graph 4.3). Disability is a product of the deterioration of physiological conditions and of exposure to risk factors (accidents or illnesses). Both causes increase with age.

The data show that the worst situation regarding disabilities is that of women in rural areas. Starting at 60 years of age, rural women reach the highest rates of disability until they are equalled by rural men and urban women at ages nearing 90 (graph 4.3). In general, starting at 45 years of age women have higher rates of disability than men,⁽⁵⁾ while it is urban men who, in the last years of the life cycle, have the lowest rates of disability. At the highest ages, over 90 years of age, the rates are similar for both sexes and by habitat, reaching rates of around 80 percent. It is at the end of the seventh decade of life when the greatest differences are reached, between habitats and between the sexes, in the prevalence of disabilities. For example, in the 75-79 age group 43 percent of rural women have some disability, while rural men have significantly lower rates at 35 percent, and urban men are at 33 percent and urban women at 39 percent.

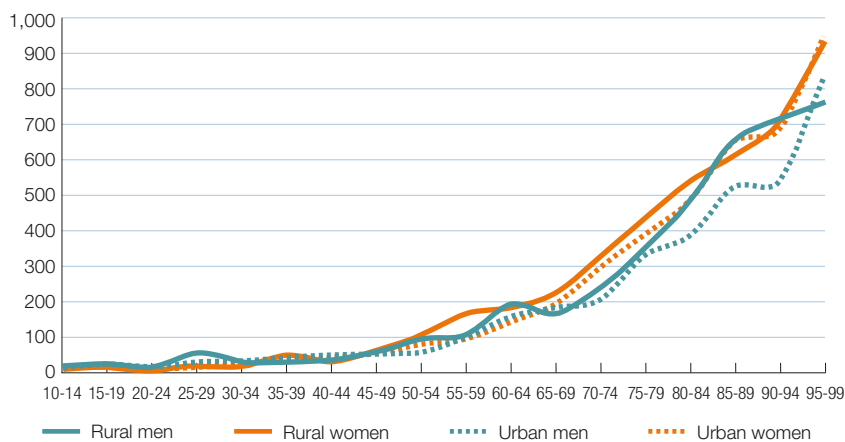
The reason for the higher rates of disability in rural areas has not been analysed in detail up until now. However, the little data available points to the higher life expectancy in rural areas. Although those with greater deterioration of vital

(4) The EDDES is a broad survey based on a sample composed of 80,000 households representing the overall Spanish population. It thoroughly researches the state of health of a subsample of the members of the households and the situation with respect to disabilities among the members of each household. For the definition and treatment of disabilities, the survey uses the criteria of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) elaborated by the WHO. It is important to take into account that this survey is referring to persons that reside in family households, in other words, the data excludes individuals that reside in institutions such as, for example, residencies or hospitals.

(5) Before this age the rates tend to be higher among men than women. The worse situation of men at younger ages can be attributed to cultural factors which have an impact on the early detection of certain problems, as well as on greater exposure to situations of risk.

GRAPH 4.3

Disability rates per 1,000 inhabitants, by sex and habitat



Sources: EDDDES 1999. Author elaboration.

functions, mobility or mental functions are more likely to die sooner,⁽⁶⁾ – it is also true that those with a higher life expectancy are more likely to live with disabilities. This suggests that the situation regarding disabilities is probably worse in rural areas because rural inhabitants live longer. The explanation for the worse situation of women also reflects the same idea: the greater survival of feminine cohorts over masculine. However, in the study of these differences, other hypotheses related to the possible existence of a greater attraction of certain environments and types of habitat for persons with disabilities have to be considered. In some cases, a rural environment could be better adapted to the daily needs of the disabled population. Perhaps because of a less dense habitat, with more adaptable buildings – lower – and an environment that, although limited in terms of services, is more accessible and adaptable for persons with problems of mobility.⁽⁷⁾

(6) However, the increase in life expectancy has also been significant among persons with disabilities. Specifically the high incidence of disabilities at elevated ages is due to the increase in years lived with a disability.

(7) On the other hand, the limitations of this data must be taken into account. Surveys such as the EDDDES do not include persons living in institutions. And perhaps for this reason there could be differences between urban and rural patterns regarding the institutionalisation of the elderly, particularly those who suffer some form of disability.

The definition of disability is so broad that it does not serve for evaluating levels of dependency. Not all types of disabilities generate dependency. Many disabilities, although important to the individuals that live with them, do not imply the need for help from other persons. For example, the impact on daily life is not the same for someone who has problems distinguishing colours as someone who has problems with the use of their hands. Cultural and generational contexts also moderate or amplify the conversion of a disability into dependency. Blind persons may be completely autonomous at younger ages but will likely be dependent when elderly.

Disabilities related to mobility are those which, as can be seen, appear with the most frequency at higher ages and are also the disabilities which establish the greatest differences among the sexes and by habitat (table 4.1). Almost one fourth of women over 59 years of age have problems getting around outside of the home.⁽⁸⁾ 15 percent of rural women, in other words, one of every six in this age group, also have difficulties getting around inside their homes, while among rural men the figure is one in ten. There are other types of disabilities which reach important levels such as difficulties in doing domestic tasks; however, this indicator has a clear gender bias: it is high among women and low among men. The association of certain domestic tasks with gender is the reason why there are men that have no difficulties doing domestic tasks in the sense that they do not do them, nor have they ever regularly done them.

In general, the different categories of disabilities are related and when one of the problems reaches a significant level it is ultimately reflected in a loss in mobility. The following table (4.2) shows this clearly, with the exception of visual and auditory problems, the great majority of disabilities also affect mobility.

With the aim of analysing and evaluating the frequency of dependency, we are going to concentrate on two types of disabilities that make the development of full personal autonomy in daily life difficult and which, in general, require the assistance of other persons. The first is the loss of mobility – problems

(8) The definition of difficulties getting around outside the home that the EDDES-1999 uses include: walking without means of transport, getting about on public transport and driving one's own vehicle. The driving of a vehicle is only considered for persons between from 18 to 74 years of age. Those who are unable to use public transport or their own vehicle refers only to those that are only able to use specially adapted vehicles.

TABLE 4.1

Types of disabilities, prevalence (%) in those over 59 years of age by sex and habitat

	RURAL MEN	RURAL WOMEN	URBAN MEN	URBAN WOMEN
Vision disability	8.5	10.7	7.6	10.4
Hearing disability	8.4	9.6	8.5	8.5
Communicative disability	3.1	3.8	2.7	3.8
Learning disability, applying knowledge and developing tasks	3.8	5.6	3.0	5.0
Problems in getting around	9.9	15.0	7.1	12.6
Use of arms and hands	7.7	10.6	6.3	10.5
Problems getting around outside of the home	15.4	24.6	12.8	20.9
Taking care of oneself	6.2	8.7	4.8	8.0
Doing household tasks	9.7	19.1	7.4	17.1
Relating with others	3.8	5.6	3.1	5.2

Note: a person can have more than one type of disability.
Sources: EDDDES 1999. Author elaboration.

TABLE 4.2

Relationship between types of disabilities and difficulties getting around outside of the home

	% THAT HAVE PROBLEMS GETTING AROUND OUTSIDE THE HOME
Vision disability	53.8%
Hearing disability	42.7%
Communicative disability	91.8%
Learning disability, applying knowledge and developing tasks	97.5%
Problems in getting around	85.0%
Use of arms and hands	72.6%
Taking care of oneself	92.2%
Doing household tasks	87.3%
Relating with others	93.9%

Note: Total of those over 6 years of age.
Sources: EDDDES 1999. Author elaboration.

getting around outside of the home. The other is problems taking care of oneself.⁽⁹⁾

Although we have been looking at data from a few years ago,⁽¹⁰⁾ the evolution of disabilities does not seem to show significant changes today (table 4.3), at least not for the majority of the population that suffers disabilities: those over 69 years of age.⁽¹¹⁾ For the category of individuals that have problems «taking care of themselves», as can be seen in table 4.3, the figures for 1999 and 2006 are very similar.⁽¹²⁾ The data from 2006 shows that the greater prevalence of disabilities among men in rural areas in comparison to urban areas continues.

Using the sum of persons with disabilities related to mobility outside of the home and those with problems taking care of themselves, we have developed an index which estimates the level of dependency. The results from this indicator provide us with an approximation of the dependent rural population. The results can be seen in graph 4.4. What most stands out is that the differences in dependency between men and women are sharper than those related to habitat (compare graphs 4.3 and 4.4). Men generate less dependency, especially urban men, while the situation of dependency of rural and urban women is almost identical.

We can evaluate the current situation regarding dependency. To do this we have made a projection of disabilities, based on the method of the standard rate/standard rate method of disabilities, of the current structure of the rural population. Note that in using the standard rate the prevalence of disabilities

(9) The EDDDES-1999 survey defines difficulties taking care of oneself as problems doing the following activities: cleaning oneself alone, using the toilet alone, dressing, eating and drinking.

(10) The data from EDDDES are from 1999. There is now a new survey, Survey of Disabilities, Personal Autonomy and situations of Dependency (EDAD), carried out in 2008, but the microdata will not be available until the end of 2009.

(11) For the data from 2006, we used data from the Encuesta de Condiciones de Vida de los Mayores [Survey on the Living Conditions of Seniors] of the IMSERSO, aimed at individuals over 65 years of age. The field work was carried out by the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas [Centre for Sociological Research] (CIS) (Study 2.647). The comparison of this data with that from the EDDDES is interesting given differences in methodology and definitions between the two sources. For example, it is not possible to compare the data on difficulties in mobility as they use very different definitions.

(12) If we take into account that the number of years lived by the elderly has increased between the two periods, the maintenance of the prevalence suggests different explanations: on the one hand, a corresponding improvement in the detection and prevention of certain ailments and, on the other hand, perhaps, the increase in institutions for persons with this type of disability.

TABLE 4.3

Population 70 years of age or older with problems «taking care of oneself»

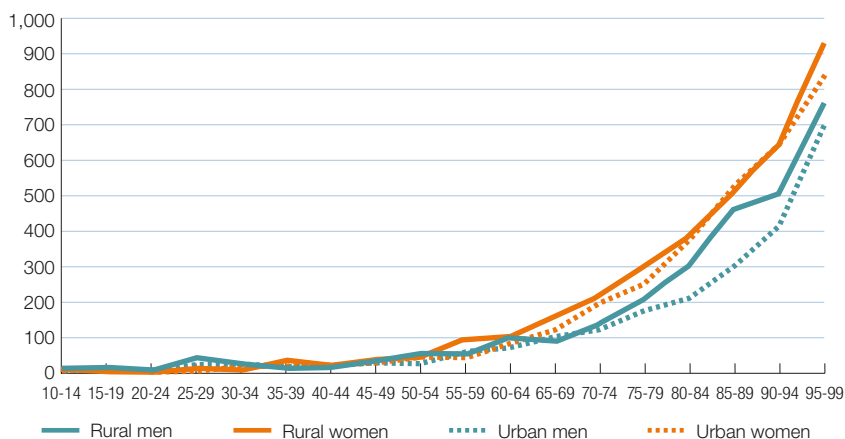
	2006	1999
Rural men	8.3	9.2
Urban men	6.6	7.5
Rural women	12.1	12.9
Urban women	12.0	12.6

Sources: EDDDES 1999, CIS Study 2.647 (2006). Author elaboration.

GRAPH 4.4

Estimate of the dependent population for 2007

(Rates per 1,000)



Sources: Estimate from the municipal register for 2007, EDDDES 1999. Author elaboration.

contemplated is considered invariable over time.⁽¹³⁾ In total, the estimation shows that there are around 780,000 rural inhabitants over 10 years of age that form a dependent population, either having difficulties in getting out of the home, or unable to take care of themselves, or both (table 4.4).

(13) In the previous analysis of the evolution between 1999 and 2006 no clear indications were found of significant variations in the highest age groups.

TABLE 4.4

Estimate of the dependent population in rural areas for 2007

	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
10-14	3,241	2,272	5,513
15-19	4,053	1,336	5,389
20-24	2,963	1,546	4,510
25-29	17,388	4,745	22,133
30-34	10,807	4,664	15,471
35-39	5,635	11,913	17,548
40-44	7,443	8,708	16,151
45-49	15,473	11,911	27,384
50-54	17,322	12,206	29,528
55-59	15,898	24,564	40,462
60-64	26,044	27,037	53,081
65-69	19,859	36,978	56,837
70-74	36,322	63,411	99,733
75-79	45,094	77,905	122,999
80-84	43,793	77,404	121,196
85+	44,644	100,612	145,255
	315,978	467,212	783,189

Note: Population that cannot care for itself or cannot leave the home.

Sources: Estimate from the municipal register for 2007, EDDES 1999. Author elaboration.

4.3. The weight of dependency on the support generation

The data, although it must be taken with certain caution, permits us to observe the impact of aging on the formation of the dependent population and obtain a picture of its size so that we can analyse the effort made by the support generation in providing assistance to the dependent population. In concrete, in rural areas we find that there are 783,000 dependent persons over 10 years of age for a support generation of 2,972,000 persons (non-dependent persons between 30 and 49 years of age). This results in a dependency index of 0.264, which means that there is approximately one dependent person for every 3.8 persons between the ages of 30 and 49.

It is important to note that dependency, although concentrated among the older population, also affects young people (graph 4.5). A close look at the

TABLE 4.5

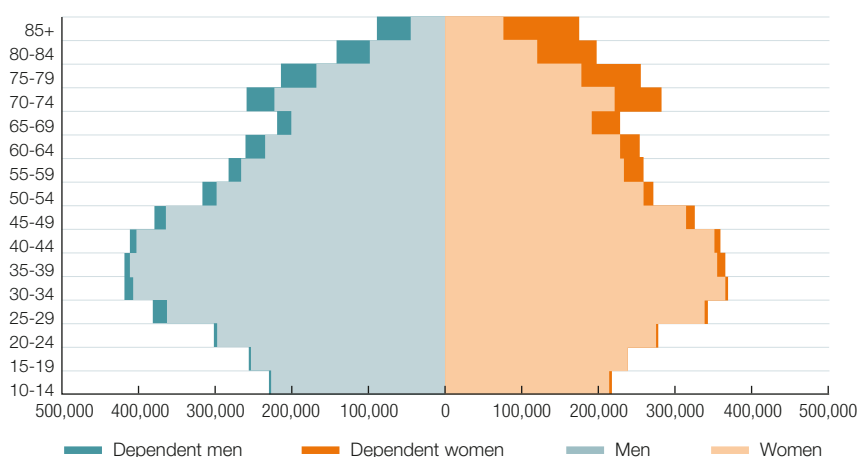
Percentage with disabilities in the support generation in rural areas

	EPR-2008	EDDES
Men	3.9%	4.0%
Women	3.8%	4.2%
Total	3.9%	4.1%

Sources: the EDDES data comes from the application of the 1999 rates to the population structure of 2007. Author elaboration.

GRAPH 4.5

Impact of the dependent population on rural demographic structure



Sources: Estimate from the municipal register for 2007, EDDES 1999. Author elaboration.

dependent population reveals the significance that some disabilities have among young people, particularly men from 25 to 34 years of age⁽¹⁴⁾ (table 4.4). In the support generation, although dependency is lower, the rates⁽¹⁵⁾ are situated around 4 percent (table 4.5). Therefore, the indicators related to the weight that

(14) This is closely associated with traffic accidents. Studies on comparative mortality in rural and urban areas have shown the impact of these types of accidents among young adults in rural areas (Camarero, Gómez and Jiménez, 1999).

(15) Table 4.5 compares the rates obtained in the EPR-2008 survey with those obtained in the EDDES survey. The results from both sources are very similar.

dependency has must be considered as minimums. The real denominators are lower and the real numerators higher.

The relationship between dependency and the support generation is not homogeneous across the country. The centre and interior of the peninsula have a rate of around three persons in the support generation for each dependent person; in contrast, in the northeast the situation is one of much greater pressure on the support generation, with a rate in Galicia of two persons in the support generation for each dependent person. In general, the northern Mediterranean coastal regions have a lower dependency index. In rural areas with a greater degree of connection to urban areas, such as in Madrid and the Basque Country,⁽¹⁶⁾ the situation of dependency is alleviated to a significant extent. The mapping of the weight of dependency on the support generation is a product of different processes previously looked at that have to do with the responses of each region to the strong imbalances produced by rural exodus: significant aging in the northeast; decline of middle generations and significant growth of the support generation in coastal areas; and new processes of territorial organization, as in Madrid and the Basque Country, which produce other patterns of population distribution by age.

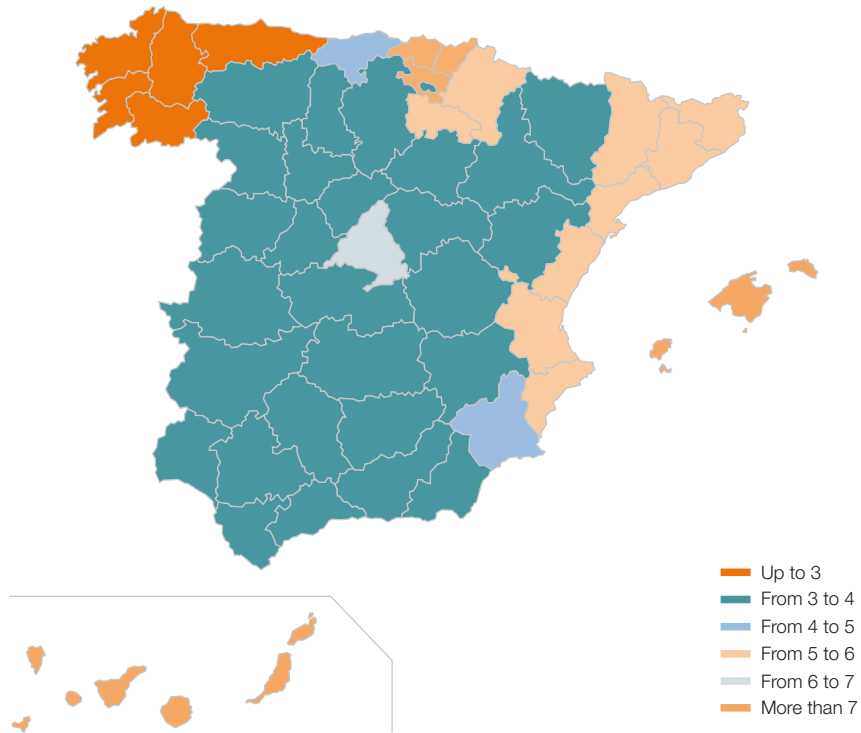
In addition, there are other factors that also have a bearing on regional differences, such as cultural variations in the forms of dependent care, such as family care or institutional care, and differences in regional government healthcare policies related to the detection and prevention of disabilities and care of dependent persons.

Map 4.2 reveals the weight that dependency has on active generations and also indicates the real capacity that these central generations have for addressing distinct development processes in rural areas. For example, Galicia, with one dependent person for approximately two persons in the support generation, is in an extremely limited situation in which the activity of its active population is closely linked to the care of the dependent population. Its possibilities and initiative are strongly conditioned by this situation.

(16) In the case of the Basque Country, if we look at map 4.2, the data are clearly different; there are more than seven supports persons for each dependent person in rural areas. A good part of the explanation for this fact is a result of the lower index of rural aging and the strength of the support population (this explanation is also valid for the situation in Madrid). In the Basque case the term city-region tends to be employed to show the high interconnection which exists between the different centres, both urban as well as rural which form a type of residential settlement of low density, spread out and continuous throughout the region and, as a result of this, rural demographic structures do not substantially differ from urban ones.

MAP 4.2

Number of persons in the support generation for each dependent person in rural areas



Sources: Estimate from the municipal register for 2007, EDES 2009. Author elaboration.

If we add to this picture the generalized situation of masculinisation – there are fewer women in middle generations – and if we take into account that, as we have seen, the role of caretaker attributed by gender means that care of dependent persons falls, in general and with greater intensity, on women, then the corollary is evident. In general, as one would imagine, in areas with a significant weight of dependency the real capacity for rural development is reduced. But not only that. Every daily action that accumulatively makes up the vital trajectory of the support generation, particularly among women, is conditioned by this situation. Thus, both men and women of this generation, to a certain extent, are also participants in this condition of dependency.

V. Family networks of care and assistance for dependent persons

The study of dependency has generally focused on the dependent population itself, their situation and, especially, the causes of their dependency; few studies have focused on those who assist them. But it is specifically the survey we present (EPR-2008) which looks at the impact of dependency on the providers of care, in concrete, on the support generation, placing them in the real context in which they develop their strategies for providing care; in other words, on the reciprocity of networks of family care and family, for both adults and children.

As a result, this chapter centres on the most unknown though daily activity which the support generation carries out: the care of others. In this analysis, special emphasis is placed on how the care of others conditions this generation's employment opportunities and how it impacts on their relationships with neighbours, family and partners.

5.1. The presence of dependent persons

The data show that approximately one of every ten rural inhabitants of the support generation lives in a household with a person that needs habitual care. If we add to this figure cohabitation with children under six years of age, around one third of the support generation has family responsibilities generated by dependent persons in their homes⁽¹⁾ (table 5.1).

(1) In table 5.1, the total, although it includes dependent minors, does not correspond to the sum of both categories, as there are those interviewed that have responsibilities for persons in both categories. The same is true for the two tables which follow (tables 5.2 and 5.3).

TABLE 5.1

Indicators of family responsibilities in the support generation

	LIVE WITH DEPENDENT	LIVE WITH CHILDREN UNDER 6	TOTAL WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES
Men	10.8%	20.4%	29.5%
Women	9.9%	24.8%	32.5%
Total	10.3%	22.4%	30.9%

Source: EPR-2008.

TABLE 5.2

Indicators of family responsibilities and assistance to elderly in the support generation

	LIVE WITH DEPENDENT	WITH CHILDREN UNDER 6	TOOK CARE OF AN ELDERLY PERSON DURING THE PAST WEEK	TOTAL PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO FAMILY MEMBERS
Men	10.8%	20.4%	22.1%	43.9%
Women	9.9%	24.8%	30.8%	53.3%
Total	10.3%	22.4%	26.2%	48.3%

Source: EPR-2008.

This proportion of responsibilities increases significantly if we add the weight of seniors or the elderly (table 5.2). Although not dependent, the elderly demand attention and help which increases the weight on the support generation. And the aging of the rural population increases the population in need of care. One fourth of those interviewed said that in the past week they had to carry out some task caring for an elderly relation. If we add up attention given to dependents, care of children and aid given to relations, one half of the support generation has such family responsibilities.

However, the attention given to dependent persons goes beyond the home and the chain of care is considerably widened in the local sphere. Close to one half of those interviewed said that they aid in the care of first-degree relatives (parents or siblings) that do not reside in their homes (table 5.3). These figures regarding such extensive family aid have to be interpreted in the context of the nature of family relations. It is important to keep in mind that aid to other persons is set within reciprocal networks and that the aid that is given varies depending on different social groups. There is no exact

TABLE 5.3

Family assistance in relation to household in the support generation

	LIVE WITH DEPENDENT	AID IN THE CARE OF FAMILY MEMBERS THAT DO NOT RESIDE IN THE HOME	TOTAL ASSISTANCE TO FAMILY MEMBERS (LIVE WITH OR AID)
Men	10.8%	47.0%	51.0%
Women	9.9%	50.8%	55.1%
Total	10.3%	48.8%	52.9%

Source: EPR-2008.

correspondence between the supply and demand for aid and the situation of dependent persons. In fact, we could say that we are all to some degree dependent and at the same time care givers, as, in general, we all receive some type of aid and also aid others every day. In practice, aid is given as much to family members that are not dependent as to those that are, within a logic of exchange based on improving the quality of life of the whole family. The reflection that follows is from the perspective of those providing care and support without differentiating the strict dependency of the recipients of aid, as this distinction is very vague for those who help.

This study does not try to calculate the effort that is dedicated to the care of others, rather, it only seeks to analyse how and in what form the different care-giving activities condition daily life. Toward this aim, two different indicators were used to observe differences established between different social groups. One indicator examined the presence of dependent persons in the home, under the assumption that cohabitation involved care-giving tasks on the part of the individual interviewed. To get a more precise picture with this indicator of the dependent population, attention to young children (under six years of age), analysed in a separate section at the end of this chapter, was excluded. In other words, here we will be referring to that population which under normal circumstances is unable to act with autonomy in the broadest sense of the term. The other indicator is composed of the total of dependent persons who were residing in the home plus direct family members of older or collateral generations that were not residing in the home but to whom aid was being given. This indicator broadly expresses the perception of those interviewed regarding the tasks they carry out to aid family members. A perception which,

although subjective, has direct consequences on the support population to the extent that, as will be seen, it conditions their daily lives.

In a preliminary analysis, assistance given by men or women to family members is not different (table 5.3). Among both sexes, around one half state that they aid their parents or other relations of prior generations or siblings. The little difference observed by sex could be somewhat surprising because the assumption is care-giving tasks fall more intensely on women than men. However, what this table reflects is the perception of involvement that men and women have. Both express it with a similar intensity. The actual degree of involvement of each in care-giving and how it affects their daily lives is another issue.

In this sense, the first question to be asked is if there exist differences in the work and professional lives of men and women related to the close presence of dependent persons. Looked at in this way, the data reveal important differences; women who live with dependents reduce their economic activity significantly, while men are completely unaffected (table 5.4).

If we look at the relationship between the different forms of economic activity and family care we see that in the case of men there is no relationship. The values (table 5.5) for the proportion of men who live with or aid family members in need of care in function of their relationship with economic activity are very similar to the overall average (47 percent). In the case of women there are, however, various categories whose values diverge significantly from the average. The percentages are lower among wage-earners and higher among the economically inactive, but even higher for women who work in family

TABLE 5.4

Economically active among the support generation and the presence of dependents in the household

	MEN		WOMEN	
	WITHOUT DEPENDENTS	WITH DEPENDENTS	WITHOUT DEPENDENTS	WITH DEPENDENTS
Inactive	2.5%	2.3%	19.1%	30.8%
Active	97.6%	97.7%	80.8%	69.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: EPR-2008.

TABLE 5.5

Percentage of the support generation that lives with or aids family members in relation to employment activity

	MEN	WOMEN
Inactive	45.7%	58.3%
Permanently employed	51.4%	52.5%
Temporarily employed	51.9%	53.5%
Self-employed	48.6%	56.4%
Employed in family business	51.4%	64.8%
Farmer	50.4%	55.2%
Unemployed	53.8%	53.6%
Total	51.0%	55.1%

Source: EPR-2008.

businesses and particularly in agriculture, as these are often of a family character. In other words, in economic activity most connected to the rural sphere, assistance to and responsibility for family members is presumably greater. This leads us to conclude that the presence of dependents in the family is associated, in the case of women, with specific economic activities, while this is not the case with men. The existence of dependent persons predisposes women to seek employment activity located in the local sphere.

What this shows is that although the presence of dependents is common in the daily lives of both men and women, the attention given to them is not equally shared and, above all, has different consequences for their professional and employment trajectories.

As indicated at the beginning of this section, the interpretations that the subjects themselves give to their actions related to care of family vary and the differences over how they are understood also vary. If we analyse the types of assistance given we see that their implication in daily activities are very different, leading in practice to situations of inequality in the distribution of responsibilities among members of the support generation (table 5.6).

Domestic tasks, which are mentioned by one third of the support generation population, and assistance with mobility (transport), by one fourth, are the most frequently mentioned forms of assistance provided to family members. We can see significant differences by gender; although it seems as if both

TABLE 5.6

Type of assistance provided by the members of the support generation that aid family members

	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
Care of children	14.7%	25.0%	19.8%
Care of elderly persons	6.9%	15.0%	10.9%
Aid in the case of illness	8.0%	9.8%	8.9%
Assistance with work	7.7%	4.0%	5.9%
Aid with domestic tasks	35.6%	34.1%	34.9%
Economic assistance	3.3%	2.0%	2.7%
Transportation	26.6%	23.8%	25.2%
Moral support / companionship	15.5%	11.9%	13.7%
Aid with everything, what is needed	2.6%	2.4%	2.5%
Other activities	2.6%	2.3%	2.4%

Note: A person can provide more than one type of assistance, therefore the percentages do not add up to 100.
Source: EPR-2008.

men and women provide assistance in domestic tasks, it must be taken into account that the content of said assistance is very distinct. While women in their answers have emphasized activities related to the general care of the home (cleaning, cooking, ironing...), men's answers have focused to a greater degree on very concrete activities (repairs, renovations, particular purchases). It is the women that stress activities which involve daily care and assistance to the elderly (for example, hygiene and constant attention), while men are in charge of assistance related to mobility. It is evident that although assistance to dependent persons involves both men and women, there is a clear gender difference in relation to the tasks assumed. And it is here where the principal differences in opportunities for men and women are produced.

The differences do not come from asymmetric situations of care or because care given to dependents is feminine and not masculine. The importance of aid is high both for men and women. The difference is produced in the type of aid that is given; of a more permanent and continual character in the case of women, and a more irregular character in the case of men. This permits men a more flexible management of the time dedicated to providing assistance and, therefore, of their time in general and their employment activity; while

women assume care-giving activities that involve greater limitations on the use of their time.

Going deeper in our analysis to see if there are differences between men and women in the forms of domestic cohabitation in function of the presence of dependent family members in the household, we see that, effectively, dependency also conditions family strategies.

For men in homes in which there are no dependents, the family model of a couple with children above six years of age reaches a high proportion; it could almost be considered the dominant family form (table 5.7). However, when there are dependent family members, almost 40 percent of men are single and living with their parents. Women in this situation are more likely to be in extended families; in other words, living with a partner and children along with dependent family members. We again find differences by gender. Women integrate the dependent persons into the family context. This is related to the earlier observation: a greater percentage of women are economically inactive and also more integrated in family type activities. In the case of men the situation is somewhat different. The extended family is also important but,

TABLE 5.7

Household composition of the support generation by sex and presence of dependents

	MEN		WOMEN	
	WITHOUT DEPENDENTS	WITH DEPENDENTS	WITHOUT DEPENDENTS	WITH DEPENDENTS
Living alone	7.1%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%
Living in a couple without children	10.4%	2.9%	8.8%	7.4%
Living in a couple with children over 6	33.4%	20.4%	45.5%	28.9%
Living in a couple with a child under 6	19.3%	14.2%	22.6%	13.4%
Single parent family	2.6%	1.9%	4.7%	1.7%
Single with older family members	19.7%	38.9%	6.8%	13.1%
Extended	5.2%	20.3%	7.5%	34.1%
Other type of family	2.4%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%
Total	100.1%	100.1%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: EPR-2008.

for them, the characteristic family form is living with parents without forming their own families.

This fact permits us to introduce new elements into the debate over rural masculinisation. Single men in rural areas now appear as a crucial support in the maintenance of the rural population. To some extent the employment trajectories of men are not affected by the care of dependents, as we have seen, but their family relations are, as their opportunities of forming their own families decline.

5.2. Networks of assistance

The analytical distinction between dependent persons and care-givers is formally correct. There are persons that need care and others, almost always family members that offer the necessary assistance. However, in practice, in many cases the dependent population is only dependent in certain very concrete circumstances and areas of daily life. Family assistance establishes multiple relationships which include assistance to dependent family members, but at the same time said relationships go beyond relations of mere assistance to form networks of family solidarity. Not only is aid provided to dependent family members but aid is also received from them. Who offers aid also inserts their actions within a complex framework of reciprocity. It is precisely through this reciprocal exchange of aid that strategies for the care of the dependent population are established. The results of the survey are very clear in this sense, revealing an enormous exchange of domestic activities and assistance among different family members, with situations of exchange more numerous than asymmetrical situations: those in which assistance is only given or received. This network of aid is traced in table 5.8.

As can be seen, participation in the network of exchange, either receiving or offering aid, is high. A little more than one third of the support generation provides and receives aid simultaneously in their relationships with older generations in their families or with collateral relations. 30 percent are outside of relations of exchange of family aid. Obviously, the overall balance for the support generation is positive as they offer more aid than they receive. Who participates the least in this network of assistance are principally new residents (those that have arrived in the last five years) and those who live alone or in a

TABLE 5.8

Balance of the family networks of assistance in the support generation

		NEITHER RECIEVE NOR PROVIDE	ONLY PROVIDE	ONLY RECEIVE	PROVIDE AND RECEIVE	TOTAL (N)	BALANCE PROVIDE - RECEIVE
Total		30.7%	23.5%	9.3%	36.5%	(1,795)	14.2%
Sex	Men	33.4%	25.5%	8.0%	33.1%	(795)	17.5%
	Women	27.7%	21.2%	10.7%	40.4%	(1,000)	10.5%
New resident: Time living in municipality	Less than 5 years	48.6%	14.2%	11.0%	26.2%	(138)	3.2%
	From 5 to 10 years	32.7%	25.0%	8.4%	34.0%	(164)	16.6%
	More than 10 years	29.2%	25.7%	7.5%	37.6%	(421)	18.2%
	Whole lifetime	28.0%	23.9%	9.9%	38.2%	(1,062)	14.0%
Family composition	Living alone	50.2%	30.1%	6.0%	13.6%	(70)	24.1%
	Living in a couple without children	53.2%	27.5%	3.1%	16.2%	(145)	24.4%
	Living in a couple with children over 6	25.7%	27.5%	9.2%	37.6%	(792)	18.3%
	Living in a couple with a child under 6	17.1%	12.3%	16.1%	54.5%	(320)	-3.8%
	Single parent family	30.8%	29.6%	6.8%	32.7%	(68)	22.8%
	Single living with older family members	40.3%	22.9%	6.6%	30.2%	(215)	16.3%
	Extended family	29.0%	23.3%	9.7%	38.1%	(154)	13.6%

Note: the values for *n* are presented without weighting.
Source: EPR-2008.

couple without children. Such persons have a higher probability of not being in the network, not providing or receiving assistance. Women participate more and they do so within a context of high reciprocity, 40 percent provide assistance and receive it at the same time.

It is the households with children which enter into the networks of assistance with the greatest intensity, although the presence of small children places these families in a different situation in these networks: those with young children receive more assistance than families not raising young children.

However, the balance of families with young children is very close to «zero» because although they demand assistance, they do so from positions of high reciprocity – half of them give and receive aid at the same time. The smallest families – those who live alone or with a partner or single parent households – have the largest overall balances.

The balance regarding activities of assistance again impacts on the efforts that the support generation makes (table 5.9). Its members provide more aid than they receive. The exception is in the care of small children; in this task the support generation finds itself in the opposite situation: it receives more aid than it provides. In general terms, the attention to dependent persons and to family members is compensated for by the care of family members it also receives. Transport, care of the elderly and domestic tasks constitute the activities where the exchange is most unequal between men and women and this is reflected in the balances (which show us the difference between those that provide aid and those that receive it). The men only clearly exceed women in transport. This indicates that providing mobility is a task assumed by men, which also permits them greater control over the family environment.

TABLE 5.9

Balance of collaboration by type of assistance in the support generation

	MEN			WOMEN		
	RECEIVE	PROVIDE	BALANCE	RECEIVE	PROVIDE	BALANCE
Care of children	58.2%	15.6%	-42.6%	64.6%	25.8%	-38.8%
Care of elderly persons	3.8%	5.8%	2.0%	5.1%	13.5%	8.4%
Aid in the case of illness	5.8%	7.9%	2.1%	5.7%	9.2%	3.5%
Assistance with work	4.5%	6.9%	2.4%	3.5%	3.6%	0.1%
Aid with domestic tasks	22.0%	33.7%	11.7%	15.9%	32.9%	17.0%
Economic assistance	4.6%	3.3%	-1.3%	2.3%	2.2%	-0.1%
Transportation	6.4%	25.8%	19.4%	10.2%	23.5%	13.3%
Moral support / companionship	5.9%	17.7%	11.8%	4.6%	13.6%	9.0%
Aid with everything, what is needed	0.7%	2.3%	1.6%	1.4%	2.8%	1.4%
Other activities	2.9%	3.1%	0.2%	2.4%	2.0%	-0.4%

Source: EPR-2008.

5.3. Care and assistance to minors

The support generation takes care of not only the elderly but also young children. As we have just seen, the importance of care-giving networks in this sphere is fundamental. Another fundamental pillar in the care of children is the existence of day care centres and schools, institutions which are crucial to the dynamic of balancing work and family. In rural areas, the low population density reduces the supply of services, and the dispersion of the population makes access to services more difficult. Even so, the data reveal that the situation is not as negative as would be thought. Three fourths of those interviewed said that there was a day care centre in their municipality (table 5.10). However, this figure is lower in smaller places, and one third of those who reside in municipalities with less than 5,000 inhabitants responded that there were no day care centres in their area. If we look at only the group of potential users, those that have small children, the figures do improve relatively, particularly in the smaller towns and villages.

Nevertheless, there are important regional differences in the provision of educational facilities and day care for young children. Despite the caution with which this data should be considered,⁽²⁾ we can specify with great clarity three very distinct situations. In the northeast of the peninsula (Galicia, Asturias, Catantabria and Castilla and Leon) as well as in the Canary Islands the situation is the worst. The figures on the availability of day care centres do not exceed 60 percent. The opposite situation is found in the Mediterranean coastal communities and Madrid, where this indicator exceeds 80 percent.

TABLE 5.10

Availability of day care centres according to the support generation

CONSIDER THAT DAY CARE CENTRES EXIST TOTAL IN MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE	LESS THAN 5,000 INHAB.	FROM 5,000 TO 10,000 INHAB.	TOTAL
Total interviewed	65.2%	87.8%	74.3%
With children under 6	74.7%	81.8%	77.8%

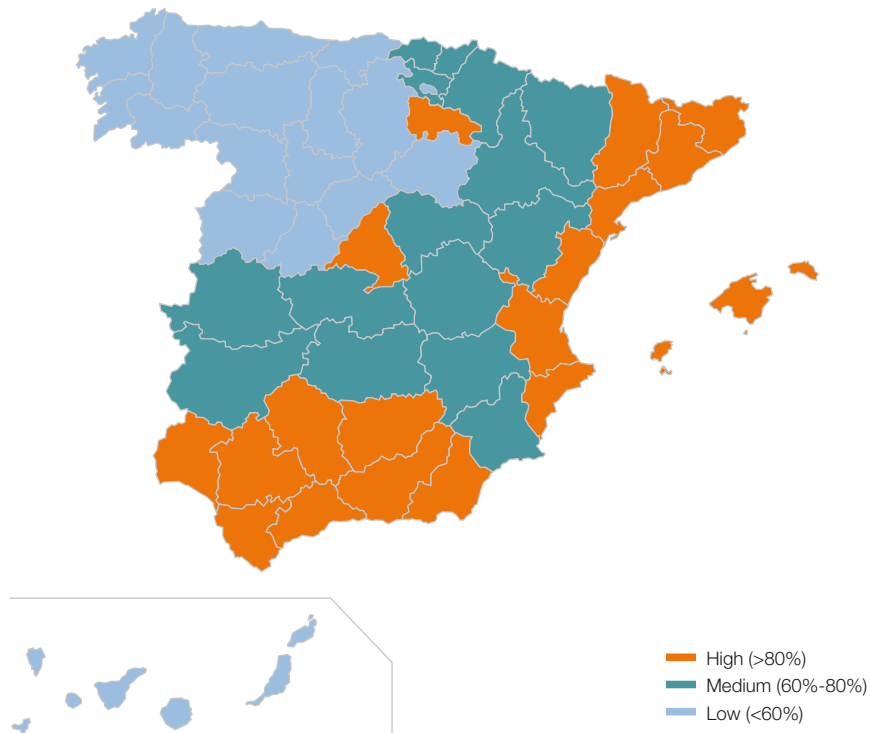
Source: EPR-2008.

(2) The data from map 5.1 are estimated. For some autonomous communities the sample was very small and the statistical error is close to or even above 10 percent (uniprovincial communities of Asturias, Murcia and La Rioja). In addition, the data is based only on the perception of those interviewed.

The map again reflects the opposition between the «liquid rurality» of Mediterranean areas and the disconnected rurality found in the northeast of the country. This reveals up to what point the processes of social reproduction are implicated in rural development; in other words, the centrality that the most everyday, routine and domestic aspects have as instruments which impact on development and socioeconomic dynamics. It is clear that the shortage of services is the reason why the care of young children takes place more often within families and this impacts on the possibility of balancing work with family responsibilities. When the ways of balancing work and

MAP 5.1

Availability of day care centres in rural areas based on the perception of the support generation



Source: EPR-2008.

family life and the distribution of domestic tasks are less flexible, these condition opportunities for development.

Evidently, the existence of day care services is a necessary but not sufficient condition. That such services exist does not mean that they are used or that access to them is simple. When those interviewed who have small children were asked about the care of their children only one fourth said they resort to day care centres (table 5.11). Approximately 22 percent do use day care centres as their only resource and 4 percent combine the day care centre with other systems of care. In fact, what is surprising is that use is not related to supply. Thus, although the figures for use of day care facilities is higher in the larger municipalities, the differences are minimal, particularly if we take into account that the supply is much greater there.

The key is in the importance that hiring individuals to care of the children has. Around one fourth of families turn to hiring someone, a figure that is even higher in larger municipalities. In smaller municipalities the difficulties in hiring someone probably increases the weight of networks of family care. If we look with greater detail at the relationship between supply of and demand for day care, what we conclude is that the absence of day care centres does not result in an increase in the number of persons hired to care for children, but rather, results in an increase in the care of young children within the family (table 5.12).

TABLE 5.11

Forms of care of children under 6 of the support generation

	MUNICIPALITIES UNDER 5,000 INHAB.	MUNICIPALITIES OF 5,000 TO 10,000 INHAB.	TOTAL
Only the family	48.6%	41.6%	45.6%
Day care centre	21.2%	24.2%	22.5%
Family member outside of the household	7.2%	4.8%	6.2%
Hired babysitter	18.9%	25.3%	21.6%
Mixed	4.1%	4.2%	4.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: EPR-2008.

TABLE 5.12

Forms of care of children under 6 of the support generation in function of the existence of day care centres nearby

	EXIST DAY CARE CENTRES	DO NOT EXIST DAY CARE CENTRES
Only the family	41.2%	60.7%
Day care centre	26.4%	8.9%
Family member outside of the household	6.8%	4.4%
Hired babysitter	21.3%	23.4%
Mixed	4.3%	2.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Source: EPR-2008.

In any case, the majority of families with young children do not have any resources outside of the home that assist them in providing care to their children. It is not necessary to show, as it is well known, that the care of young children tends to correspond to and fall most frequently on women. What is of greater interest is to see up to what point day care centres play an important role in the care of young children in function of the economic activity of the parents (see table 5.13).⁽³⁾

The relationship is simple: when both are active they rely in greater measure on institutions or individuals for the care of their young children, and this reduces the amount of care provided within the family. But what is most striking in this relationship is that the use of day care facilities is relatively independent⁽⁴⁾ of the working situation of the couple. When the woman works, the differences appear in the hiring of individuals to take care of the children. This means that the economic activity of the woman depends a lot on the possibility of hiring someone to take care of the children.

Curiously enough, the use of day care centres, despite their being an important instrument in the care of young children, is not related to the employment

(3) The cases in which both members of the couple are inactive and in which the woman is active and the man is inactive are omitted. Their low number does not permit a statistically significant analysis to be carried out.

(4) All the differences in percentages in the table are significant to confidence levels of 99.7 percent with the exception of the category for day care centres which does not reach a confidence level of 95 percent.

TABLE 5.13

Relationship between employment among couples and forms of care of young children in the support generation

	BOTH ECON. ACTIVE	HE ACTIVE/SHE INACTIVE
Only the family	34.5%	70.4%
Day care centre	24.0%	19.4%
Other family	8.5%	0.9%
Hired babysitter	27.1%	9.3%
Mixed	5.8%	0.0%
Total	100%	100%
(n)	(258)	(108)

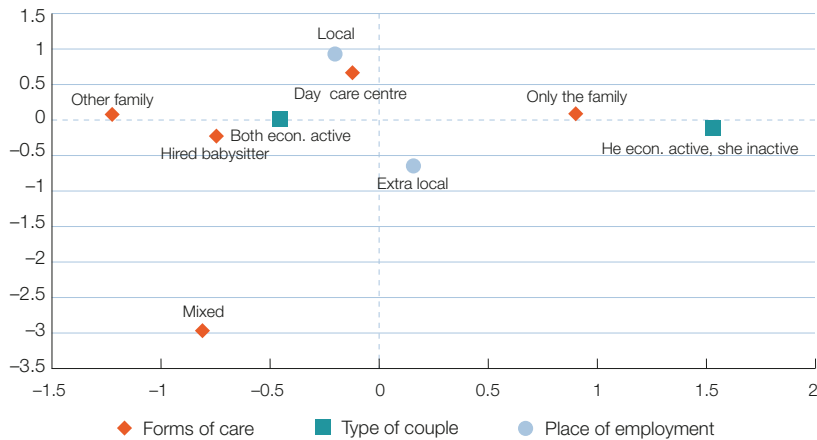
Source: EPR-2008.

situation of women who are part of a couple. If we look for the cause of this we can point to a single explanation: the complex relationship that rural inhabitants, particularly women, have with their place of residency and place of work, resulting from the high cost of commuting. Mobility demands lengthening the work day to include the time of commuting and also necessitates greater time flexibility. Without a doubt, in such circumstances educational institutions cannot adequately meet parent's time demands and couples must look for individual solutions, which involves the hiring of individuals, in addition to the use of family networks.

When the place of work is introduced in the relationship that exists between the economic activity of the couple and the strategies followed in the care of the children, the results bear out the previous supposition (graph 5.1). Multiple correspondence analysis shows that couples in which both members work are associated with the use of hired babysitters, the use of family members from outside the household and mixed strategies in the care of the children. Women who are economically inactive are associated only with provision of childcare by the family. Within this first dimension of analysis, day care centres are situated in the centre and are not clearly associated with any particular structure of economic activity of the couple. The second dimension shows that, when the place of work is local, day care centres are important; in contrast, if the place of work is outside of the municipality (extralocal), the hiring of individuals to provide day care and particularly mixed forms of care

GRAPH 5.1

Relationship of between employment among couples, commuting and forms of care of young children



Note: $\lambda_1=43.4\%$, $\lambda_2=38.5\%$, total: 81.9%.
Source: EPR-2008.

acquire importance. This suggests that day care facilities are an important resource but only useful when there is no work-related commuting.

When we look closely at the group of women that are economically active, mobility impacts fundamentally on the use of combined strategies for the care of the children and in the reduction of care provided only within the family (table 5.14). In the case of men, mobility increases the recourse to hiring individuals to provide care and is associated with a greater proportion of the forms of exclusively family based care. This is probably because situations of mobility among men are related to an increase in the inactivity of their partners (table 5.15).

In short, the different analyses show that day care facilities are a useful resource when there is no commuting. The mobility of both men and women involves the search for alternatives for the care of the children, beyond the day care available. In this sense, it is useful to keep in mind the paradoxical situation which exists; areas with less employment related commuting also have a lower supply of educational resources. And areas where commuting is higher

TABLE 5.14

Impact of mobility among the economically active on the forms of care of young children in the support generation

	WOMEN		MEN	
	LOCAL	EXTRALOCAL	LOCAL	EXTRALOCAL
Only the family	34.3%	21.3%	44.5%	50.0%
Day care centre	24.4%	21.7%	31.9%	18.9%
Other family member	11.1%	14.7%	4.4%	3.4%
Hired babysitter	30.1%	29.7%	17.0%	23.1%
Mixed	0.0%	12.6%	2.3%	4.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: EPR-2008.

TABLE 5.15

Employment activity of women in function of the place of employment of their partners in the support generation

Couples with children under 6

	LOCAL	EXTRALOCAL
She econ. active	76,8%	65,8%
She econ. inactive	23,2%	34,2%
	100%	100%

Source: EPR-2008.

have a greater supply. In both cases, the supply is inadequate; where there is more, because it does not cover the needs which derive from commuting, and where there is less, because the supply is insufficient. The mobility of women, principal path of access to more skilled employment, involves an extra effort. The mobility of men involves women dedicating more time to the care of the children and, therefore, a decline in their employment opportunities.

Finally, mobility is revealed as a factor which modifies the strategies and the life opportunities of individuals and couples, and, therefore, becomes one of the principal factors to be considered in practices to balance work and family. Without forgetting that it also affects and conditions the lives of men and women differently because of the distinct social allocation of productive and reproductive roles.

VI. Persistence of gender inequalities⁽¹⁾

The transformations that rural life has undergone in recent decades are particularly reflected in the diversity of life styles among women in the rural world. This chapter intends to show that diversity and its impact on living conditions and the daily organization of life among the individuals that make up what we have been calling the «support generation». To do this, we have used a new qualitative methodology that aids in revealing the representations, experiences and feelings of rural women.

With this aim, a total of thirteen in-depth interviews have been carried out and analysed. The reader will find in the final appendix of this book the detailed description of the profiles of those interviewed: women pertaining to different sociodemographic landscapes, that participate in diverse economic activities and that belong to or are close to the support generation. Through these interviews we intend to look at how gender relations are changing with the introduction of values linked to new functions for rural areas and in a context in which women are acquiring greater prominence; and in what ways the new roles women have in rural areas are facilitating a process of change in public, private, productive and reproductive spheres. The results of this research and of previous studies (Cruz, 2006; Díaz Méndez and Dávila Díaz, 2006; Camarero *et al.*, 2006; Sampedro, 2008) indicate the need to continue investigating the persistence of gender inequalities, the mechanisms of their perpetuation and their possible impact on processes of emigration to the cities.

(1) The authors are grateful to Elena García Gómez for her valuable contribution to the analysis in this chapter.

We begin the analysis exploring the discourses of the women regarding the reproductive sphere: balancing work and home, the division of domestic tasks and the care of dependent family members (children and the elderly). All this from different perspectives beginning with the social and employment position of the women. Following, we look at issues related to social control, based on the reproduction and legitimacy of traditional gender roles and resistance to change, and how this conditions the lives of the inhabitants of rural areas. Finally, we address the issue of employment and the participation of rural women in public space to understand the persistence of gender inequalities and discrimination, as well as the contribution that the adoption of new roles by women have had on improving living conditions, and to what extent they are becoming the protagonists in certain emerging economic sectors and how they are experiencing these changes.

6.1. The division of domestic tasks and care in rural areas

We can see from the discourse of the women and in the data analysed on the balancing of family and work, that there is unequal dedication to domestic tasks and the care of others between men and women. This unequal work results in a «double work day» for women. To understand the fragility of rural areas it is fundamental to look at the gender structures which are the basis of the organisation of daily life. First, for the centrality that the forms of family organisation have on subsistence and productive activity, both in agriculture and in other productive sectors, and which present clear gender inequalities and, in addition, have an impact on the different models and proposals for rural development. And secondly, for the transcendence that the problems of depopulation and masculinisation have in rural zones, the origins of which have to be looked for not only in differences in employment opportunities based on gender, but also in the subordination of said opportunities to activities in the domestic or family sphere, leading to the exodus of young women.

The analysis in this study verifies that the «double working day» is a daily reality for many women. The unequal division of work in the home and care for dependent persons results in an unavoidable obligation for women that implies an overload of tasks and responsibilities added to the hours of work

outside the home. In short, women join the labour market without men taking on an equal share of the responsibilities for the care of the home.

–No, no, he doesn't help out much. Over time, little by little, you see he does something, but the minimum. And here I think they do less, that men do less than in the cities, I'm sure.

(18)

The women say that domestic tasks, caring for the home and the family, have been and continue being feminine responsibilities. Gender stereotypes continue being used to legitimate an unequal division of productive and reproductive tasks, in such a manner that these stereotypes represent a burden for women trying to take on different social roles, while the majority of men do not seem to be open to increasing their role in the home.

–I am the one that organises my job around the needs of the family. I think that this is good for him; if he can dedicate so many hours to his job it's because he knows I am taking care of the house, of the children...

(112)

There exists an increasingly clear perception of the different socialisation of men and women, but the «naturalness» of the unequal division of tasks by gender persists. Women have been educated to carry out the role of taking care of the household, while men are educated to participate in the labour market and social sphere, but also to look down upon domestic tasks and the care of children. The women interviewed reveal the socialisation of women into feminine roles, tied to domestic labour and the limitations that have been imposed on their educations. Many, principally those most enterprising, say that the situation has not changed as much as may appear. Men continue without taking responsibility for the home, and women continue being overloaded with double or triple the work.

–I ask him to stay with one of the children because I'm going to put the other one to bed, and when I go downstairs he's complaining: «I've been an hour with her!» Christ! and the other 24 hours, who's with her? Me, and I'm not complaining all day.

(19)

In addition, these women reveal a different socialization related to domestic tasks for boys and girls, and they see the women of the previous generation as responsible for having transmitted this differentiation in the distribution of tasks based on sex that the new generations (sisters, wives or partners) are «obligated» to modify, blaming «the mothers» for not having done so previously.

–My husband, because his parents worked, always had to do things at home, but my brother is incapable of running the washing machine in his house... Because my mother was always at home, she never worked, and of course, the difference is that if your mother worked and your mother is not there to do it for you, you have to do it.

(14)

Conflicts and clear generational differences can be observed in the discourses, depending on age and the relationship with those that they share tasks with, but so can the reproduction of social practices; the new generations adopt the same traditional models of the division of tasks. In the end, younger women continue to accept, not without complaints, domestic labour in greater measure than men. In addition, they continue reproducing the discourse which identifies only paid work as work, not considering reproductive tasks as work.

Another negative effect of the unequal distribution of domestic tasks is that the double work day that women have absorbs their free time to such an extent that, either as a result of taking care of the children or the home, the majority have to give up their leisure time, their education and their participation in the public sphere (in associations, organisations, etc.).

–My husband maintains friendships more than I do... He is more consistent. It's easier for him because I stay at home with the kids.

(19)

Taking care of the children is an obstacle in finding employment and in personal and professional advancement, but only for women, traditionally responsible for child care; even today it being difficult for men to accept equal responsibility. Many of those interviewed, although living in small towns or villages, come from cities or have previously lived in urban environments, and make clear that the social role of urban women is not very different from that lived by women in rural towns and villages. The division of domestic tasks

continues being unequal, and the socialisation of women both in cities and rural areas is grounded in the traditional feminine roles of wife and mother.

The acceptance of inequalities as «natural» in the construction of gender roles must be emphasized. The exclusion of women from productive work is largely invisible but also granted social legitimacy. Consequently, women face economic dependency, not participating in paid work and being dependent on having men in the house (fathers, brothers, husband, partner). In such circumstances paid work is often seen as unnecessary, a «choice», and sometimes even as a «whim».

–My work is seen as something extra. In reality, it's my husband's job which maintains the family. If I work and earn money or not, has nothing to do with the day to day of our home. When I work and I have money I use it to change something in the house, to buy something. But really, we don't count on that money.

(I12)

It must be noted that some women do report some changes in the division of domestic tasks, which is reflected in men beginning to assume certain functions within the domestic sphere. We interviewed one woman (a young entrepreneur) without children, who was the only one that spoke of an equal division of domestic tasks. But her case also serves to illustrate how much motherhood still impacts on gender roles and discrimination; because this working woman, who never considered giving up her work, admitted the possibility of doing so in the case of having children, but did not consider that a man could also do so. Today, the division of domestic responsibilities continues being unequal and the weight of those responsibilities fall on women. The work of men in the domestic sphere appears in the discourse of these women as «help» or even as a favour the man does for the woman, who continues being considered the only one responsible for these tasks.

–He helps me with some things. But you almost have to use the whip: please, you give the older one his bath and I'll bathe the younger one, but he's so lazy, he'd rather lie on the sofa watching television, but in the end he does it...

(I9)

Taking care of the children is the central activity of family reproduction, which in rural areas, given the difficult access to services and the greater needs for

mobility in the labour market, implies a significant effort on the part of the parents, although, as we have seen, it is mostly women who make this effort.

–In the morning I have to be organized to get the three of them out the door. Just to dress them and give them their breakfast is a lot of work... I pull her hair back into a ponytail and I don't brush it. When I'm in the car I look at myself in the mirror and I say, I should go back home! Then I don't manage to leave the workshop. In the afternoon I run errands with the three of them for the house or work... Then I run home with them to make dinner.

(I12)

Because of the very centrality that family responsibilities have in the socialization of women, in many cases they design their future perspectives and plans thinking about the future development of their children and the opportunities that cities offer, in contrast with the limitations they see in rural towns and villages. Women that have family responsibilities, when they make comparisons between the rural and the urban, put an emphasis on the inequality of access to educational and day care services for children. Discourses on the life in rural areas manifest these women's sense of being discriminated against, both in relation to men as well as in comparison to women who live in cities (Cruz, 2006). Among women that work outside the home, these disadvantages are more patent because they directly perceive them as obstacles to the satisfaction of their own desires for professional development. These resourceful women with family responsibilities face the lack of services in rural areas every day and the comparison with those services offered in cities. They also understand the impact this has on their professional development and on reinforcing traditional gender roles.

–When there's no bank, supermarket, school or doctor within 17 kilometres you feel like a third-class citizen. What I envy most is that possibility they have in the city to find someone to take care of the children so that you can work.

(I13)

The issue of balancing home and work and the division of domestic tasks in rural areas includes an added difficulty because of the lack of specialized services of support for providing care and assistance, both to young children and to dependent persons, apart from the long distances and the inevitable need to travel to access services. Having to be responsible for care-giving,

women subordinate professional activities to domestic ones and organize their daily lives around balancing home and work, organizing their priorities and time very differently than their male companions.

–For me it's very easy, as I don't work for any other businesses I don't have to leave the town. Also, I manage my work and, if I have to be with the children because they are ill I can organise my schedule. Because of this I won't consider working for anyone now, although you have more stability with a permanent contract, this way I have more freedom.

(I12)

Some women, principally those that work outside the home, precisely because they take on different roles, one inside the family and one in the workplace, perceive more the pressure of local society to perpetuate the models of traditional men and women that are culturally connected to the mandates of gender.

–For women it's still how it was for our grandmothers. You can't work with tranquillity because it ends up you have your parents or you have your husband's parents or you have children... It's very difficult to say «get lost!» because you are already stuck and then the guilt and that we live in rural areas where what everybody will say is important.

(I1)

As has been seen with young children, the same thing happens with assistance to other dependent persons: assistance is provided in distinct ways by men and women and the consequences for their employment trajectories are also distinct. The presence of dependent persons conditions the lives of women, but it does not appear to constitute a significant determinant in the lives of men.

On the roles of women in rural families, one of the women interviewed commented on a concrete experience she had after participating in a course in her town to train persons to provide in-home care.

–They organized a course «providing in-home care» and a lot of people were amazed when they began the internships, because having someone, who isn't the daughter or granddaughter, going into a house to take care of an elderly person is frowned upon.

(I13)

This service, which principally employs women, while being consistent with culturally reproduced gender stereotypes, is often rejected because it is the women from the family itself that are obligated to exercise this role. That a woman that is not part of the family undertakes this role professionally is, to a certain extent, rejected, and is only accepted when there is no woman among close family that can do it.

The discourse of the women interviewed illustrates the persistence and force that traditional mandates regarding gender (Lagarde, 1996) have in defining the division of labour between men and women, and in guiding the expectations that women have regarding gender roles (Bem, 1981 and 1993). This type of reasoning – which many women express, including those that seem to most resist submitting to the mandates of gender – identifies mechanisms of social control that are present in social relations and practices, that are used with the aim of guaranteeing the reproduction of the traditional and unequal division of tasks and responsibilities in the domestic sphere, principally in care-giving tasks. But these mechanisms of social control are considered intrinsic to the rural condition, while they continue being invisible in their condition as patriarchal mechanisms for maintaining the subordination of women.

–A large city is better because you live more freely, here we all know each other, there are so many stories: Mary has left her husband and is with someone else; that one is a widow but is now with someone. This is the gossip of little towns. In a city they know you in your neighbourhood, but outside of the neighbourhood you are anonymous.

(17)

We can see that the social pressure on women is perceived as a problem specific to life in small towns and villages, something intrinsic to their nature and less a question of gender. That men have more freedom and women are subject to social control is perceived as something «normal», something that forms parts of the nature of the towns and villages, and not as a result of socially constructed strategies of domination of women. And within this logic «of the towns», women have largely chosen between two options: conform to traditional patterns regarding gender or leave for the city.

6.2. Inequalities in the productive sphere and participation in public space

Paid work is at this time key to the construction of equity between women and men, and women are giving it increasing importance. Although autonomy is a complex process in which other dimensions of daily life intervene (Cruz *et al.*, 2006), paid work guarantees a significant degree of economic independence, and that is how women perceive it: «They feel like protagonists, [...] who through their actions are overcoming male resistance and transforming their position in society [...] When one looks for a trigger in this tangible historical progression, the unanimity is practically complete: paid work» (Tobio, 2005).

–Economic Independence is vital and it still hasn't been achieved. Here a woman gets married and ends up taking care of the children, and leaves the labour market, she doesn't return because there aren't the means to do so in the rural world, she's stuck.

(11)

We see the importance that women give to integration in the labour market and to economic independence as indispensable factors in achieving personal autonomy. However, women also emphasize difficulties and inequalities which derive from gender conditions in the work sphere. The analysis done by Harding (1996) on the social structure of gender shows that productive activity follows an organisational structure which is anchored in symbols of gender and which determines an unequal division of work, visible and invisible, in function of attributes based on gender. This reality appears clearly in the discourses of the women interviewed when they explain their daily social functions, which are based on the distribution of tasks rooted in gender asymmetry. In addition, it is reflected in resistance to change toward more egalitarian relations. Men have always used public spaces, for material and symbolic production, controlling social recognition through activities considered to be specific to the male gender. And women have been allocated, and they have accepted, tasks which refer to the private, to the home and to the care of others, activities marked by their invisibility and lacking not only social but also economic recognition.

«Despite the importance of the domestic sphere, without which the public sphere would not be possible, domestic tasks are not socially valued. There is no symmetry of power and recognition between the two spheres. In industrial

societies only paid work is recognized as work. Paid work provides authority, autonomy and social recognition to those who do it.» (Carranza and Puleo, 2002).

Gender structures are particularly rooted in agricultural work, with agricultural business still being masculine. In farming families, many women, including those that are legally the owners of the farm, have difficulties in taking on that role as it has been appropriated by the men of the family.

–I made myself the owner of our operations because my husband had a good job outside, and well-paid, but in practice they (my husband and the employee) run the operation. The first time it occurred to me to wear coveralls in the warehouse they were amazed. And I prefer this to be taking care of the children all day, but then you give in and you lose ground.

(I13)

The weight of gender expectations often impedes the professional development of women, above all, when they pursue professional roles and do not take on farming work or the family business or only as an addition to their invisible domestic labour (Cruz, 2006). Gender stereotypes legitimate the reproduction of gender roles through characteristics that are considered to be intrinsically feminine or masculine. Men are considered more productive managing tractors, and women are better at taking care of the children, with a clear division of labour which follows traditional gender structures.

We can see that young women still accept this sexual division of labour; they believe that their principal responsibilities are related to motherhood and domestic tasks, subordinating their professional activities to these.

–My sister-in-law was breastfeeding her baby here and I was breastfeeding mine while we were cleaning the guest house, they'd take a nap in one of the bedrooms, in other words, it hasn't been easy. The worst is in the summer, there's no school and a lot more work, you sign them up for courses, you bring them to work and you are constantly tense.

(I6)

In the imaginary of women and in the organisation of daily life, husbands have continuity in their routines, and women are the ones that have to adapt to new responsibilities. The material conditions for women's double work

days are constructed, employment is subordinated to domestic demands and professional development is deferred.

–Before my first child, the majority of my time was spent at my job. My husband also. When my son was born we had a lot of fights: If I worked I wasn't with my son. With the twins I knew I was going to work less. But if you work and you are a housewife, you are going to do more than you can.

(I12)

Regarding care of the children and its compatibility with a profession, the responses of the women interviewed reveal much ambivalence and contradictions. The women find satisfaction and pleasure in their responsibilities, although this means more work and requires great effort and organisation:

–I'm a working mother, but, in addition, I dedicate a lot of time to my children because I like it. I try to work more in the morning and the afternoons I dedicate to them, I want to enjoy this period when they are babies without burning out, so I keep working. For almost 12 months I was hardly working and I ended up wanting to work more, because I like my job.

(I12)

Guilt appears as one of the most potent forms of control that women who take on non-traditional roles are subject to, feeling responsible for balancing family and work. When looking for work women already begin with strategies to balance work with family life, while men are exempted from family responsibilities. Women's time acquires a plasticity in daily life, resulting from the self-demand to try to «do it all», with a high personal cost in many cases.

–If you don't have children then the shifts don't matter, you get up at 4 to eat what you can and that's it, but if you have children it's more complicated. In the end you can do it if you are organised, you work in shifts, you take care of the children, but you lose sleep and other things.

(I9)

Women understand that their time has to be flexible and permit them to do all those tasks, both job related and in the home, even feeling guilty for their incapacity to «do it all». These women have internalized the idea that the work of men is more important than the sharing of domestic responsibilities. Some of the women interviewed see that gender discrimination permits men to

maintain privileges and social control through asymmetric relations. It is not only an issue of the reproduction of patterns that are considered to be natural, but also of power in relationships between men and women.

–They are the ones in control, they play soccer and they are good at it, and it's like that since they are small. So 99 percent of the school playground is taken up with male games, and the girls are eating sunflowers in the plaza and waiting for the latest boy to arrive and take them from there.

(I11)

Regarding women's employment in rural zones, a special mention must be made of rural tourism, not only for the importance of the feminisation of this economic activity, but also for the visibility that it has acquired in programmes for rural development. Rural tourism is a productive and socially recognized activity, in which women are aware that they have greater decision-making capacity than in other spheres, surely because of its proximity to domestic tasks and management of the home, both in practical daily activities as well as in women's symbolic space.

–I see myself as much more a promoter of rural tourism than a rancher. It's something that I control, that I can do alone. And run a ranch, no.

(I13)

Women, when they become entrepreneurs, can make decisions, both with respect to their businesses and their families as they feel legitimated by their new functions: the social participation and economic contribution to family income. For women, this is determinant, as there is greater family pressure with the business risks that new initiatives entail. When men begin new business projects, they tend to have the trust and support of the family in assuming new financial risks. However, women face greater distrust regarding their capacity for business, surely for the lack of a business tradition among women and for the lack of social recognition which is part of gender discrimination.

–It's a family business, but we are responsible for everything related to the guest house, and we have our pay, what we make from the guest house for the three of us.

(I16)

Although rural tourism is not a solution for the development of the countryside, it has become an important additional source of income and even an economic alternative for many families, offering the possibility of decent earnings to those that want to continue to live in their rural towns or villages, particularly for women. In addition, with the cultural exchange that takes place, it broadens social relations and the construction of direct ties with cities through urban tourists and provides a high profile to women, who get out from the shadows of domestic tasks restricted to the family sphere, to provide a socially and economically recognized service which pays them.

—I love to meet the people, to talk with them. I'll even say that when they go on Sunday sometime I feel bad, it's the relationship with the people that I like most of all.

(16)

The incorporation of women into the working world is today an unquestionable reality, even in rural areas, as is the fact that gender discrimination continues to exist. Women run into added difficulties because of the issue of gender when competing in the labour market and undertaking entrepreneurial initiatives. The pressure of gender stereotypes in the context of the labour market and the weight of tasks traditionally given to women in the domestic sphere are, today, important obstacles to the full integration of women into the economic and public spheres.

The naturalization of the allocation of domestic responsibilities to women represents a permanent demand on women to give attention to the home, while the tasks connected to the professional sphere are considered secondary and women can only participate in a profession when domestic demands are properly resolved. The situation of rural women is marked by the dual condition of being a woman and being an inhabitant of a territory defined by depopulation and the transformation of productive activities.

Camarero *et al* (2005) describe the rural sociodemographic landscape of the last decade as «dramatic». It is a landscape with an aging population and with an increasingly masculine population of young people which is leading to a panorama of difficult reproduction of the rural population. It is also a landscape which is «hostile» to young women who «by necessity, appear to be “resistant” to a social landscape where everything seems to invite uprooting».

They affirm that «the rural world is today a “desert for women” and that means that the “handicap” of gender relations must be dealt with as a priority and decisively in any policy and initiative for rural development».

Regarding social relations, in rural areas social control to maintain compliance with the mandates of gender stand out. The women interviewed that work outside of the home, in assuming social roles which are outside of the domestic sphere, state that they are more exposed to criticisms and social pressure which seek to keep them within traditional roles. Nevertheless, these women are constructing new models for women, which broaden their expectations in all areas of productive and private life. Many women are breaking traditional stereotypes and increasing the possibilities for social and professional integration. But, at the same time, in the comparative perception of women, urban spaces appear more egalitarian and rural centres more restrictive of women’s freedom and less conducive to gender equality and the full incorporation of women in all spheres of public and productive life. In this sense, women feel there are greater possibilities to change traditional gender roles in urban environments than in rural ones, where social control and the weight of traditions are more rigid.

Rural women are aware of the problematic consequences of the definition of the attributes of gender. And any initiative aimed at promoting social sustainability in rural areas, and particularly programmes for development, must give this issue the crucial importance it has.

VII. New residents and rural immigration

The sustainability of rural areas depends on the demographic and social reproduction of the population. Modernisation has imposed difficulties on this reproduction as a result of the processes of aging and masculinisation, but increasingly clear indicators exist that changes are happening in the social configuration of the country which could be decisive for the future of these areas. In other words, as part of an open and interactive system, structural characteristics, historically produced, will not be the only explanatory factor for the evolution of rural populations. In this sense, the size and importance of migratory flows toward the countryside should be addressed. But not only this, as the social configuration, the personal and social traits and characteristics of new rural residents are also key. This approach requires us to recognize a new social organisation of mobility, which transcends the concept of spatial distance and is explained by new meanings that are given to the rural environment which, in contrast to what occurred during the period of rural exodus, make it attractive. Becoming a new rural resident, although it is experienced individually, through the life trajectories of individuals, can only be understood as a product of relatively consistent social processes linked to social structures.

Modernising currents established the distinction in rural areas, clearly stigmatising, between those that stayed and those that left. For the first, the countryside meant a means of life but also a force of excessive fixation, both protected and constrained by family and community networks. Those that left, in a process not exempt from conflict, had to make a great effort to be included in urban society and find employment. The rural village was seen as the subjugation to destiny, in the sense that it defined a necessary or inevitable life, while the city was seen as the location of achievement, where

individuals met the goals they set and desired. Few saw then that rural areas would deagrarianise, that farmers and farmworkers would move toward the service economy and that the rural would acquire a new attractiveness. But that is how it has been, and while some follow the path to the city, others see the countryside as the ideal place to set up residency or as a place for new opportunities. These contradictory currents shape the current reality of rural towns and villages and, particularly that of the members of the support generation, whose transition to maturity has been marked by decisions related to family, work and residential context. Living alongside of them are disenchanting urbanites, retirees, emancipated young people and *immigrants* looking for opportunities who have moved to rural areas as new residents, and whose arrival consolidates this new landscape and raises new challenges for integration and social sustainability. This chapter presents two areas of research on this issue, which until now have not been sufficiently addressed. One focuses on the impact of new residents and, in general, on the trajectories of residential mobility within the support generation, contrasting the profiles of «those that stayed» with those of new residents. The other focuses on the transforming phenomenon of foreign immigration in Spanish society in recent decades. In the case of rural areas, this immigration has been key, not only for its volume but because of the marked social segmentation of the immigrants in function of their status.

7.1. Residential mobility and new residency in the support generation

One of the most important demographic characteristics of industrial modernity, in relation to the spatial movement of the population, was the huge population transfer from rural areas to cities. In Spain, this process began in a sustained and unequal manner during the first half of the 20th century and continued in a massive manner during the decades of the 1950s, 60s and 70s. However, starting in the 1980s we began to see the neutralisation of the rural exodus and the beginning of more varied movements of population, which included the arrival of new residents to rural zones (Camarero, 1993). Such movements corresponded with both the exhaustion of the rural source and with changes in a society, a post industrial society, whose mobility began to transform based on new forms of organisation and possibilities for movement. In contrast with

urban agglomerations as areas of production and the basis for settlement for work and family, we find territorial dispersion as the expression of the new information economy, and mobility as the strategy for occupying space, in what has been called «nomadic sedentarism» (Bericat, 1994).

The support generation occupies a very concrete space in this story of great demographic disequilibriums. Concretely, it comes after the massive missing generation, that is, the principal protagonists of the rural exodus. This situation has left its members responsible for a large number of elderly and a small generation of children that they have engendered. To a great extent they are the cause of the neutralisation of the net migration toward cities, having managed to adopt a variety of strategies that connect them to the towns and villages, such as pluri-employment and economic diversification, which have completed the deagrarianisation of the rural world. Undoubtedly, the majority of the social phenomena which characterise this generation are a result of these strategies. However, along with this generation of rural residents who did not abandon the countryside, new residents began to take on significant weight as a genuine counterweight to out migration beginning in the 1980s. And it is precisely in the support generation, as already mentioned, where the new residents have acquired a particular numerical impact.

The percentage of individuals that live in the municipality where they were born offers some initial indicative data. While the 2001 census shows that 44.5 percent of individuals in the generation having 30 to 49 years of age were living in the municipality where they were born, the 2008 survey shows 38 percent, which gives us an indication that changes continue in the direction of increasing mobility in rural areas. According to Camarero (1997), rural immigration is situated upon two axes which permit us to identify four types of rural residents. First, we can distinguish between those born in their rural place of residence and those who come from outside. Secondly, we can classify rural residents by their socioeconomic position and their sphere of economic activity. In this way, we can talk about autochthonous residents (born in the town or village and with an inferior economic position to that of new residents), «immigrants» (foreigners who come as low-skilled labour), children of the town (individuals born in rural towns and villages but that have lived away and have returned to retire there) and new residents (a heterogeneous group which gathers together retirees that were not born in

rural towns and villages and in some cases coming from north or central Europe and other new residents who are at economically active ages). Regarding individuals of intermediate ages, where the support generation is located, these are connected particularly to the new residents of middle or high socioeconomic status and to «immigrants» of low status, although they also have a place in other categories. The status of the new residents according to their national or foreign origin will be explored later. These four types constitute ideal types in which reality is only partly reflected, as there exist many overlaps in the lives of individuals which make it difficult to place them in any one specific category. For example, it would be difficult to qualify as a «child of the town» someone born in a rural municipality that returns upon retirement without having maintained any contact during most of his/her life. Our approach starts with this idea of complexity and tries to adapt it to the reality of a somewhat more homogeneous group, the support generation, establishing a continuum that takes into account both the residential experience in the town as well as residential mobility to other areas, especially urban ones.

Thus, given that the objective is not only to compare the vicissitudes of those that have recently established themselves in rural areas with those that lived there before, but to also differentiate trajectories of mobility throughout life, in particular regarding urban areas, a complex residency index has been constructed using data from the EPR-2008. This index is based on both the time living in a specific municipality and the residential history of the individual,⁽¹⁾ leading to four categories of rural residents, ranging between the lifelong resident and the new resident. As is logical, the great majority (two thirds) of rural residents of this generation are lifelong (31.1 percent) or longterm (34.1 percent), in other words, they have maintained long ties to their towns from birth, having grown and lived in them and having had limited experiences in urban living. One third, however, can be characterized

(1) The indicator of new residency was elaborated grouping together scores on the following variables: place of birth: (0) In town or in the county, (1) in a town outside of the county and (2) in a city. Place lived until 16 years of age: (0) In town or in the county, (1) in a town outside the county and (2) in a city. Number of years living in the town: (0) whole lifetime, (1) more than 10 years, (2) between 5 and 10 years, (3) less than 5 years. Number of years living in a city: (0) Never have lived in a city, (1) Have lived in a city for 10 years or less, (2) Have lived in a city for more than 10 years but less than or equal to half one's life, (3) have lived in a city for more than half one's life. The index obtained ranges from 0 to 10, and has been reduced for presentation into the following categories: lifelong residents (0-1), longterm (2-4), relatively new (5-7) and new residents (8-10).

by the characteristics of residential mobility or having lived in urban areas, making them new residents (17.0 percent) or relatively new residents (17.8 percent).

The condition of new resident is not, therefore, a neutral attribute that refers exclusively to the period of arrival in the municipality. Rather, as we are trying to show, new rural residency should connect recent residential location with phenomena shared by all of society, such as the increase in mobility and the blurring of the boundaries between the rural and the urban. The recognition of the importance of different levels of rural residency is a consequence of this. We say levels, not only for the ordinal character of our indicator, but also because, as the relationship of residency with social institutions reveals (the family, work, the environment), new residency acquires this quality, the categories tending to be laid out in a more or less linear manner, from lifelong residency to new residency. In addition, we are trying to give meaning to an essentially complex reality, in which disparate phenomena such as dual residency, flexible work hours or the care of elderly parents have some influence. Thus we find individuals whose lives are closely linked to the rural space in which they reside or others with no stronger connections to rural place than having recently established their residency there. In the middle, there is a range of situations which reflect diverse ties to territory: individuals born in a town or village which, after a period of time in a city, they return to form and maintain a family; individuals, not born in a rural area but of rural parents, returning to the rural home to begin a new working life; those who, despite an urban life are needed to provide care to elder relations, etc. This range of situations is replicated in the survey when those that say they have not lived in the town or village all their lives are asked for the reasons which led them to establish their residency in the municipality (table 7.1). The answer, open in principle, points to three paths for choosing the municipality: family reasons, work related reasons and environmental reasons. Family reasons are related as much to family of origin (one's parents are from that town or village) as to the family one has formed as an adult (one's partner, whose mention is the principal reason given for establishing residence for 35 percent of the women. Work related reasons refer to employment opportunities that are offered in the town or village. Finally, we find two aspects that have to do with the environment: one, housing, tied to the process of residential emancipation and the difficulties associated with it, made more difficult in

TABLE 7.1

Reasons for settlement in rural towns in the support generation

In percentages

Total	100
Marriage	25.1
Employment or education	22.8
Family	16.6
Reasons related to housing	16.2
Reasons related to the quality of the rural environment	16.1
Others	1.3
Reasons related to communication and services	1.5
Don't know	0.4

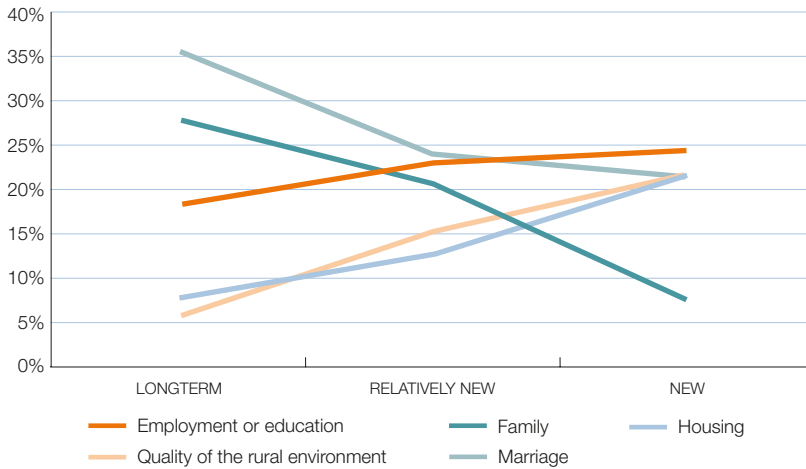
Note: Individuals that have not been living in the town all their lives.
Source: EPR-2008.

the last decade with the increase in cost of housing; the other, the quality of life in rural areas, responding strongly to the «rural ideal» as a way of life contrasted to the urban. A third aspect related to environment, the value of communication and services in rural areas was mentioned in the survey, although its importance was clearly low.

To understand the distribution of reasons given for choosing to live in a rural municipality, these must be related to the residency index, as is presented in graph 7.1. The contrast between longterm residents, resident for reasons related to family, and new residents, much more drawn by the environment and work, is clear. Marriage as a reason for rural residency still represents an important though declining reason, particularly among women. Regarding environmental reasons, it should be pointed out that each category may account for both large groups of new rural residents proceeding from urban spheres. On the one hand would be those that, conscious of increased residential mobility and taking advantage of it, find in the rural environment an accessible place (for example, in terms of housing costs). On the other hand are those who grant an intrinsic value to the rural, what has been called the «rural ideal», valuing the conditions of the rural environment itself.

GRAPH 7.1

Reasons for settlement in rural towns by type of residency of the support generation



Source: EPR-2008.

7.2. Autochthonous and new residents

We will now briefly look at the structural characteristics which differentiate the population in function of their residential trajectory and we will place them in the context of the changes which have taken place in rural areas in recent decades. In comparison with autochthonous inhabitants, the new residents present a different structure by age and sex (table 7.2). Although the issue of age is not particularly important in an intragenerational analysis like this, it should be mentioned that new residents have a younger profile than lifelong residents, the majority of new residents being in their thirties, which is indicative of both the newness of the process bringing the new residents and its link with the initial stages of the formation of families, which could mean the revitalization of these areas. Regarding sex, the differences indicate, beyond their statistical significance, an extraordinarily important change, as the new resident population has a sex ratio much closer to that of the national average for the support generation than to the autochthonous population, clearly masculinised.

TABLE 7.2

Residency of the support generation by sex and age

By percentage (columns)

	LIFELONG	LONGTERM	RELATIVELY NEW	NEW	TOTAL
Men	54.0	54.9	50.8	51.1	53.3
Women	46.0	45.1	49.2	48.9	46.7
30-34	21.6	25.2	22.6	32.8	24.9
35-39	23.6	23.1	27.4	27.5	24.8
40-44	25.2	24.3	25.8	21.6	24.4
45-49	25.2	23.9	20.4	16.1	22.4
50	4.5	3.4	3.8	2.0	3.6

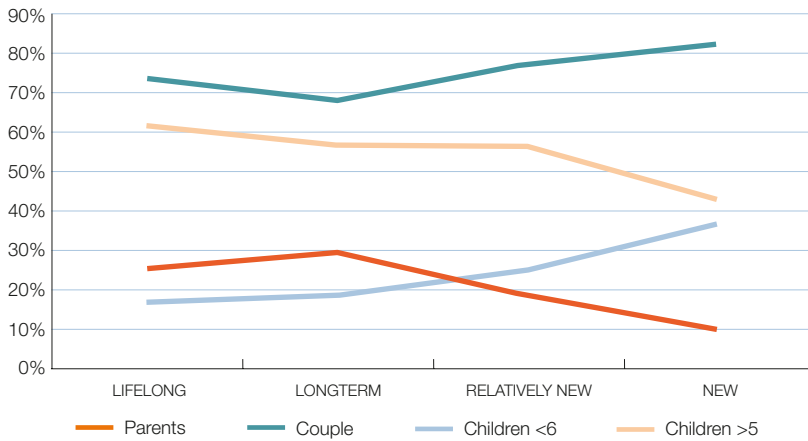
Source: EPR-2008.

In part as a consequence of the young age of the new residents, we find families in formation, with a high percentage of couples, with small children and very little co-habitation with parents; in general, with very few living with elderly family members (graph 7.2). This panorama contrasts with the overall situation of the generation described in the previous chapter.

The new residents are more tied to their own family groups, which confers on them a profile different from the global panorama, characterized by a not insignificant number of individuals living alone or with their parents. As we can see in graph 7.3, differences regarding the percentage of families with children are not very significant, real differences being in the age of the children, which is indicative of the age of the parents, which, in the case of new residents, is, on average, lower. Nor are there great differences in the proportion of extended households, somewhat lower among new residents, nor in the percentage of individuals living alone. The differentiating traits are the proportion of those that reside with their families of origin, something more common among lifelong residents, and those that live with a partner but without children, more common among new residents. These findings have greater significance if we take into account that new residents constitute a younger group and, therefore, in principle, one more likely to stay in their homes of origin. This suggests that the arrival in the countryside of these new residents is related to a family residential strategy, a sort of neolocalism, perhaps possible thanks to a new social conception of territory, more uniform

GRAPH 7.2

Persons in the support generation that live with parents, in a couple and with children, by type of residency



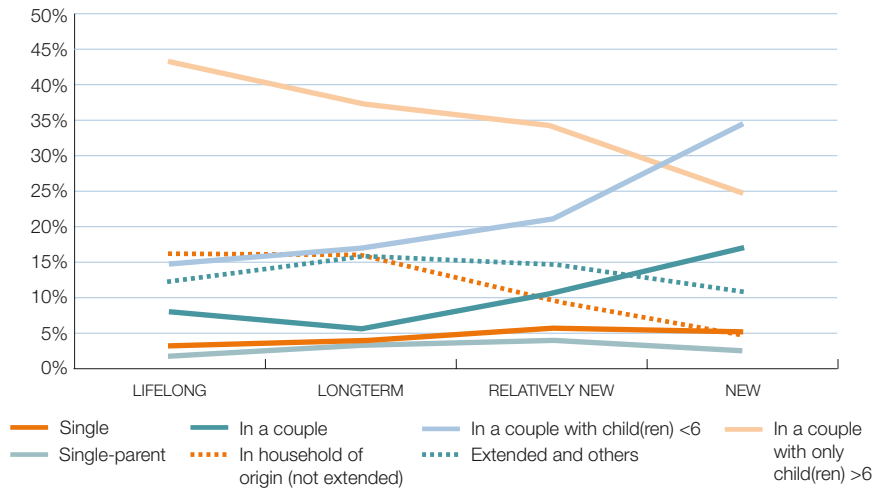
Source: EPR-2008.

then when the more or less stagnant categories of the rural and the urban were constituted.

The formation of new households by new residents acts as a regenerator and contributes to neutralizing the grave demographic imbalances in rural areas. However, it is difficult to calculate the contribution of new residents to the support of dependent persons in rural areas, aside from the care of their own children, given that these families may be less connected to the autochthonous population and, particularly, to those that are involved in the care of elderly dependents. Thus, on the one hand, due in part to the younger age of new residents, there are few elderly in their homes, as we can see in graph 7.4. And on the other hand, as residents that are less involved in networks of care and with fewer family relations nearby, the possibility that they provide assistance to the elderly population is reduced, limited to the ability of new residents themselves to connect with networks of solidarity which contribute to alleviating the problems of dependency in rural areas. In fact, assistance to dependent persons is significantly reduced among new residents, placing additional responsibility on the backs of the lifelong and longterm residents.

GRAPH 7.3

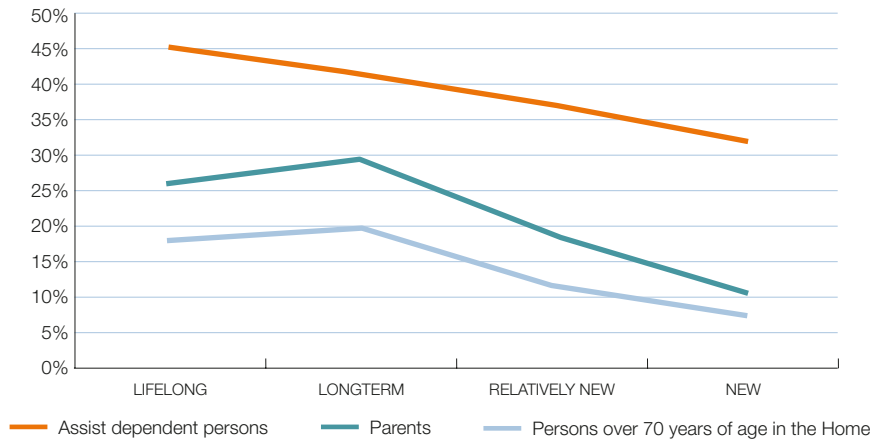
Household type among the support generation by type of residency



Source: EPR-2008.

GRAPH 7.4

Persons of the support generation that live with parents, the elderly or assist dependent persons outside of the home, by type of residency



Source: EPR-2008.

We have seen how residency affects the family composition of the members of the support generation. Now we are interested in seeing how new residency also affects work, another social structure of great importance and one of the principal motivations for settlement. If we begin with the foundation of employment, which is education and training, we find considerable differences in the educational level of the support generation based on type of residence. We find a higher percentage with secondary school educations among new and newer residents, and above all with university level studies (table 7.3). In contrast, the relationship with economic activity doesn't show major differences according to type of residence, showing only the complete disconnection of new residents with agricultural work and a greater percentage of new residents that are self-employed.

Nevertheless, the employment structure of the generation based on type of residency does reveal some important differences (table 7.3). Very few new residents participate in agricultural work. There is also a significant decline in the percentage of workers in industry among new residents. In the service sector, the most notable changes are in the percentage of residents in management positions, as a consequence of the higher educational levels among new residents, and to a lesser extent in administrative positions.

In short, new residents reveal a complete tertiarisation of employment activity, although, because of their higher educational levels, the differences are concentrated in professional and management positions more than in lower skilled service jobs (graph 7.5). The employment panorama shows that new residents constitute a strata that is more autonomous and more immersed in the process of individuation. Their participation in the labour market, to a greater extent extralocal, shows a clear predominance of wage earning, now common among the whole generation. The disconnection with the agricultural world among new residents, together with their lack of participation in family businesses, is indicative of our finding ourselves before a social group which, if it connects to the rural community, or what remains of it, it is more for its very presence in the life of rural towns and villages than for its direct involvement in that life. This form of distant participation raises questions about the ambivalent role of new residents in social sustainability in rural areas. New residents have appeared as renovators of rurality in this new century, and, certainly, on the purely demographic level they are. They are revitalizing households,

TABLE 7.3

Persons of the support generation according to type of residency by educational level, economic activity and type of work

By percentage

		LIFELONG	LONGTERM	RELATIVELY NEW	NEW	TOTAL
EDUCATION	Without studies	2.2	2.3	2.5	1.3	2.1
	Obligatory Education	59.2	40.1	31.8	22.3	41.6
	Secondary school graduate	29.1	26.4	34.3	35.4	30.2
	University	9.5	30.8	31.1	41.0	26.0
	Not known		0.3	0.3		0.2
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	Inactive	13.4	9.4	8.8	10.8	10.8
	Permanent employment	42.5	52.7	49.1	52.3	48.8
	Temporary employment	11.1	8.8	10.1	7.5	9.5
	Self-employed	13.6	12.2	16.4	18.3	14.4
	Family business	4.5	3.1	5.7	2.3	3.8
	Farmer	7.3	3.6	2.8	0.3	4.1
	Unemployed	7.5	10.2	7.2	8.5	8.6
TYPE OF WORK	Professional or management	8.0	23.3	22.0	29.7	19.5
	Mid-level management	2.7	4.1	2.6	5.2	3.6
	Administrative work	12.7	16.2	17.9	18.1	15.8
	Employment in retail, hotel and restaurant sector	10.2	8.3	10.8	9.2	9.5
	Skilled trades	17.7	13.4	17.5	12.9	15.4
	Industrial employment	17.5	13.6	10.1	11.2	13.7
	Unskilled manual labour or in service sector	5.0	7.9	5.2	5.6	6.1
	Agricultural employment	16.6	7.3	5.6	2.4	9.0
	Cleaning/domestic services	8.9	5.3	7.1	5.2	6.7
	No answer	0.7	0.6	1.1	0.4	0.7

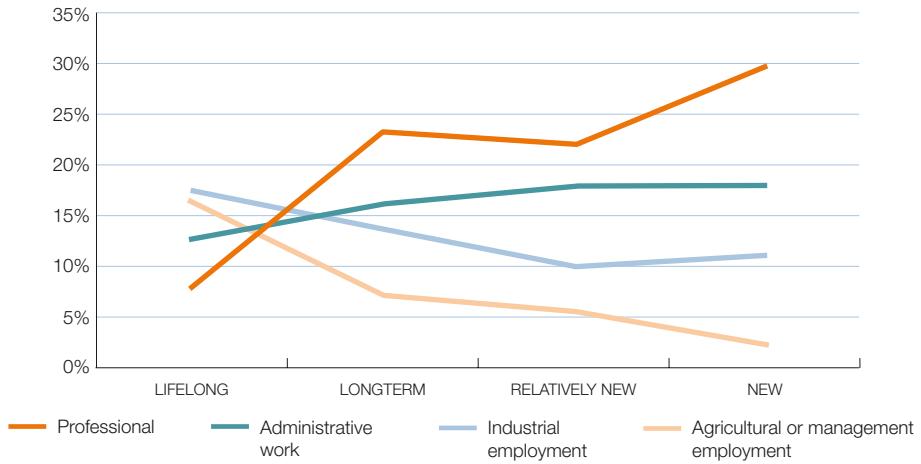
Note: in italics, the differences are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

Source: EPR-2008.

which is profoundly positive for neutralizing demographic disequilibriums and renewing the social fabric. However, their disconnection with the local with respect to their employment, which is fundamentally extralocal, and their connection with social currents that are broader than specifically rural ones,

GRAPH 7.5

Persons of the support generation according to type of work by type of residency



Source: EPR-2008.

may lead to important social differences within the rural sphere. In fact, some of these differences may be detected in such a key issue as care of dependent persons, which falls disproportionately on lifelong and longterm residents.

7.3. Immigrants in rural areas

One of the most significant changes in the social structure in Spain has been the growth in the population of foreign origin; a growth that has been particularly intense during the last five years. In 2001, the foreign population resident in Spain was 3.8 percent of the total population, while in 2007 it was 10 percent. The total weight of the immigrant population in Spain has increased more than two and a half times (2.6) in a very short period of time. Although the settlement of the immigrant population has essentially been an urban phenomenon, it has also had its impact on rural populations. Rural areas have participated in this growth with a similar intensity. The population of foreign origin which lives in rural areas has gone from 2.8 percent to 6.7 percent during the same period (2001-2007).

There are various factors which have contributed to the settlement of the foreign population in Spain. There is the migration of retirees: Central Europeans of retirement age that find in the coastal areas of Spain more agreeable living conditions for their retirement. This is a migratory wave that began in the mid-1980s, with destinations which are concentrated in very specific areas and even town.⁽²⁾ Another source of immigration is the return to Spain of descendents of emigrants; a return that can be intense in moments of crisis in the countries of origin. Children and even grandchildren of emigrants return and settle in places where they still have family ties. This type of immigration, coming from Latin America (Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, Uruguay and Cuba principally) and also from Europe (Switzerland and France) has had particular importance in some rural areas of Galicia.⁽³⁾

More recently, during the second half of the 1990s, the arrival of an immigrant population at economically active ages began from different places on the globe. This is an immigration closely tied to economic development and the life expectations of its protagonists. This phenomenon has given rise to what, in colloquial terms, is called the «immigrant collective».⁽⁴⁾ It is specifically this group which is the protagonist of the changes that we see in both the Spanish social structure and in many rural areas. It is fed by transnational migratory waves, originating in Northern Africa, in Central and South America, as well as in Eastern Europe, and it consists in the movement of workers looking for work in concrete sectors. Currently, these waves are increasing as a result of family reunification processes.

(2) Various examples come to mind: Mojácar on the Almerian coast; Finestrat in Alicante, and small towns in the Balearic archipelago. As an example of the impact of this migration of retirees is the fact that, in 2001, in municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants in Alicante, 15.9 percent of the inhabitant over 65 years of age were foreigners.

(3) The correlation of this immigration with the destination of transoceanic migrations at the end of the 19th century and until the middle of the 20th century is clear. For example, in rural areas of La Coruña, 5 percent of the foreigners are Swiss; in Orense, 7 percent of rural foreigners come from Venezuela; in Pontevedra, the Argentines are 9 percent of the foreign population that resides in rural areas. 9 percent of the foreigners residing in rural Galicia are Colombian. All these nationalities have, in general, a much lower weight in the overall population of foreigners in Spain. (Data comes from the 2001 Population Census.)

(4) The differences between «foreigner» and «immigrant» is socially determined. A European who works as a language teacher is not considered to be a member of the immigrant collective, while a Moroccan who works in construction is. Both are foreigners, and their motivation for settling in another place is the same: employment opportunities. The difference between them is the recognition of their socioeconomic status. The first, as a skilled worker, becomes a foreign worker; the second, as an unskilled worker, is called an «immigrant».

The data reveal great diversity in the countries of origin and the situations of resident foreigners in rural areas. This diversity, which is common in urban areas, is a reflection of the very multifunctionality in which rural areas are today inserted (table 7.4). The migration of retirees, returning generations, economic migrations and family reunification shape an overall very heterogeneous population. While Moroccans are the most numerous immigrant group in Spain as a whole, and, at the same time, the group which has been immigrating to Spain for the longest time, the largest immigrant group in rural areas is Rumanians; one of every six foreigners in rural areas currently being from Rumania.⁽⁵⁾ Although migration for economic reasons dominates (Rumanians, Moroccans and Ecuadoreans, tied to seasonal agricultural employment and construction), the migration of retirees also stands out (from Great Britain), as does that for proximity (France and Portugal) and that of returning generations (Argentina).

Due to the rapid growth of this migratory wave in rural areas, the impact of immigration is no longer limited to or concentrated along the southeast coast of the country. That localized model was connected to the migration of retirees and to the expansion of intensive agriculture for export. Now, as reflected in the diversity of situations which exist in rural regions, immigration has become a generalized phenomenon which is having a major impact on rural areas (map 7.1).

The following maps show the percentage of new residents of foreign origin in rural areas. In 2001, the presence of foreigners was concentrated, as was mentioned, in coastal areas and in the rural part of the metropolitan area of Madrid. Six years later, this presence has extended to areas of the interior, spreading and intensifying in the eastern part of the country and in the archipelagos. These regions have a significant percentage of foreigners. The 2007 map, as with that of 2001, shows the areas in which more than one of every twenty rural inhabitants is of foreign origin.

The attraction of rural areas of the eastern part of the peninsula has its origin in the labour markets of the coast which are seasonal, in the growth

(5) The Rumanian collective is the one which has grown the most in rural areas during the period considered. In 2001 it was the sixth largest foreign nationality in rural areas, behind Morroccans, Ecuadoreans, the British, Germans and Colombians.

TABLE 7.4

Principal nationalities in the rural areas of Spain

Weight (%) of the different nationalities over the total number of foreigners in rural areas

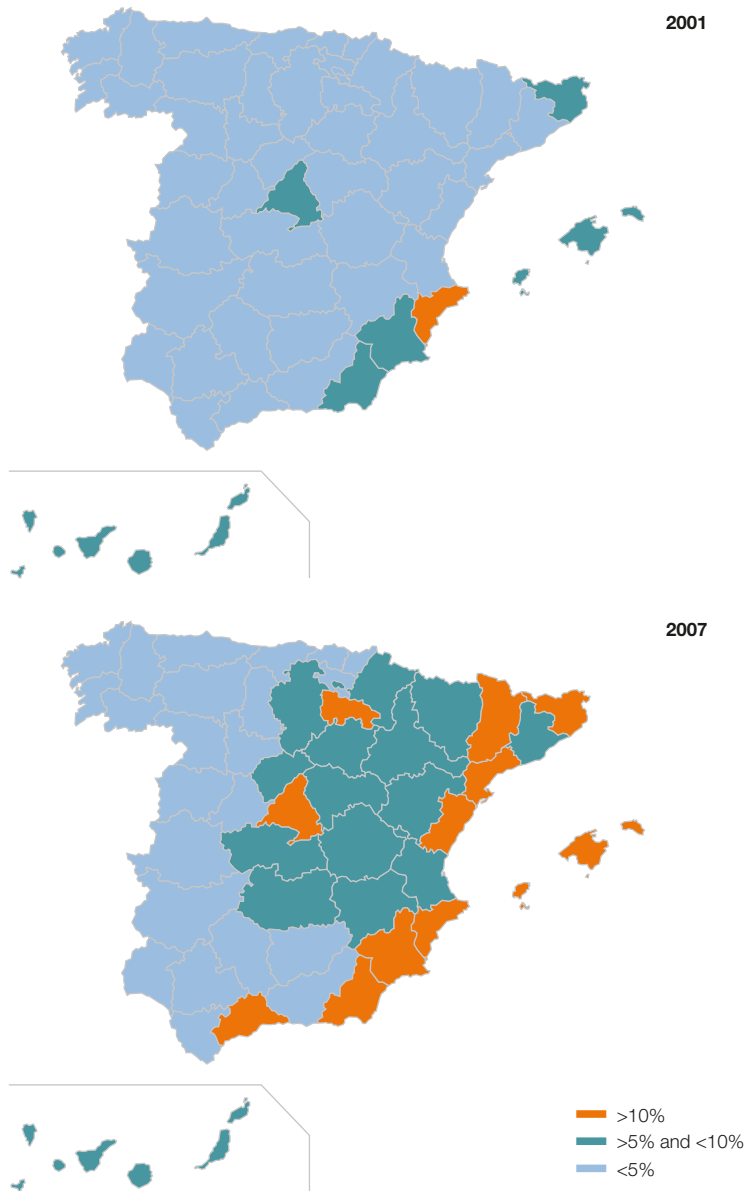
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	ARRIVED BEFORE 2005
Romania	156.4
Morocco	127.5
United Kingdom	64.9
France	61.4
Ecuador	59.6
Bulgaria	49.2
Argentina	48.2
Colombia	43.2
Portugal	42.9
Germany	41.7
Switzerland	22.7
Venezuela	20.2
Uruguay	15.3
Poland	14.3
Cuba	14.0
Russia	13.8
Bolivia	13.8
Ukraine	13.7
Brazil	13.5
Holland	11.6
Peru	10.7
Belgium	10.4
Total	869.0

Source: ENI 2007. Author elaboration.

of agriculture for export, with intensive demands for labour, in the growth of urban development, an enormous consumer of labour, and in the territorial expansion of metropolitan areas, which in the case of Madrid has reached rural centres in the bordering provinces: Segovia, Guadalajara and Toledo. Also of importance has been economic activity in the Ebro valley, linked to agricultural production and the transformation of agro-industry and food packaging

MAP 7.1

Weight of the immigrant population residing in rural areas, 2001 and 2007



Source: Population census of 2001 and municipal register for 2007. Author elaboration.

(pre-prepared foods), which also generates seasonal employment and demands for readily available labour. In the new map of rural immigration we can detect other phenomena. Thus, regions such as Soria, Teruel and Cuenca are largely disconnected from the processes just mentioned, their rural areas being examples of the process of rural depopulation. Among the causes for the high presence of foreigners in these regions is the fact that these are areas with a very small population and in many cases closely tied to economic activity in extractive industries,⁽⁶⁾ but the impact of certain «reception» programmes developed in recent years, concretely in the province of Teruel, and specifically to fight against rural depopulation and the consequent loss of education and healthcare services which rural recession involves, also have to be considered.

It is clear that the settlement of foreign population in rural areas has produced an important change in the rural social landscape. However, as such a recent phenomenon, it has not yet been well studied. The challenge is a lack of quality data regarding these groups. We have used the best current existing source: the National Immigrant Survey 2007, ENI-2007, done by the National Statistics Institute (INE). Using this source⁽⁷⁾ we have looked at the profiles and trajectories of foreigners in rural areas to consider their impact on the real processes of socioeconomic development in these areas.

An initial interpretation of the settling of immigrants in rural areas may lead one to conclude that immigrants have come to fill the vacancies that demographic imbalances have created in rural population structures. The data, however, do not strongly support this hypothesis, which, in addition, is overly simplified as it does

(6) In Teruel, 9.5 percent of the rural population is, today, of foreign origin. There are very small municipalities such as Puertomongalvo, with 252 inhabitants, 43.6 percent foreign; Albentosa, 334 inhabitants, 30.2 percent foreign; La Cerollera, 124 inhabitants and 29.8 percent foreign; and La Cuba, with 63 inhabitants and 28.6 percent foreign, in addition to Fuentes de Rubielos, Josa, Salcedillo, Allueva, Aguaviva..., the majority in the county of Gudar-Javalambre bordering Castellón and dedicated in many cases to activities related to mining. One fourth of rural municipalities in Teruel have more than 10 percent foreign population. In the case of Soria, the situation is different because the concentration of foreigners is in the county centres. The population of Ólvaga, connected to agro-industry, with 3,546 inhabitants, is 9.9 percent foreign, and Almazán, 8 percent. However, in the great majority of municipalities with less than 100 inhabitants there are no foreigners.

(7) This is a representative survey for all of Spain of persons older than 15 years of age and born outside of the country. The complex character of settlement strategies – it is difficult to specify if a stay in Spain is permanent or temporary – and of legal conditions has limited the data to only those foreigners who have been residing in Spain for at least three years. The variable, size of household, could only be calculated indirectly by tracking the trajectories of residential mobility. In approximately 22 percent of the cases said information could not be obtained; given the size of the survey and the different tests done, it is not expected that this produces important biases in the information dealt with here.

not take into account the dynamics of development of rural areas themselves, or the importance that the immigrant population and their families can have in the development of their own residential and employment trajectories.

What we first observe in the foreign population is that it is very concentrated regarding age, which strengthens the support generation. But it is also very unbalanced by sex, reinforcing the masculinisation that has taken place in rural areas (graph 7.6).

Analytically, it is useful to differentiate the rural foreign population by their origin, as this reveals very distinct situations. To do this, our analysis has focused on two large groups: those whose country of origin is in the EU-15, and those whose country of origin is outside of the EU-15. These groups differentiate the immigrant population not only by motivation, (such as retirement or work) but also in terms of socioeconomic level and social considerations in the receiving populations.

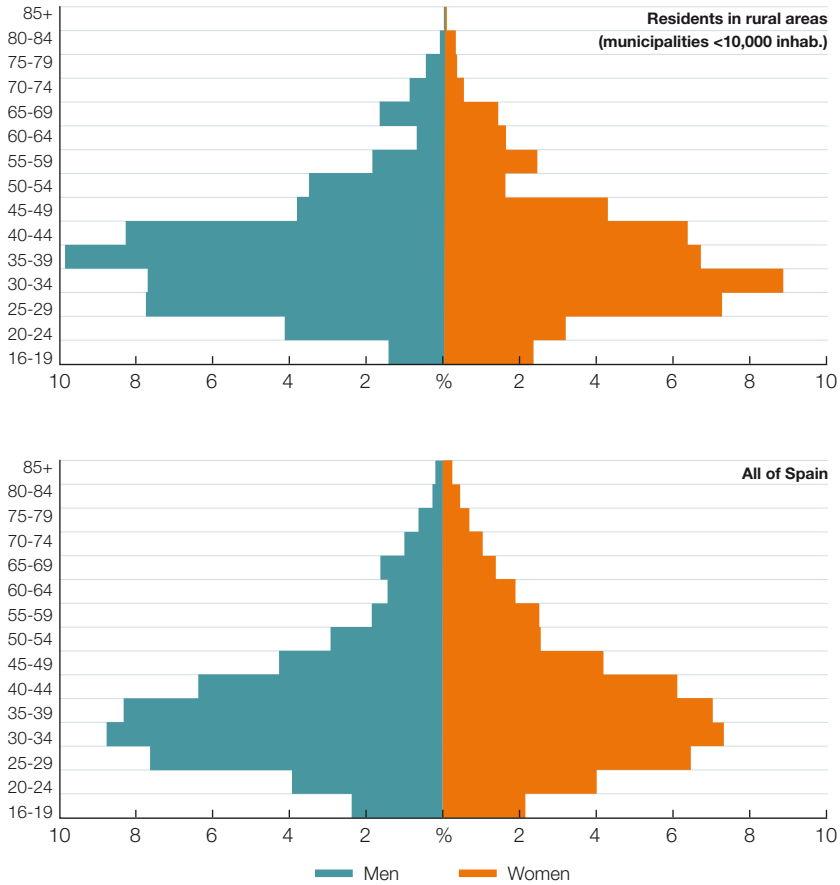
Those who proceed from the EU-15 (graph 7.7) are, first, older, the logical consequence of retiring immigrants. Secondly, they are concentrated among intermediate ages. Although in general, this is a masculinised immigration, it is surprising that it is not true for all age groups, particularly among the population at intermediate ages. In this regard, it is necessary to take into account that residence in Spain among foreigners proceeding from the EU-15 is often related to family motives, more than 40 percent of this group of foreigners being married to or having a partner who is a Spanish national (table 7.5). This can explain the feminisation at earlier ages. Thirdly, this is also a work related emigration, settlement in rural areas having to do with the residential preferences of professionals, though the presence of residents of the EU-15 in rural areas has no relationship to local labour markets.

Immigrants from outside of the EU-15 (graph 7.7) are concentrated in intermediate ages, ages consistent with the support generation. In the case of non-EU immigrants, they also strengthen the generation right below the support generation. This immigration also reinforces rural masculinisation, though despite its strong masculinisation it maintains a slightly better balance among those in their thirties. Currently, an important change in the pattern of transnational migrations is being produced, in the sense that there is a growing feminisation. The feminisation of transnational migrations is a recent

GRAPH 7.6

Structures of the immigrant population

Arrivals before 2005



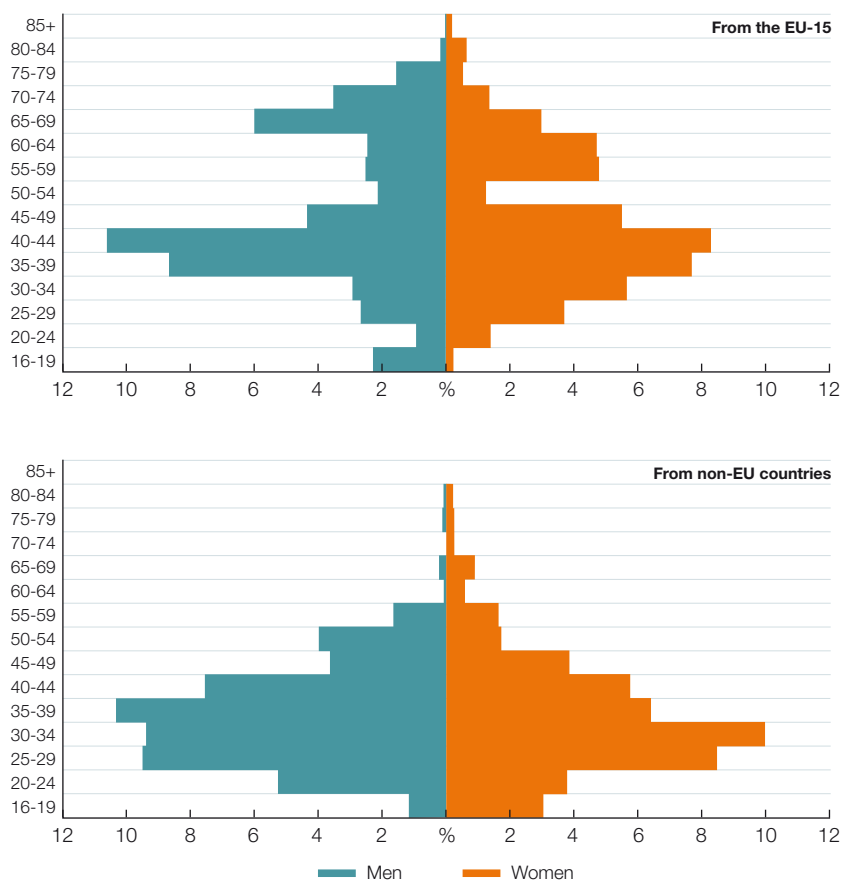
Source: ENI 2007. Author elaboration.

phenomenon which characterizes what is called «postfordist migrations», and has to do with the transmission of gender inequalities on a global scale. In the regions of Central and South America it is principally women that initiate migratory chains. The devaluation of work and the subordinate economic role attributed to women in these regions makes them, within family strategies, the members selected to participate in transnational labour

GRAPH 7.7

Structures of the rural immigrant population

Arrivals before 2005



Source: ENI 2007. Author elaboration.

markets which provide precarious and irregular employment.⁽⁸⁾ Their social devaluation in their countries of origin makes them the most apt for adapting to the working conditions that await them. In the case of Spain, however, the

(8) In addition, the end destinations favor this migratory segmentation by sex, as the lack of public resources for the care of dependent persons, the outsourcing of parenting and domestic household work, creates a demand for female workers.

TABLE 7.5

Forms of cohabitation among couples of the immigrant population residing in rural areas

		NON EU-15		EU-15		
		MEN	WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN	
Not married		21.6	21.7	21.6	16.0	
	Spouse lives in Spain but in other Household	1.0	1.1	0.0	1.0	
Married or living with a partner	Living with partner in the home	Intranational	56.6	45.9	29.9	23.9
		Transnational	3.6	4.1	5.4	9.8
		Mixed	10.5	25.8	41.9	48.6
	Spouse lives outside of the country	6.8	1.4	1.2	0.7	
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	

Note: persons over 19 years of age, arrivals before 2005. Intranational: both spouses of the same nationality. Transnational: spouses of different nationalities. Mixed: one of the spouses is Spanish.
Source: ENI 2007. Author elaboration.

importance that Moroccan immigration has, which is a very masculinised and seasonal immigration⁽⁹⁾ (sometimes called «de golondrina» [«by swallow»]), means that the data for the totality of immigrants maintains the panorama of masculinisation. For example, if we look at the previous table (table 7.5), we can see that 6.8 percent of non-EU male immigrants have their partners residing in their country of origin.⁽¹⁰⁾

Table 7.5 also permits us to look at the relation immigration has with some of the effects of rural masculinisation. A little more than one fourth of non-EU women that reside in rural areas are married to Spanish men. In this sense it can be seen that marriage is an important factor in the settling of women immigrants in rural areas and is related to the high percentage of single rural men and with the «convoys of women» which have become known as a result of the famous case of the town of Plan in the Pyrenees.

(9) However, we also begin to see feminine migrations of seasonal character from Morocco. The case of the strawberry harvests in Huelva is a good example. For certain agricultural jobs married women are chosen, in this way guaranteeing that emigration will only be temporary. See the article: «Manos de madres para recoger fresas» [Mothers' hands for harvesting strawberries], *El País* (19.01.07).

(10) 14.4 percent of Moroccan men residing in Spain have wives residing in Morocco.

The consequences of immigration on rural demographic structure are contradictory. On the one hand, the arrival of these new residents increases some demographic imbalances, such as masculinisation. On the other hand, there are trends that may revitalize rural populations. Being a population at reproductive age, the impact may be great in demographic terms. Although technically it is relatively complex to evaluate this impact,⁽¹¹⁾ in the following table (table 7.6) we can see some data regarding the living situation of immigrants with children. Despite the percentage of immigrants living in rural areas who reside with their children being lower than in urban areas, the differences are slight; what's more, regarding the number of children that live with them there are no notable differences between urban and rural habitats. In addition, given the lower birth rate in rural areas, immigrant families with children are contributing to maintaining a certain demographic vitality there.

Regarding immigrant employment, it is concentrated within a reduced range of occupations, strongly differentiated by gender (table 7.7); one of every three immigrant men work in construction and almost one of every four immigrant women work in domestic services. However, this concentration hides a real diversity of jobs and, above all, employment situations. For example, in the case of women immigrants, the hotel and restaurant sector and the retail sector also have a great deal of importance as sources of employment, and, in the

TABLE 7.6

Indicators of parental-filial cohabitation among the immigrant population by size of municipality

	<10,000	10,001 to 20,000	20,001 to 50,000	>50,000
Have children under 16 years of age that live in the home	55.9%	60.9%	57.7%	62.1%
Average number of children under 16 that live in the home	1.62	1.56	1.67	1.49

Note: persons over 19 years of age, arrivals before 2005. Average of those who have children residing in the home.

Source: ENI 2007. Author elaboration.

(11) The principal obstacle is that many immigrants have already had children before arriving and it is difficult to evaluate when or under what conditions family reunification will happen, as the children may not live in the parents' household, as that will depend on the age of the children when reunification happens.

TABLE 7.7

Employment by economic sector

Total of foreign population residing in Spain

	MEN	WOMEN
Agriculture	7.3	2.5
Manufacturing	13.3	6.9
Construction	33.1	0.8
Retail	11.3	14.1
Hotel and restaurant	10.0	17.5
Transport, mining, energy and fishing	7.8	3.7
Business services	7.6	13.4
Administration and education	3.5	6.1
Personal services	5.3	11.3
Households	0.8	23.7
Total	100%	100%

Note: arrivals before 2005.

Source: ENI 2007. Author elaboration.

case of men, manufacturing jobs. The relevant issue regarding occupation is the job of the workers, something which is difficult to identify using the statistical categories employed in the analysis of occupation by branch of economic activity.⁽¹²⁾

In short, beyond the characteristics that historical processes have established in rural populations, the arrival of new residents reveals the opening of the rural world to complex processes of an even transnational reach. All this reinforces the idea of the insertion of the rural in global society, as well as the importance of sociological factors in explaining who these new residents are who are contributing to redefining the social and demographic characteristics of rural areas, and why they settle there.

(12) This is the case, for example, in services to businesses. This occupational category is very broad and includes industrial cleaning, call centers, security guards, among others. We might conclude that this category gathers together the majority of temporary employment in service sectors managed by temporary employment agencies.

VIII. Inequalities in mobility

In modern societies, mobility has become an essential resource for resolving daily needs and carrying out a good deal of our daily tasks. Access to opportunities and services, sociability, recreational and consumer options, etc., depend in great measure on the resources we have available to move from one place to another, compressing time and space. Mobility and, more specifically, mobility based on private automobiles, also known as *automobility*, has become natural, as if inherent to our way of life and to being a modern citizen. And as a result, the absence of or limitations on mobility have also resulted in the creation of new forms of exclusion and social precariousness. In this way, automobility transcends the merely instrumental character of connecting distant spaces, and becomes an element which, on the one hand, habitates by its action, relatively fast and flexible transport and, on the other hand, limits possibilities, having contributed to organizing space in function of the exclusive use of the private automobile.

The capacity to move about derives from a combination of resources (possession of a private automobile, purchasing power, etc.) and varying skills (for example, the ability to drive is lost with age). In this sense, mobility also forms social capital which can increase or decrease (for example, residential changes or aid from family networks) and which can also be transformed or exchanged for other forms of capital such as economic, relational capitals, etc. (for example, having access to better jobs in labour markets outside of the municipality).

8.1. Mobility as part of rural fragility

Automobility has become a key element in the contemporary rural world. Especially for life in certain types of habitats (dispersed settlements, mountain

areas) or those areas with special socioeconomic characteristics: with significant elderly populations, with very small populations which do not make public transportation cost effective, and dependent on extralocal labour markets, etc. In addition, the centralization of services (healthcare and education among others), as well as shopping and leisure activities also give mobility a strategic role. But the centrality of mobility, as we will see in what follows, is a factor of vulnerability and inequality for many rural groups.

The 2001 census registered almost two million residents in municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants living in homes without cars. In comparison with medium sized municipalities, the rural world appears to have an unfavourable relationship with this strategic resource. The weight of *immobilized* groups increases as the size of habitat descends, being particularly significant in the most rural places. In municipalities with less than 2,000 inhabitants one of every five persons lacks an automobile in their home and one in every four in municipalities with less than 500 inhabitants.

Diverse processes are associated with this phenomenon (aging, poverty, etc.), but the vulnerability of certain groups in relation to *automobility* should be emphasized, as well as the situations of risk and dependency that may arise from such situations. Table 8.1 shows the weight that certain social conditions (persons over 65 years of age, children under 16 years of age, unemployed) acquire in rural communities among those that live without cars according to autonomous community. Some of them (such as Andalusia and Extremadura) show more than one in ten children under 16 years of age, 6 of every 10 persons older than 65 years of age and more than 2 of every ten unemployed persons in rural areas living in homes without cars.

The process of aging in society in general and in certain rural areas in particular plays a determinant role. Thus, of the total number of persons that lived in households without cars in 2001, half were receiving pensions (for retirement, widowhood or disability). In addition, one of every three of these households was formed by two adults (at least one of 65 years of age or more), without children and, almost 2 of every 10 were formed by a single person 65 years of age or more (in the majority of cases, women) (table 8.2). Thus, 60 percent of persons over 65 years of age resident in rural areas were living in homes without an automobile in the following provinces: Cádiz, Granada, Huelva and Jaén (Andalucía), Ávila, Salamanca y Zamora (Castilla-León), Cáceres and Badajoz

TABLE 8.1

Persons that live in households without cars (municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants)

	NUMBER OF PERSONS	% AMONG CHILDREN UNDER 16	% AMONG PERSONS OVER 65	% AMONG UNEMPLOYED
Number of persons	1,947,347	124,804	1,059,923	117,645
Spain	20.3	8.7	51.5	20.0
Andalusia	421,799	12.3	62.0	24.3
Aragón	79,832	6.5	49.0	17.1
Asturias	34,938	8.7	49.5	18.8
Balearic Islands	22,534	5.7	38.8	11.1
Canary Islands	46,346	11.8	45.4	21.8
Cantabria	28,386	6.5	42.2	14.0
Castilla and Leon	267,988	7.5	57.4	18.5
Castilla-La Mancha	210,674	8.2	61.0	20.6
Catalonia	158,545	5.8	35.5	12.8
Community of Valencia	136,909	6.6	47.1	16.0
Extremadura	156,004	10.1	64.6	22.5
Galicia	196,599	9.1	44.9	17.3
La Rioja	23,726	8.2	54.8	21.0
Madrid	43,628	8.0	48.4	15.0
Murcia	17,827	10.3	52.7	18.1
Navarra	39,696	6.4	40.8	15.4
Basque Country	61,916	7.2	41.8	17.6

Source: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

(Extremadura) and Toledo, Ciudad Real and Cuenca (Castilla-La Mancha). This is an indicator which suggests a social landscape where dependent groups (dependent on their own family network and on social services) acquire a strong weight. In the most at risk cases, households which lack private cars may suffer various situations of social risk. For example, a total of 16,735 persons live in households without cars and with more than 3 unemployed persons in the home (47 percent of these households are found in rural areas in Andalusia).

The precarious mobility of certain groups of rural residents contrasts, however, with the intensified «motorization» that we find in others (such as among young

TABLE 8.2

Structure of households without cars (municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants)

	TOTAL PERSONS	% OF TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD	% OF HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CARS
Total	1,947,347	20.3	100
Single person households < 65 years of age	122,765	33.5	6.3
Single person households 65 and older	365,781	88.1	18.8
Single parent with children	30,550	23.3	1.6
Two adults of 16 to 64 years of age, without children	100,816	15.2	5.2
Two adults, one at least 65 years of age or older, without children	593,398	56.8	30.5
Two parents with children	136,360	6.9	7.0
Two adults, one of 16 to 35 years of age, with or without children	154,542	11.3	7.9
Two adults, 35 years of age or more, with or without children	76,794	6.9	3.9
Other households with several adults, with or without children	366,341	14.6	18.8

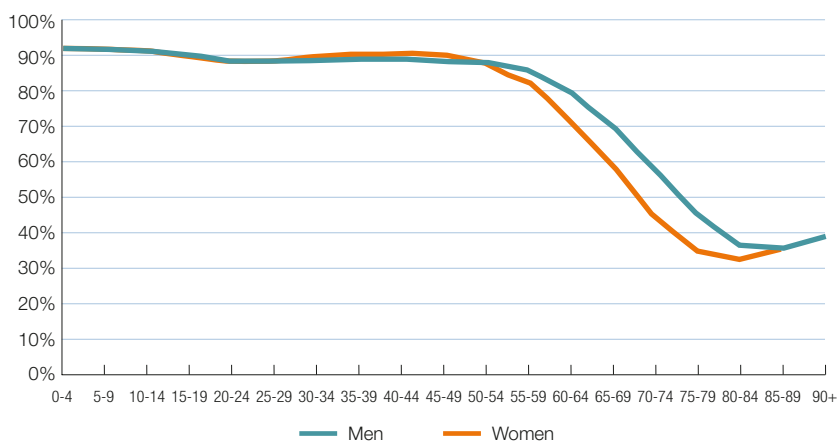
Source: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

people or the exurban middle class that arrived in rural areas during recent decades). The 2001 census shows, for example, that among the employed under 35 years of age, the car is used as a means of transport to work for 6 of every ten individuals living in mid-size municipalities (between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants) and 7 of every ten who live in municipalities of less than 10,000 (72 percent among young people who reside in municipalities of less than 2,000 inhabitants).

This unequal relationship with *automobility* among rural residents can be better seen comparing the percentages of persons that live in homes with cars by age and sex (graph 8.1). The *immobilized* groups increase significantly in older generations (between 50 and 80 years of age) only to decline among the most elderly (as they tend to live in homes with families that have cars). There is a slight inequality between men and women of the same generation, a higher percentage of men living in households where there is an automobile. In

GRAPH 8.1

Percentage of persons that live in households with vehicle by age groups (municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants)



Source: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

addition, the special association between homes with children and automobility due to the multiplication of tasks and responsibilities associated with raising children should also be noted.

8.2. Mobility in relation to opportunities and employment

Daily life in rural areas today is shaped by the possibilities that the spread of *automobility* offers. The flexibility offered by privately owned cars makes possible the forms of settlement among young people and women in rural areas, the residential and employment strategies of a good part of its residents, the repopulation of certain areas with new exurban residents and the permanence of others, particularly the aged assisted by family networks.

For example, access to employment is clearly linked among more than half of the employed to the possibilities that transport offers to escape the limitations of local labour markets. This is an increasingly necessary option as the size of municipality decreases, as table 8.3 shows, and the necessity for automobile travel increases.

TABLE 8.3

Employed over 16 years of age who work in another municipality or several municipalities

	TOTAL EMPLOYED THAT WORK IN ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY	MEN THAT WORK IN ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY	WOMEN THAT WORK IN ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY	YOUNG PEOPLE (UNDER 35 YEARS OF AGE) THAT WORK IN ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY
Total	37.6	41.5	31.3	41.2
Less than 101 inhab.	55.5	51.6	66.5	71.0
From 101 to 500 inhab.	53.4	51.7	57.5	66.8
From 501 to 1,000 inhab.	52.2	52.7	51.1	63.4
From 1,001 to 2,000 inhab.	50.6	52.2	47.3	58.9
From 2,001 to 5,000 inhab.	48.0	50.6	42.9	54.3
From 5,001 to 10,000 inhab.	45.8	48.6	40.7	49.8
From 10,001 to 20,000 inhab.	44.9	48.1	39.2	47.8
From 20,001 to 50,000 inhab.	44.2	47.3	39.0	46.5
From 50,001 to 100,000 inhab.	41.7	45.7	35.3	44.0
From 100,001 to 500,000 inhab.	31.7	35.9	25.3	35.4
More than 500,000 inhab.	19.8	24.0	14.3	21.2

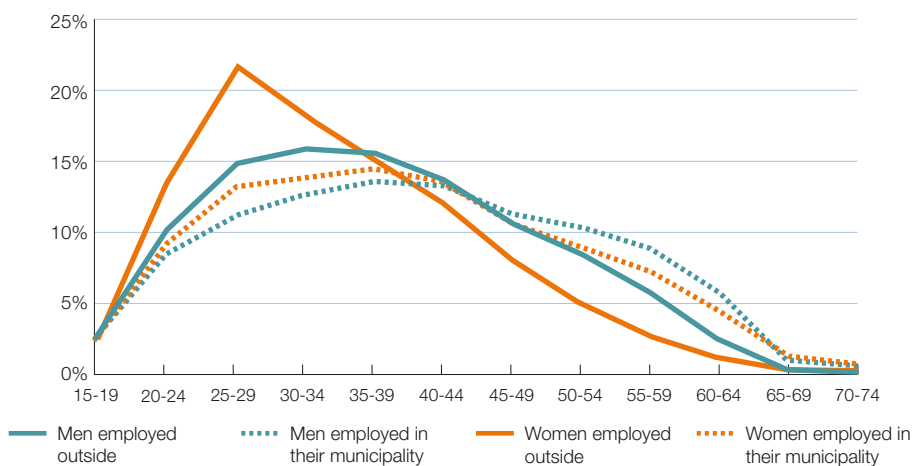
Source: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

This routine job related mobility outside of the municipality is a form of integration in the labour market widespread among rural young people. The different milestones in the life cycle (marriage, children, etc.) can later favour a gradual tendency toward individuals adapting work to their place of residency (which may involve women's abandonment of employment, residential changes, etc.). But, as we see in graph 8.2, the youngest groups of employed maintain a high level of mobility, more than half being employed outside their municipality of residence. This relationship reverses sharply among mature adults (those above 50 years of age), who opt for local employment. In the case of women, employment outside their municipality of residence declines significantly after 30 years of age, until it eventually almost disappears.

The different age pyramids of men and women employed outside and in their municipality of residence show the pressure that the rural world exercises (as an environment with limited opportunities) on the youngest residents. We can also see how generational strategies appear associated by gender and mobility in the different groups of rural residents.

GRAPH 8.2

Age structure of those employed outside of their municipality of residence (rural residents)



Source: Population census of 2001. Author elaboration.

For example, a significant number of women that worked outside of their municipality of residence in 2001 worked in skilled jobs in services and public administration (teaching, healthcare) and as mid-level administrators. Along with these jobs, other less skilled jobs also acquired a significant weight (personal services in the home, providing home care and attention, cleaning). Men employed outside their municipalities of residence often worked in *manual* labour (construction, skilled agricultural labour) and transportation. We can sum up these employment strategies by saying that 3 of every 10 rural residents employed outside their municipality of residence were men employed in construction or *blue collar* jobs; 2 others were a man and a woman employed as professionals, qualified technicians or *white collar* workers; and two others were a man and a woman in unskilled jobs.

Other studies (Camarero and others, 2006) have shown that the decline in precarious employment among rural women is sustained by the use of private transport. Among rural young people, the groups that have a high mobility (working outside of their municipality, having their own vehicle, employing an average of more than 20 minutes daily travel time to work) worked in

management, technical or professional positions. While the groups with low mobility (young people under 20 years of age, those employed in their municipality of residence and without their own vehicle) work under worse working conditions and more often in unskilled positions. Private automobiles seem to be one of the keys to improving the possibility of professional employment among rural women and young people.

If we look at this phenomenon from a regional perspective, commuting for employment purposes in the rural areas of the different autonomous communities follows two basic patterns (Oliva, 2007), (table 8.4). On the one hand, there is that which characterizes the most industrialized and urbanized

TABLE 8.4

Characteristics of extralocal rural employment

	EMPLOYED OUTSIDE / EMPLOYED LOCALLY	WOMEN / MEN EMPLOYED OUTSIDE	% INTERRURAL MOBILITY	% EMPLOYED OUTSIDE (MEN < 35 YEARS OLD)	% EMPLOYED OUTSIDE (WOMEN < 35 YEARS OLD)	% EMPLOYED OUTSIDE THAT COMMUTE > 30 MINUTES
Total	0.93	0.45	24.4	55.4	53.5	28.6
Andalusia	0.68	0.36	20.0	47.7	41.2	33.4
Aragón	0.69	0.46	34.5	47.2	51.1	24.8
Asturias	0.70	0.37	25.0	54.4	47.4	33.3
Balearic Islands	0.64	0.58	15.6	39.3	41.6	22.1
Canary Islands	0.92	0.50	11.3	52.6	49.0	49.7
Cantabria	1.52	0.40	24.1	70.2	65.4	21.0
Castilla and Leon	0.96	0.43	23.7	59.4	62.3	23.7
Castilla-La Mancha	0.74	0.34	25.2	50.4	44.5	34.4
Catalonia	1.25	0.59	26.9	60.3	62.2	25.1
Community of Valencia	0.90	0.45	26.4	53.3	49.0	20.1
Extremadura	0.52	0.33	29.1	43.8	38.5	26.2
Galicia	0.90	0.43	20.5	62.8	56.6	28.5
La Rioja	0.72	0.43	34.6	46.9	48.4	16.0
Madrid	1.85	0.52	12.6	68.2	64.7	57.8
Murcia	0.85	0.35	9.4	56.0	41.6	23.8
Navarra	1.26	0.51	37.7	62.1	62.4	18.6
Basque Country	1.87	0.52	30.6	71.8	69.4	23.0

Source: Oliva, 2007.

areas (for example, Catalonia, Madrid and the Basque Country), where commuting has become widespread regardless of type of work or place of residency. Its importance is high among all occupational groups, by gender and across generations, and is oriented in different directions (interrural commuting, rural-urban commuting, etc.). On the other hand, the model in regions with traditionally large land holdings and less or later industrialization (for example, Andalusia and Extremadura) is one in which commuting is concentrated in certain occupations held by young people, and with low rates of commuting among women.

In the first group of rural areas (close to metropolitan areas, integrated into the most industrialized regions and in the uniprovincial communities of the north of the country), more diversified and accessible extralocal labour markets are emerging which employ both men and women and different age groups. In the second group of rural areas, labour mobility seems more difficult or less necessary and mobility is oriented toward masculinised work in metropolitan areas, the capitals or regional centres. If in the first group we find 6 to 7 of every 10 rural young persons under 35 years of age commuting daily to work in another municipality and young rural women with equal or higher rates of commuting than men, in the second group their weight is reduced significantly (3 to 4 of every ten employed women work outside of their municipality of residence).

8.3. The support generation and mobility

Daily mobility is a fundamental resource for the employment and residential strategies of a good part of the support generation. Especially for those that arrived in rural municipalities in the last decade, among whom 7 of every ten commute to work outside of their municipality of residence (table 8.5). We also find in this group a wider use of the car and a higher percentage of employed with a longer commute to work.

In comparison with men, women in this generational group more often have employment that is locally based (especially women that have resided in their municipality for more than a decade). And when women travel to work, they have an easier and closer routine commute. For example, one of every four women walks to work or goes by bicycle, and half work in the municipality

TABLE 8.5

Commuting among the support generation by sex and by length of residency

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	NEW RESIDENTS (<10 YEARS)	LOCALS (>10 YEARS)
Work at home	5.3	4.8	6.0	3.8	5.5
Work at home or in the municipality	42.5	38.1	49.0	18.4	46.2
Work outside the municipality or in several places	56.2	60.4	50.1	72.5	52.4
Take less than 20 minutes	66.3	62.3	72.4	54.8	69.1
Take more than 20 minutes	30.8	34.0	26.2	43.1	27.9
Walk to work or go by bicycle	19.3	15.1	25.7	14.5	20.5
Commute to work by car	70.6	72.8	67.4	73.6	69.9
Commute to work on public transport or employee provided transport	8.7	10.6	6.0	12.0	8.0
Commute to work with others	23.0	20.8	26.6	17.5	24.3

Source: EPR-2008.

where they reside (as compared to 38 percent of men). In general, workers that are locally employed, are those that need the least time to get to work (less than ten minutes in 90 percent of the cases), while almost half of those that work outside their municipality of residence need more than 20 minutes to get to work (table 8.6).

Regarding the means used to get to work, the division between those that work locally and those that work outside their municipality also shows the importance of strategies for daily mobility based on the use of private vehicles (table 8.7).

If we look more closely at the group formed by persons that do not drive, we can see that their different position with respect to opportunities and services appears, in the survey, to be associated with gender and length of residency in the municipality. For example, one of every five of those who do not drive state that they are economically inactive, and the unemployed also acquire greater weight in this group (13.5 percent) than among the rest, as do casual workers (12.2 percent). In contrast, more than half the individuals who drive regularly are wage earners with permanent contracts and only a small percentage (7.5

percent) state that they are unemployed. This association cannot be interpreted as a causal relationship but it does point to different lifestyles which broaden or reduce the range of opportunities that different groups of rural residents have access to.

If persons in this group are seen as potential regular users of aid in social and family networks (for example, to travel to regional centres, to get to work or complete errands outside of the municipality, etc.), they also constitute, as members of the support generation lacking motorized mobility, a group in a

TABLE 8.6

Time employed in commuting to work among the support generation by place of work and sex

	WORK IN MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE					WORK OUTSIDE MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE			
	TOTALS	MEN	WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
< 10 min.	39.3	37.5	42.2	81.5	77.3	79.6	14.2	12.6	13.6
10-20 min.	27.0	24.8	30.2	11.0	19.5	14.9	33.1	39.9	35.5
20-30 min.	13.5	14.4	12.4	3.4	2.8	3.1	20.8	20.5	20.7
30-60 min.	12.4	13.3	10.9	3.1	0.4	1.8	19.5	20.5	19.8
> 60 min.	4.9	6.2	2.9	0.7	0.0	0.4	9.3	5.5	7.9

Source: EPR-2008.

TABLE 8.7

Means used by the support generation for getting to work by place of work and sex

	WORK IN MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE						WORK OUTSIDE MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE		
	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN
Car/motorcycle	70.6	72.7	67.5	50.3	55.8	43.8	85.5	83.7	88.8
Employee transport	5.6	8.0	2.0	3.3	5.1	1.2	7.3	9.8	2.7
Public transportation	3.1	2.6	4.0	0.4	0.0	0.8	5.0	4.2	6.5
Walking/ bicycle	19.3	15.1	25.6	46.0	39.0	54.2	1.9	2.1	1.7

Source: EPR-2008.

TABLE 8.8

Drivers and non-drivers among the support generation by type of work

	TOTAL	DO NOT DRIVE REGULARLY	DRIVE REGULARLY
Professional or management	15.8	13.4	20.5
Mid-level management	2.9	1.4	3.9
Administrative work	12.8	14.2	16.1
Employment in retail, hotel and restaurant sector	7.6	14.5	8.6
Skilled trades	12.4	12.2	15.9
Industrial employment	11.1	9.1	14.5
Unskilled manual labour	4.9	9.2	5.6
Agricultural employment	7.2	10.2	8.8
Cleaning/domestic services/personal care	5.4	14.8	5.5

Source: EPR-2008.

much more precarious position to provide assistance within their own network. In fact, assistance provided and received in relation to transport constitutes the third most mentioned form of assistance by men and women after the care of children and aid with domestic tasks.

The type of household, as well as its size and the resources that immediate family networks use, become conditions that either multiply resources or increase responsibilities in relation to aid and mobility. For example, only a small percentage (5.2 percent) of the support generation is brought by someone else when they travel to the city, and barely 10 percent go to the city using public transportation. However, if we look more closely at the homes where these individuals live, we can see the greater or lesser dependency they show in getting around (and accessing the specialized services that nearby cities offer). Table 8.9 shows the distribution by different type of household. For example, the weight of those that are brought by someone else to the city increases in single parent households and those where members of an extended family live.

In addition, not only available resources but also the definition of family roles and different lifestyles determine the forms of aid that are given to or

TABLE 8.9

Normal means for going to the city among the support generation

	TOTAL	TAKEN BY SOMEONE	ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT
Live alone	4.5	2.1	8.6
Live in a couple	9.1	7.4	9.7
Live in a couple with children over 6	37.5	36.2	36.2
Live in a couple with children under 6	20.1	20.2	10.8
Single parents with children	3.4	5.3	7.0
Single living with elderly persons	15.1	11.7	16.2
Extended family	8.4	11.7	7.0
Others	1.9	5.3	4.3

Source: EPR-2008.

TABLE 8.10

Members of the support generation who during the last week took someone or accompanied someone, for any reason, outside of the municipality

Total	34.8
Men	34.6
Women	35.1
Living less than 10 years in the municipality	36.0
Living more than 10 years in the municipality	34.2
Employed in the municipality	31.2
Employed outside the municipality	37.5

Source: EPR-2008.

demanded from family networks. For example, long term residents have more «localized» lifestyles and less mobility in their social practices. However, those that have become rural residents in the last decade, in addition to more often working outside of their place of residency and driving more regularly, have less local lifestyles. In other words, they travel more intensively, incorporating travel in a greater number of their daily activities (they more often leave the municipality to go shopping, to take the children to day care, etc.). Table 8.10 offers a picture of this relationship.

8.4. Mobility and labour markets

In comparison to labour relations which predominate in urban areas, rural labour markets have been traditionally described using characteristics that reveal their fragility (greater prevalence of informal relations, paternalistic practices, less skilled work, temporary contracts, etc.). These characteristics fit, in particular, local labour markets. The vulnerability of rural employment is thus closely associated with mobility as it divides the employed into two differentiated groups. For example, the 2001 census shows almost 1 of every 4 individuals employed locally working in primary activities (essentially agriculture) and 1 of every 5 working in retail and the hotel and restaurant sector. A significant number of these workers (11.6 percent) carry out their work at home. The employment profile of those that do not work locally is more diverse and includes individuals with higher qualifications (1 of every 5 is employed in manufacturing and another in public administration, education and healthcare).

The primary sector, small businesses and personal services predominate among the jobs of those that are employed in their municipality of residence. In some cases we are talking about aging and masculinised sectors (such as the managers of small and medium sized retail businesses, hotels and restaurants where those over 50 years of age make up more than 1 of every 5 employees). In the case of young people who are employed locally, they often work as supplementary and unskilled labour in these same sectors (workers in restaurants – half of them younger than 35 years of age –, agricultural labourers – 7 of every 10 from this same age group –, employees in personal services – housework and cleaning, etc. – and workers in traditional manufacturing industries – food, drink, wood and furniture, textiles, leather goods, shoes – where those under 35 years of age make up half of the workers).

Thus, depending on accessibility and regional infrastructures, daily labour mobility is a strategy which guarantees the setting down of roots among rural youth, as it facilitates their access to better wages and opportunities and is even a widespread and obligatory option because of the lack of local employment. For example, some counties have developed true local subcultures of rural commuting, perfected over various generations (Oliva and Díaz, 2005).

The survey on the support generation goes deeper into the analysis of this division. Almost 40 percent of those employed in their own municipality are self-employed, in family businesses or as farmers. And while those that work outside of their municipalities of residence have, in 7 of every 10 cases, permanent contracts, this relationship declines to 5 of every 10 among those employed locally. This difference also appears when we consider the types of work and gender. For example, almost one of every 3 women employed outside of their municipality works as a professional or in management, and almost one of every three as an office clerk. In contrast to this pattern, the predominant employment activities among women who work locally are related to manual labour (jobs cleaning, in domestic service or in the care of others, in 1 of every 5 cases, and in retail and the hotel and restaurant sector also in one of every 5 cases). Finally, agricultural labour duplicates its weight among local workers in comparison to those who work outside of their place of residence. While among this group jobs as professionals, in management and other skilled work acquire greater weight.

Educational level also reveals the fragility of local employment, as well as different trajectories in integrating into the labour market. For example, while women with primary school education make up almost half of the women locally employed, their weight is reduced to one of every three women employed outside their place of residence. An inverse and proportional relationship can be seen in considering those with a university education.

In addition, the visibility of female employment permits us to see the strong subjugation of women workers in their own municipality to a secondary labour market (temporary and part time work, etc.). For example, one of every 4 locally employed women works by the hour and there are twice as many part time workers among women as men.

It is not surprising, therefore, that those interviewed share the perception that local employment is fragile and that almost 6 of every 10 say that they agree with the idea that there are more local jobs for men than for women and that those that have better jobs work outside of town.

To sum up, our analysis of the relationships that rural residents have to mobility reveals three important processes which define the current situation in rural areas. First, differences emerge between new and long term residents.

Unequal access to and use of mobility illustrates, in this sense, an inequality in the social conditions which provide flexibility in the time and space of daily life and which impact on employment activity and social responsibilities. *Immobility* or precariousness in relation to mobility (social capital) is, in a broad sense, a limitation on opportunities. If added to other social conditions, this lack can end up relegating certain groups to situations of dependency or to adopting old strategies of traditional rural society (emigration, to settle and renounce employment opportunities, etc.).

Secondly, our analysis also shows the effort carried out by the support generation to sustain rural society. The weight that this group takes on (in this case, through the intensification of their daily mobility oriented toward strategies for providing aid) forms one of the backbones of rural family networks. The effectiveness of intergenerational solidarity (aid to dependents, access to healthcare and educational services, access to shops, etc.) cannot be understood without taking into account the fundamental role that *automobility* plays in all these relationships.

Finally, mobility plays a strategic role in the establishment or settlement of numerous rural groups, such as young people, women and professionals. This important function is clear in the case of employment. Rural labour markets present a fragility which, often, can only be overcome through mobility, as they are more conducive to the reproduction of subordinate labour relations, shaped by the secular scarcity of work, dependency on local employers and limited possibilities for self-employment. In addition, the weight of manual work – with lower skills requisites –, typical of less mature production processes, raises a question about up to what point rural labour markets are or will be exposed to competition from regions and workers of different countries under the logic of global economic relations.

IX. From disequilibrium to sustainability

In the introduction we referred to a story with a main character, the support generation; a storyline, the management of daily life; and a setting, global society. Our story has no ending because it is never ending; but it does have a plot and intrigue, so that the reader can construct the ending that most convinces him or her. Here the work of the authors ends and, perhaps, the work of the reader begins.

Although without a beginning or an end, our story is composed of various scenes that occur in the same place. First, we presented the main character: the support generation. Next, through a combination of short takes, we gradually presented the daily life of this generation, verifying that a good part of the time of its members is dedicated to taking care of others and that the form in which this care and support is given conditions their employment and life trajectories. The text does not end with a traditional fade out but rather with a panoramic shot which reveals the growing social heterogeneity of rural populations and their dynamic connection to territory and, hence, with society.

As background we have briefly looked at the «*rural question*» on the political agenda. «*The future of the rural world*»,⁽¹⁾ the «Cork Declaration»,⁽²⁾ the latest EU rural development regulation⁽³⁾ and, in Spain, the Law for sustainable rural

(1) Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament (17 October 1988 COM (88) 501 final). See Commission of the European Communities (1988).

(2) *The Cork Declaration – A living countryside*. Declaration from states participating in the European Conference on Rural Development. Cork, 9 November 1996. See http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/cork_en.htm.

(3) Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 of 20 September 2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). *Official Journal of the European Union* of 20 October 2005.

development⁽⁴⁾ mark fundamental milestones that have oriented many initiatives for intervention in rural areas. Agricultural production, environmental concerns, rural employment and quality of life in rural areas are the focus of said initiatives in a context in which rural development has been progressively defined as sustainable rural development. The emergence of sustainability as leitmotif has led to new perspectives and a shift in focus from the environment to the economic sphere. The debate has been enriched with questions about social sustainability. In fact, despite improvements due to the efforts of the European Union and national, regional and local government, some economic indicators (depopulation, masculinisation, aging, fragility of labour markets, social inequalities) indicate a horizon of perennial uncertainty in rural areas. As a result, development must not only integrate the organisation of socioeconomic processes, but permit the emergence of subjectivities and desires so that an improvement in quality of life is effectively perceived by rural inhabitants. It is with this purpose, contributing to reflections on social sustainability in rural populations in Spain, that this study has been carried out. To do this, statistical information from numerous sources has been complemented with in-depth interviews with women from rural areas of Castilla and Leon (who as a group paradigmatically represent the challenges of development), and a broad survey of a total of 1,500 men and women (EPR-2008) representative of the population from 30 to 49 years of age that resides in rural areas of Spain.

The important demographic imbalances caused by rural exodus during the second half of the past century still condition rural population structures today, one generation standing out for its size: the support generation.

The support generation is constituted by those who are today near to or in their forties and are the children of those that did not leave during the exodus. They constitute the nerve centre of rural life for their active age and their importance as care takers of dependent elderly persons and young children; and because the immediately older and younger generations are, in comparison, much smaller. Because of their vital importance and for the effort they make in maintaining rural areas, they have been the principal object of this study. The change in traditional settlement patterns toward new regional and more diffuse

(4) Law 45/2007, 13 December, for sustainable rural development. BOE no. 2999 of 14/12/2007, pp. 51.339-51.349.

forms (counterurbanization and sprawling) in the organisation of populations in the country mean that the support generation increases in size because of the arrival of new residents. Around one third of the support generation is now made up of these new residents.

Demographic disequilibriums, in addition to being an expression of the past, are also the result of these new trends, and a close reading of these imbalances across the country permits us to see distinct social landscapes. In concrete, we have detected five major rural models. At one extreme we find the northeastern interior of the country, which reveals a *disconnected rurality*, in which the relationships between rural populations are exiguous and the support generation does not grow and has a very high level of responsibility for the care of dependent persons. At the opposite extreme we find rural areas where the support generation has grown rapidly because of the arrival of new residents and a social landscape in which the economically active population predominates. This forms a model of *dense rurality*. Between both positions are hybrid models, a *rurality in transition*, fundamentally in the north of the country, which has some of the characteristics of decline of disconnected rurality without reaching the same depth; a *local rurality*, centred in Andalusia and Extremadura, which reveals a panorama of relative demographic equilibrium in a context of larger and more self-sufficient population centres; and, finally, a rurality which we have called *liquid rurality*, present in the northern Mediterranean coastal areas, the Ebro valley and the region of Madrid, which constitutes rural areas where the heterogeneity of the social composition and social processes and their inter-relationships are very high, in other words, a very dynamic rurality.

The important role of the support generation cannot hide other imbalances which severely affect rural populations. In concrete, rural masculinisation, which is defined by the significant absence of women at young and central ages. The reality of this problem can be seen in the data from municipalities of less than 2,000 inhabitants, where there are only 80 women for every 100 men between the ages of 30 to 49. This level of rural masculinisation is high even in the context of the whole of Europe.

The effects of rural masculinisation are important to the issue of what we have called, throughout this study, social sustainability. The absence of women conditions to an extreme many social, affective and reproductive processes,

but what is most important, it reveals the impact of gender inequalities on the future of rural populations. The cause of rural masculinisation is the greater emigration of rural women in comparison to men, and this illustrates one of the principal weak points of development processes. The development of modernity was androcentric; women had a secondary role in the operation of family agriculture. The response was *educated flight*: education as a means to reach independence which could almost only be obtained through employment in urban areas. Currently, new sources of inequality are emerging in rural areas because of the demands of extra-local labour markets. The responsibilities that women have for the care of dependent persons reduces their mobility and as a result, their access to labour markets outside of their places of residence where their qualifications can be recognized. This process is another factor in the emigration of rural women.

The other fundamental imbalance in rural populations is aging. The figures for the aging population are so high that we really must talk about an over-aging population. 19 percent of the inhabitants of municipalities with less than 5,000 persons are older than 70 years of age, a figure which increases to more than 25 percent in the northeast interior of the country. The aging of the population is highly correlated with disability, as disabilities increase considerably with age. As a result, this study has explored the prevalence of disabilities in rural areas. In general terms we have seen that disabilities are more frequent in rural areas than in urban ones.

The data does not permit us to determine the concrete causes for this but points to the higher life expectancy in rural areas as an important cause. The results show that in rural areas in Spain around 750,000 persons reside who have difficulties taking care of themselves or have difficulties getting around normally. In short, these situations of dependency mean that there is one dependent person (someone incapable of taking care of him/herself autonomously) for each 3.8 persons in the support generation. However, this ratio varies across the country. Thus, dependency is extremely high in rural areas in Galicia and Asturias, where there are less than three members of the support generation for each dependent person, and much lower in the northern Mediterranean coastal areas and the upper basin of the Ebro.

The family constitutes an institution of great importance for the organisation of subsistence, care and reproduction. There has been a gradual transformation

of family structures in rural areas which has been parallel to the changes taking place in society in general, in the sense that there has been a decline in the size of families and an increase in the plurality of forms of cohabitation. In the composition of rural family structures, the higher incidence of forms of cohabitation without reproductive structures, stands out. There are more people living alone and there are more adult children that continue to live with their parents. Both categories reveal the impact of aging, of masculinisation and of the responsibility that dependency entails. Thus, in rural areas more than 12 percent of individuals between 30 and 50 years of age are single and living with their parents.

Relationships of dependency are extreme in many places. Rural populations confront such situations through a dense network of aid. The dispersion of and difficulty in accessing facilities and services nearby means that the involvement of the support generation is intensive. Some 10 percent live with a dependent person and half of the support generation has daily responsibility for the care of a dependent family member. The care of others impacts in a direct manner on the employment and life trajectories of women in the support generation. One of every ten women has to give up their work to take care of family. Aid to dependent persons is provided through reciprocal family networks, and this aid is inscribed, without distinction, in a general system of aid in which activities related to care of dependent persons are not distinguished from domestic tasks. These are informal networks which function like time banks, that is, with a strong segmentation by gender of the tasks and in the forms of organisation of the network: women in the routine and most personal tasks of care and men in the management of the mobility of dependent family; women through networks of solidarity of generalized exchange and men through the exchange of concrete and reciprocal aid.

As can be seen, gender inequalities are a continual presence in the distinct processes studied. This is a central issue in the study of the balancing of family and work life, particularly in regards to the division of tasks between men and women. Our study shows the distortion that gender stereotypes produce in the very perception of reality. The unequal division of tasks between men and women is accompanied by the great difficulty on the part of both men and women in recognizing this reality and, especially, in imagining more balanced ways of sharing tasks. The intense weight of dependency that falls on the

support generation means that men collaborate more than would be imagined, but they do it through control over mobility. This unequal division of labour is a crucial issue and, as the reader has little by little discovered, is central to this story. It is symptomatic in this regard to observe that, although the provision of day care centres is significant in many rural areas, their use is not. The role of day care centres in balancing work and family life is clear, especially for women. However, when we look at their use, what we discover is that couples that commute to work, and particularly women, very often do not use available day care facilities, preferring to contract individuals to provide child care.

In this social landscape, very much determined by demographic disequilibriums, we have studied other tendencies toward change such as the arrival of new residents to rural areas. The new residents differ from the autochthonous population in having higher educational levels, higher levels of economic activity and more individualized and autonomous integration in productive spheres. These differences are reflected in reproductive spheres. They have fewer dependents because of the great distance they have from their families of origin; in other words, they are a support generation that does not provide support with the same intensity as the autochthonous population. In addition, their settlement in rural areas is characterized by a strong duality, as, though they generally form *family* households, living with a partner and with children, there is also a significant group of new residents who live alone.

An additional factor of change in rural structures is the arrival of new rural residents of foreign origin. Currently, just over 1 of every 20 rural inhabitants comes from outside of Spain. This is a growing population group but one which is very differentiated. On the one hand, there are residents that come from the European Union, who install themselves in rural areas near the coast and who fit what is referred to as *retirement migration*. On the other hand, there are non-EU immigrants who come to rural areas to work. The growth and importance of these new residents is a recent phenomenon, which began with the new century and which divides the country between the west, with a low presence of non-EU immigrants, and the east, with a presence that in some cases reaches rates above 10 percent of the rural population. In general, the residential trajectories of immigrants shows strong residential variation, as rural areas constitute a passing way station for them. Agricultural activities and others of a local character do not form part of their life project and family

organization. The cities are their first and final destinations. In fact, although agricultural employment is important for their integration in the labour market, they often do such work while maintaining their urban residency, so as to not lose mobility and so that they can develop a constant chain of economic activities. While rural inhabitants commute daily, from their rural residence to their urban jobs, immigrants practice a reverse commuting: from their urban residence to their rural jobs.

In short, it can be seen that the arrival of new residents, foreigners or not, to rural areas, does not effectively counteract the demographic disequilibriums we have pointed out. But it does provide rural areas and populations with new sources of diversity in their social structures and reveals the high level of exchange and interconnection which exists between rural towns and villages and cities in Spanish society.

In our analysis we also looked at the forms of economic activity. Access to work in rural areas is highly determined. Determined by gender and by length of residency. Work is fundamentally extra-local. Working in rural areas means moving about in the area, above all for good jobs. The best jobs involve daily commuting. This is easier for men and for new residents and is less feasible for women and autochthonous residents. This generates a new source of vulnerability and social inequality whose key element is mobility. Long term residents have less mobility than new residents. In fact, new residents move their residency to rural areas but maintain their work in urban areas. Women involved in the regular or constant care of others are not as mobile and as a result, their employment is limited to local labour markets which have higher rates of irregular and precarious employment.

The importance of mobility is so great that it acts as the principal marker of social differences, generating two distinct groups: the mobile and immobile. Access to mobility is key. Rural areas today function to the extent that mobility is possible, to the extent that individuals can accede to employment outside of their place of residency, to the extent that the arrival and settlement of new residents is possible, and to the extent that productive activities that were not previously present can be developed. However, the weight of dependency on the support generation reduces its members' mobility, primarily in the case of women. There is mobility for work, mobility to take care of others and the mobility of persons in need of care. All of this is supported by *automobility*,

in other words, mobility through the use of the automobile. *Automobility* generates differences, particularly by gender. There are cultural restrictions and material restrictions on the mobility of certain groups, especially women, which makes them immobile and, as a result, particularly vulnerable.

This is, in short, life in rural areas in Spain from the perspective of one of its principal protagonists: the support generation. Three issues raise questions about the sustainability of rural areas: demographic disequilibriums, inequality in access to mobility and gender inequalities, situations which feedback on each other continuously and which determine the exodus of young people and particularly women. These imbalances decisively condition opportunities to form families and the establishment of personal strategies for life development. Those who are most mobile can avoid this situation. In fact, those are the new residents, who, as we have seen, are generally not responsible for the care of dependent persons. Those who are immobile or who see that their mobility may be constricted opt to settle in urban areas; they are the protagonists of depopulation. Those who are immobile but cannot leave constitute the vulnerable population.

These three elements – demographic disequilibrium, gender inequalities and differences in access to mobility – are the principal threats to social sustainability in rural areas. Within a framework of inequality it is difficult for rural residents to develop an attractive life project and, as a consequence, the future of rural populations continues in uncertainty. And here lies the heart of the matter. Development can be harmonious if it manages to use available resources, if it makes use of rural regions and if it balances protection of the environment with economic activity, but this is not all that is necessary for development to be successful. The social landscape, the environment in which individuals make life decisions, comprises not only the productive sphere, but also that of daily life. In other words, the quality of rural life depends not only on the possibilities for material development but also the real possibilities of matching life expectations, individuals' subjective desires, to the environment. And it is precisely here, where the inequalities analysed in this study endanger rural sustainability.

These three inequalities represent a great social and political challenge. To diminish them will require a great effort involving all of society. Demographic disequilibriums have underlying historical causes and they feed off the other

two inequalities. Gender inequality is not rural patrimony, nor is it clear that it is more intense in rural areas than urban ones. It is only more visible and its combination with rural demographic disequilibriums strengthens its impact on community life. Inequalities in access to mobility offer us, perhaps, the most immediate opportunity to change the situation or, at least, an accessible thread for unravelling the problem.

Approaches to development based on a better understanding of the close connection of rural populations with urban labour markets; actions that favour the mobility of workers; social policies that address the care of dependent persons, the care of young children and the need for balance between family and work taking into account the demands for mobility of the support generation; these are all part of the solution to the problems which rural areas and their populations face.

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Methodological appendix

This study has combined sources of quantitative and qualitative data, as well as primary and secondary sources. Below the main sources are described.

Qualitative analysis

The principal qualitative source was the thirteen interviews with rural women, completed prior to the quantitative study, which permitted us to incorporate some of the results from the interviews into the quantitative study. The interviews were with women from rural areas in Castilla and Leon. The interviews were organized around three central themes widely discussed in this study: the social landscape, the family and life cycle and employment situation. The social landscape takes into account, not only the demographic structure of the population, but also its socioeconomic situation and its degree of interconnection with the city. The life cycle places the women interviewed near or in the support generation, between 24 and 54 years of age, with a range of family situations. Finally, the employment cycle also reveals a range of relations to economic activity, from situations of fragility to situations of complete integration in labour markets.

CHART A.1

Qualitative interviews

	PROVINCE (POPULATION OF MUNICIPALITY)	SOCIAL LANDSCAPE	LIFE CYCLE	EMPLOYMENT SITUATION
1	Burgos (1,994)	Masculinisation/aging Masculinised local labour market Peripheral	49 years old, in process of separation, one daughter	temporary employment in sociocultural programmes
2	Palencia (165)	Masculinisation/aging Masculinised local labour market Peripheral	24 years old, single	temporary employment in recreation and tourist promotion for local government
3	León (3,115)	Demographic equilibrium Limited local labour market Connection with urban labour market	24 years old, lives with a partner	self-employed, own photography business
4	Valladolid (1,948)	Demographic equilibrium Limited local labour market Integration in urban labour market	25 years old, living with a partner	employed, clerk in clothes shop («new resident»)
5	Salamanca (3,281)	Demographic equilibrium Limited local labour market Integration in urban labour market	43 years old, separated, two children	self-employed, owner of clothes shop («new resident»)
6	Ávila (2,198)	Masculinisation Limited local labour market Connection with urban labour market	36 years old, married, two children	self-employed, in rural tourism
7	Burgos (6,271)	Demographic equilibrium Feminised local labour market Connection with urban labour market	30 years old, single	employed in textile sector
8	Segovia (3,671)	Masculinisation Limited/masculinised local labour market Peripheral	27 years old, lives with a partner	civil servant, primary school teacher
9	Ávila (7,507)	Demographic equilibrium Masculinised local labour market Connection with urban labour market	34 years old, married, two children	housewife
10	Soria (749)	Masculinisation/aging Limited local labour market	26 years old, married, does not live with husband, one daughter	immigrant, takes care of the elderly
11	Zamora (439)	Masculinisation/aging Limited and peripheral local labour market	54 years old, married, three children	owner of the village bar

	PROVINCE (POPULATION OF MUNICIPALITY)	SOCIAL LANDSCAPE	LIFE CYCLE	EMPLOYMENT SITUATION
12	Palencia (7,263)	Aging. Distant from urban centres, small, dispersed populations Limited local labour market	38 years old, married, one daughter and two sons	Owner of a workshop for the restoration of art works
13	Palencia (423)	Aging, masculinisation, Mountainous zone, communication difficulties Limited/masculinised local labour market Peripheral	31 years old, married, two daughters	owner of cattle ranch and promoter of a country house for rural tourism owned by her mother

Quantitative analysis

This study has used a variety of sources of quantitative data, among which are:

Population census. The population census is an irreplaceable source for knowledge of the demographic and social evolution of the population as it includes a complete count, not only of individuals, but of households and housing.

Municipal register. The municipal register contains an up-to-date statistical register of the population, by sex, age and place of origin. In addition to using the registers from 2007 as a sampling frame, they have permitted us to follow the demographic evolution of rural population up to the present.

Survey on Disabilities, Impairments and State of Health [Encuesta de Discapacidades, Deficiencias y Estado de Salud (EDDES, 1999)]. The EDDES was, up to the year 2008, the principal study on disabilities at the national level; which makes it a necessary source for evaluating the reach, diversity and complexity of this problem in rural areas.

In addition to the use of secondary sources, the research has singularly focused on the design, field work and analysis of a survey directed at members of the support generation which we have called the Encuesta a Población Rural [Survey of the Rural Population] (EPR-2008). The EPR was designed with the objective of revealing the family and socioeconomic structures in which the

support generation is integrated, as well as understanding their role in issues of growing importance in rural areas such as the dependency of the elderly, the balancing of family and work, mobility and perceptions regarding the rural environment. This survey shares some of the objectives of the Encuesta a Mujeres Rurales 2004 [2004 Survey of Rural Women], but its sphere of interest also includes men. Although it is a quantitative tool, a conversational questionnaire was designed with the objective of obtaining quality information, in which the subjects could express their stories without excessive limitations. Hence, the presentation of a set of open questions codified after the interviews. In table A2 the technical aspects of the survey are explained.

Datasheet for the 2008 Survey of the Rural Population

Universe: rural population in Spain from 30 to 50 years of age that resides in municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants.

Sample size: 1,795 interviews divided into two subsamples by sex. The size of the subsample of men is 795 and that of women, 1,000.

Stratification: within each subsample, the interviews are stratified by categories resulting from the combination of ages groups (30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50) and habitat (<5.000, 5.001-10.000).

Affixation: proportional to the strata.

Sampling procedure: for each subsample, the procedure was multistage, with random selection of the primary units of the sample (households), proportional to the stratification by size of habitat. Random selection of the final units (individuals) proportional to the stratification by age.

Sampling error: for the estimate of proportions in assuming simple random sampling and in the worst case scenario ($P=Q=0.5$), with a confidence level of 95.5 percent:

- Sample total: +/- 2.36 percent
- Subsample of men: +/- 3.55 percent
- Subsample of women: +/- 3.16 percent

Information gathering: Computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI).

Average duration: the average duration of finished interviews was 13.36 minutes; regarding invalid contacts the average duration was .78 minutes.

Timetable of field work:

- Preparation of work: 19 to 22 September 2008
- Briefing: 22 September 2008
- Information gathering: 22 September to 29 October 2008
- Supervision: 22 September to 29 October 2008
- Computer processing of data: 22 September to 29 October 2008
- Encoding: 29 September to 29 October 2008
- Sending of result files: 31 October 2008

Staff: researcher, head of field work for telephone based research, head of department for data processing, technician for data processing, head of coding, 3 coders, 2 supervisors and 25 interviewers.

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This study of rural Spain, based on both a wide statistical analysis and an examination of the nature of everyday life, examines the problems that impede the balanced social development of the rural world. The research has found three interrelated factors that create an extraordinarily complex social challenge: demographic disequilibriums, gender inequalities and unequal access to mobility. Demographic disequilibriums manifest themselves in a masculinised and aging rural population, but, above all, in the prominence of the so-called «support generation»: men and women of around 40 years of age that have become the authentic pillar of support in rural society.

The gender inequalities which beset rural areas, though not exclusive to such areas or more intensive than in urban ones, are more visible there and their effects are felt not only by women but throughout the overall social fabric.

Lastly, there is inequality in access to mobility, which constitutes an important marker of social differences in rural regions, making mobility an important component of policy aimed at the development of rural areas.

This study demonstrates the centrality of these and other factors which characterise the rural world in Spain today and is aimed at stimulating discussion on what is necessary to address a future dependent not only on economic or environmental sustainability but also, fundamentally, on social sustainability.

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