

SOCIOLOGY OF IMMIGRATION AND INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Migratory processes and particularly international immigration have become a central phenomenon – perhaps the most significant challenge facing 21st Century societies. While it may be easy to understand that the flow of persons, capital and cultures is unstoppable as social reality becomes increasingly global and interconnected, it is not so straightforward to explain the processes that such flows entail. Knowing the reality from the various contexts and actors involved (migrants and origin, transit and host societies) as well as contemplating the multiple dimensions (demographic, social, political, legal, economic and cultural) that impact on immigration, is fundamental to producing any realistic response to immigration and the increasing prevalence of multicultural societies.

Social workers must carry out their professional activities in this environment, shaped by intra- and inter-cultural diversity, independently of their specific area of activity (and whether or not they work with immigrants). This subject hence aims to develop students' awareness of the complexity of immigration and its general social implications. More specifically, the subject seeks to facilitate the acquisition of the theoretical and practical competencies necessary to effectively understand and intervene in situations shaped by the presence of immigrants and cultural diversity.

COMPETENCIES

- Identify the principal dimensions explaining immigration.
- Know the different immigration systems, and in particular the European immigration system.
- Be able to identify and evaluate the different models for integrating immigrants.
- Know how to find and use the most important statistical and documentary sources to understand immigration in Spain.
- Know the geographical distribution and sociocultural characteristics of the immigrant population in Spain.
- Understand the link between the characteristics of the Spanish economy and job market with the arrival of immigrants.
- Be able to evaluate the needs of the immigrant population and the principal difficulties for each group in terms of effective integration into Spanish society.
- Be able to identify the principal areas for intervention in the host society to facilitate the integration of immigrants.
- Be able to critically evaluate national and European migratory policy.
- Understand the role of social workers in multicultural societies.

CONTENT

1. Immigration as a social phenomenon. Critical analysis of certain basic notions. Immigration contexts (countries). Types of immigration and principal social transformations. Statistical and documentary sources.
2. Theories on migratory trends: causes and consequences of immigration for original and host societies. Functions of immigration and processes of integration. Critical evaluation of existing theories.
3. Evolution of international migratory movements: old and modern migrations. Migratory models. Changes in immigration policy and the composition of migratory flows.
4. Contemporary immigration in Spain and in the Autonomous Community of Madrid: volume and socio-demographic characteristics. Economic, political, legal and cultural dimensions. Institutional and social responses. The major current challenges: multiculturalism, racism, citizenship. Inter-ethnic relations: adaptation strategies and integration models.