

The Chinese in Spain: The Last Fifty Years

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In recent years, the economy of Spain has registered far better growth statistics than Germany, France and Italy. It is gradually regarded as a paradise or springboard by the illegal immigrants from South America, West Africa and mainland China. The trend of illegal immigrants has great influences and has been a major test for the social security in Spain.

In the Council of the EU's annual report of 1999, it was already indicated that every year tens of thousands of illegal immigrants try to enter Spain or use Spain as a springboard to enter the West Europe. Most of them come from Morocco, Columbia, Ecuador, mainland China and Romania, etc.

According to official reports from Spain in 2004, there were about 500,000 to 800,000 illegal immigrants in Spain. Moroccans head the list by 194,099 people, while Chinese take the second position by 30,958 people, followed by the Ecuadorians (28,773), Columbians (24,650) and Argentineans (18,039). In 2006, the number of legal immigrants is 282,021,808. Chinese take the sixth position by 99,526 people and take 3.3% of the whole population. The illegal immigration has been a great threat to social security in Spain.

In the annual report published by IISS in May 16th, 2001, it is indicated that global warming and refugee crises are two greatest threats to world stability besides military conflict. IISS also admonished that although the two threats would not directly cause great disasters for many years, the trend cannot be changed soon.

An English newspaper *The Observer* also reported in February 22nd, 2004 that climate change will cause more serious human calamities in 20 years' time, more than terrorism. On the other hand, the endless refugees and economic immigration will severely threaten the global security.

This paper will discuss the history of the Chinese in Spain for the last fifty years, the evolution of Spanish immigration policies towards this movement, as well as the challenge of social assimilation and adaptation encountered and experienced by new Chinese immigrants.