

# STATISTICAL BULLETIN ON FOREIGNERS AND IMMIGRATION

In the Statistical Yearbooks on Immigration the Permanent Observatory for Immigration provides information on visas issued by the Spanish Consulate offices abroad. However, as of the 2007 Yearbook, an important qualitative leap has been made in the statistical extraction and treatment of data, as a result of the co-operation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation.

Indeed, the possibility of working with variables that used to be unavailable means that we can now obtain information on certain characteristics of the foreigners who have been issued a visa, such as their nationality, sex and age. Furthermore, more details are provided through the classification of short-term and residence visas, offering valuable information on the reason for issuing the visas.

This bulletin includes the latest available data for 2008 on visas issued in Spanish Consulate or Diplomatic Mission offices abroad.

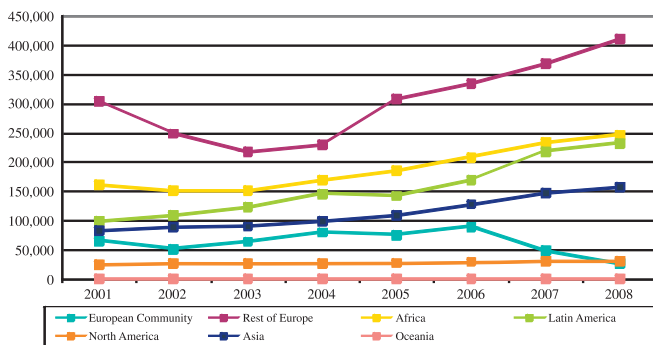
The analysis is rounded off with a global view through the evolution of the data over the current decade, both from the point of view of the continent where the Consulate office which issued the visa is based and the type of visa.

**Consuelo Rumí Ibáñez**

Secretary of State for Immigration and Emigration  
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## VISAS ISSUED IN SPAIN. 2008

Evolution of issued visas by continent of issuing Consular office. 2001-2008



in 2008. The highest increase took place in 2006, with 112,511 more visas issued than in the previous year. The sharpest fall was registered in 2002 (8.06% fewer visas than in 2001), although the lowest point in the period was in 2003 (673,729 visas issued).

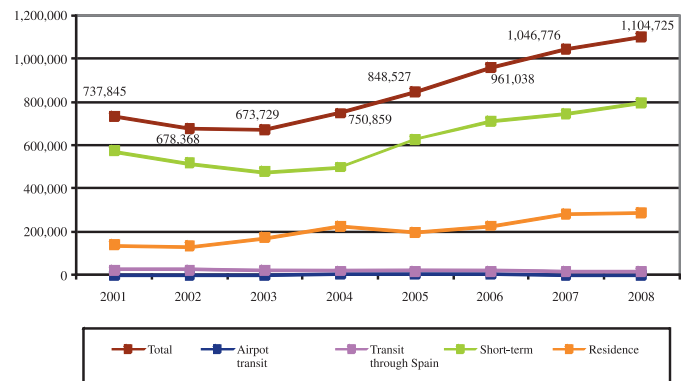
The **type of visa most frequently issued** in the period under review was the **short-term** visa, representing more than 66% of the total number of visas issued in each of the years, and as many as 72.17% in 2008. The residence visa was the second most frequently issued, making up 30% of the total in 2004, and 26.08% in 2008 (288,151 visas).

**By place where the visa was issued,** the number of issued visas increased in all parts of the globe except in the European Community<sup>1</sup>, which ended the period under review with 39,277 fewer visas than in 2001, due to new Member States joining the European Union and the subsequent abolishment of the visa requirement.

In 2008, the different Spanish Consulate offices abroad issued **1,104,725 visas**, which is an increase of 5.54% (57,949 visas more) compared with 2007.

The number of visas issued in the **period 2001-2008** was **6,801,867**. From the 737,845 visas issued in 2001 the number rose to 1,104,725

Evolution of issued visas by type of visa. 2001-2008



Evolution of issued visas by continent of issuing Consular office 2001-2008

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>737,845</b>	<b>678,368</b>	<b>673,729</b>	<b>750,859</b>	<b>848,527</b>	<b>961,038</b>	<b>1,046,776</b>	<b>1,104,725</b>
European Community	65,360	51,254	64,240	80,560	75,054	90,017	48,792	26,083
Rest of Europe	303,633	248,858	217,422	229,182	307,808	333,705	367,046	409,723
Africa	161,944	151,817	151,359	169,140	185,636	208,169	233,548	246,560
Latin America	99,166	110,077	123,239	146,222	142,461	169,880	218,472	232,627
North America	24,188	26,386	26,617	26,279	27,514	29,711	30,116	30,926
Asia	83,066	89,514	90,345	98,988	109,480	128,536	148,078	158,054
Oceania	488	462	507	488	574	893	723	752
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	127	1	0

<sup>1</sup> The clustering by continents is based on the situation as at December 31st 2008. In other words, the data relative to the European Community includes the 27 Member States of the European Union on the aforementioned date, nationals of other States party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and nationals of the Swiss Confederation.

### Issued visas. Main nationalities 2007 and 2008

	2007	2008	Annual variation	
			Absolute	%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,046,776</b>	<b>1,104,725</b>	<b>57,949</b>	<b>5.54</b>
Russia	306,131	341,511	35,380	11.56
Morocco	146,009	152,892	6,883	4.71
Colombia	68,233	70,186	1,953	2.86
China	41,771	43,864	2,093	5.01
Peru	40,523	42,205	1,682	4.15
Ecuador	33,950	37,491	3,541	10.43
Ukraine	32,526	27,571	-4,955	-15.23
Algeria	30,305	26,365	-3,940	-13.00
Turkey	14,992	23,016	8,024	53.52
Dominican Rep.	26,156	22,967	-3,189	-12.19
India	19,541	22,013	2,472	12.65
United States	17,186	19,564	2,378	13.84
South Africa	17,924	16,955	-969	-5.41
Cuba	16,374	16,929	555	3.39
Philippines	16,910	15,174	-1,736	-10.27
Rest of countries	217,720	225,533	7,813	3.59
Stateless and unknown	525	489	-36	-6.86

made up 50.90% of the total. The number of men who were issued a visa rose by 2.40% from the previous year, whilst the number of women rose by 8.56%.

The **distribution by sex** sheds a positive balance for men in the category of visas issued to nationals of European Community countries (60.19%), Asian countries (56.23%) and African countries (52.35%), whilst women made up a majority in the visas issued to North Americans (64.41%), nationals of non-European Community countries (58.45%), Latin Americans (51.88%) and nationals of Oceania countries (50.89%).

**Women made up a majority** in eight of the fifteen largest nationalities of foreigners who were issued visas (North American, Russian, Philippine, Dominican, Colombian, Moroccan, Ukrainian and Peruvian), representing as many as 64.71% of the visas issued to North Americans and 60.36% of those issued to Russians.

In terms of **age**, of all the visas issued in 2008, 11.10% (122,640) were issued to individuals under 16 years of age; 64.35% (710,865) to individuals between 16 and 44 years of age; 21.66% (239,216) to individuals between 45 and 64 years of age; and 2.89% (31,926) to individuals aged 65 and over. The average age was 33.8 years.

**Women have a lower age profile than men**, since women have more weight in the 20 to 29 age group (28.17% of total) than men (22.26%), whilst men have more weight in the 35 to 44 age group (22.29%) than women (19.41%). The average age of men is slightly higher than that of women (34.3 years for men compared with 33.5 years for women).

The Latin American collective had the biggest share of visas issued to individuals under 16 years of age (14.29%), whilst the North American had the biggest share of those issued to individuals between 16 and 44 years of age (92.25%). In the 45 to 64 age group, nationals of non-European Community countries had the biggest share of visas issued to individuals in this age group (25.61%), whilst in the 65 years and over age group the biggest share is found in the Latin American collective (3.58%).

### Place of issue

The country of nationality of the foreigner to whom the visa was issued coincides in 93.18% of the cases (1,028,822 visas) with the country where the visa was issued. In 2.75% of the cases (30,409) the visa was issued in another country of the same continent, and in 4.07% of the cases (44,923) in another continent.

North America is the geographical area with the highest share of visas issued in the same country as the applicant's nationality (97.62%). On the other hand, Oceania is the continent with the highest share of visas issued in another country of the same continent as the applicant's nationality (13.07%), followed by Asia (7.93%). In terms of individuals who obtained a visa in a different continent from that of their nationality, once again nationals of Oceania countries stand out in number, with 20.59% of visas issued in countries of another continent, followed by Asians, with 8.86%.

Visas issued in **non-European Community countries** made up the largest numbers in each of the years of the period under review (409,723 in 2008), followed by visas issued in African countries (246,560 in the last year). The third place was held by visas issued in Latin American countries (with 232,627 visas issued in 2008), whose numbers in the last two years were very close to those issued in African countries, with a difference of 13,933 visas between them in 2008.

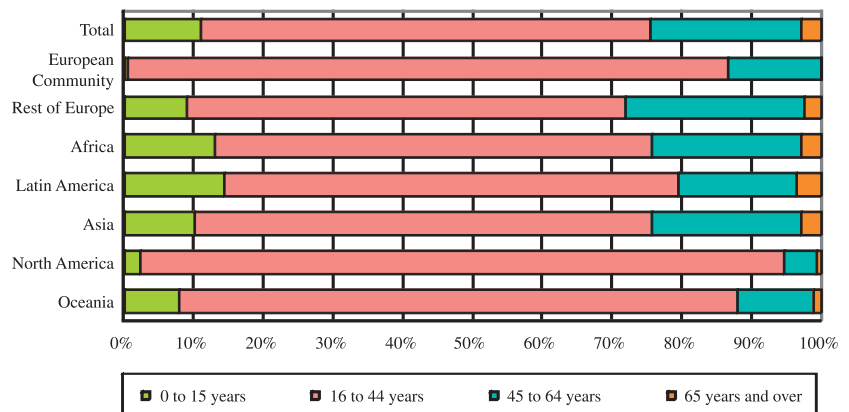
### Nationality

Most of the visas were issued to nationals of **non-European Community countries** (37.78% of the total), mainly to Russians (341,511), followed by Africans (22.86%), mainly to Moroccans (152,892), Latin Americans (21.95%) and Asians (15.32%).

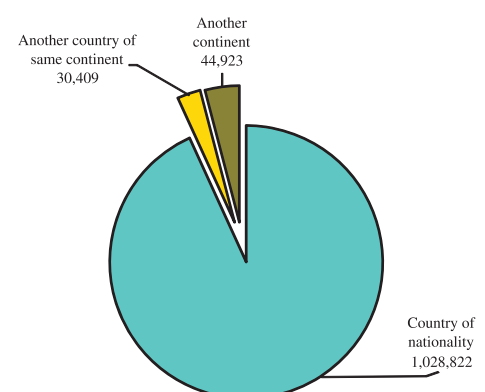
### Age and sex

Of the visas issued in 2008, 52.36% (578,394) of the holders were **women** and 47.64% (526,331) were **men**. This gender gap widened since 2007, when the visas issued to women

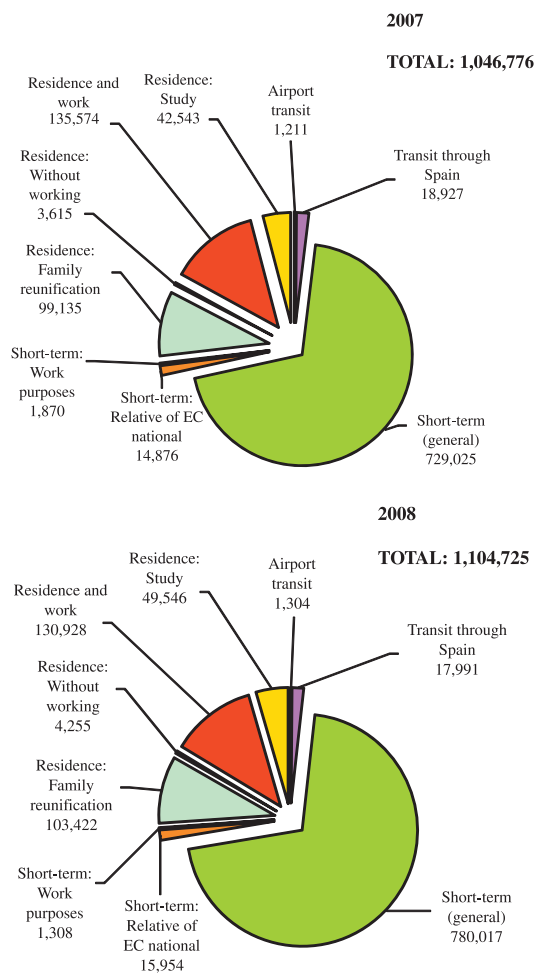
### Issued visas by continent of nationality and age group 2008



### Issued visas by place of issue 2008



**Issued visas by broader classification of visa  
2007 y 2008**



**Type of visa**

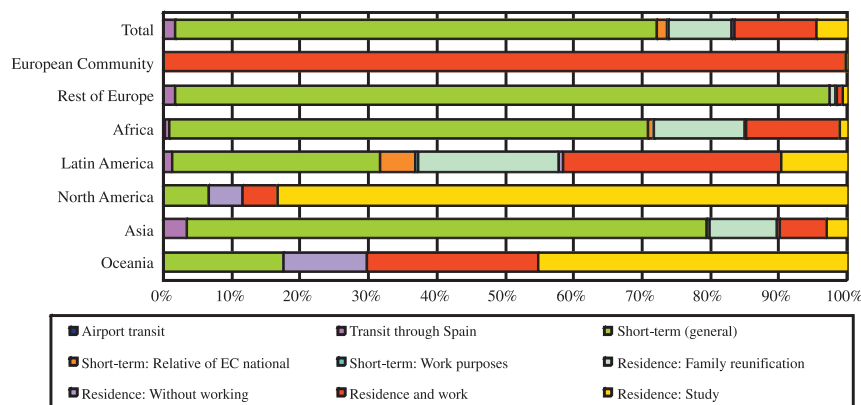
Of the total number of visas issued in 2008, 72.17% were short-term visas. Among these, **general short-term** visas made up 97.83% (780,023 visas in 2008); short-term visas for relatives of nationals of European Community countries made up just 2% (15,954 visas) and short-term visas for work purposes represented only 0.16% (1,313 visas).

**Residence** visas made up 26.08% of the total (288,151) and were distributed as follows: 130,928 visas were for **residence and work** purposes (making up 45.44% of the visas in this group), 103,422 visas (35.89%) were issued for reasons of **family reunification**, 49,546 visas (17.19%) were issued for **doing courses, research work, studying or training**, and only 1.48% (4,255 visas) were issued for residing in Spain **without working**.

Lastly, **transit visas**, which can refer to airport transit and transit through Spain, made up less than 2% of the total number of visas issued (1,304 and 17,991 respectively).

It is worth highlighting that 50,992 more general short-term visas were issued in 2008 than in 2007. Among the visas issued for study purposes, 7,003 more visas were issued in 2008 (16.5%). In the category of residence visas for family reunification, the number rose by 4,287 visas (an increase of 4.3%). The relative weight of the different types of visas did not experience significant changes.

**Issued visas by continent of nationality and broader classification of visa  
2008**



**Type of visa and nationality**

The category of short-term visas (797,279) is headed by nationals of non-European Community countries, with 42.05% of the total number of short-term visas (335,050) issued to foreigners of **Russian origin**.

However, in the category of short-term visas for relatives of European Community nationals (15,954), most of the visas were issued to citizens of **Latin American** origin (12,404), mainly Colombians, Dominicans and Cubans.

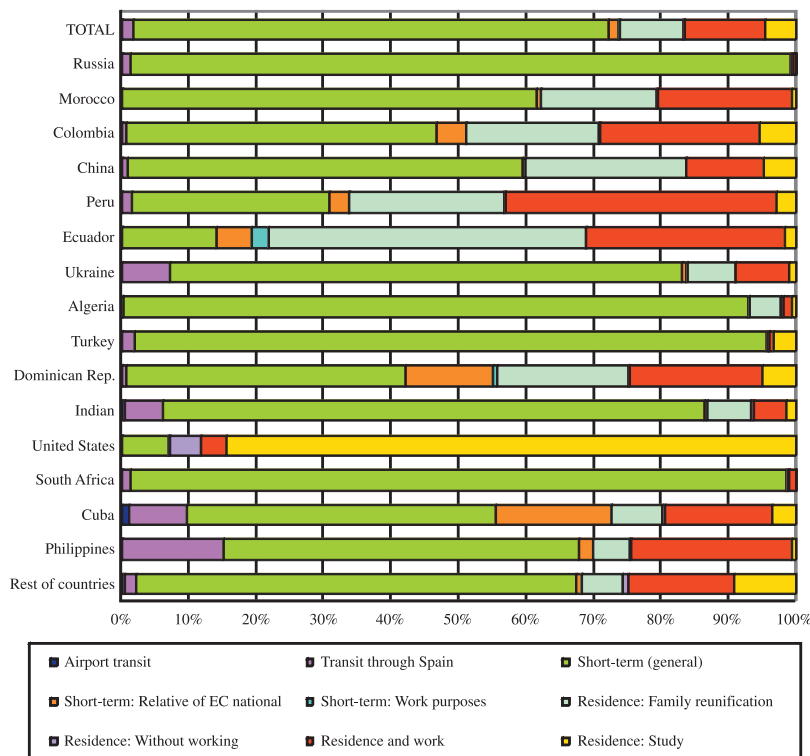
Residence visas (288,151) were mainly issued to nationals of Latin American countries (52.69%), although by nationality, the largest numbers were issued to **Moroccans** (57,666), followed by **Colombians** (34,288) and **Ecuadorians** (29,273).

Of the residence visas issued for family reunification purposes, 48.08% were issued to Latin Americans and 32.32% to Africans, although by nationality, Moroccans, Ecuadorians and Colombians headed the list.

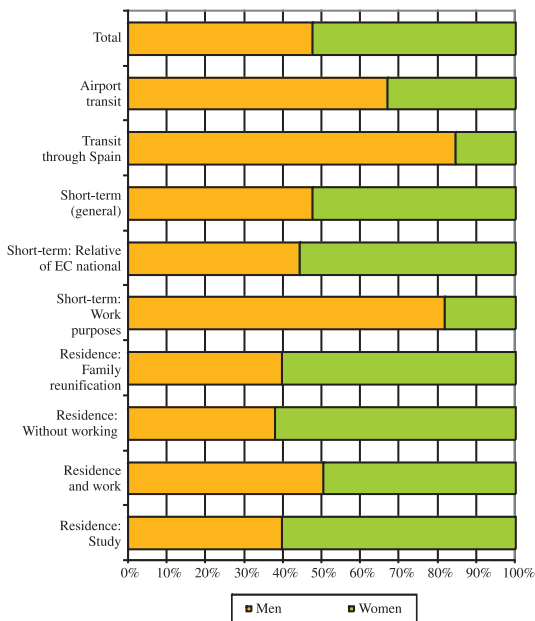
In the category of residence without working visas (4,255), Latin Americans, followed by North Americans, made up a majority. The **United States** was the country of nationality with the highest number of visas of this type.

**Residence and work** visas (130,928) had the biggest weight in this group, with **Latin Americans** (77,190) holding the largest share. The nationality issued the highest number of visas was the Moroccan (30,376), followed by the Peruvian and the Colombian.

**Issued visas by nationality and broader classification of visa  
2008**



### Issued visas by type of visa and sex 2008



Lastly, visas for **study** purposes (49,546) were mainly issued to nationals of American countries, with the biggest nationalities being **North America** (16,510) and **Mexico** (6,153).

### Type of visa and sex

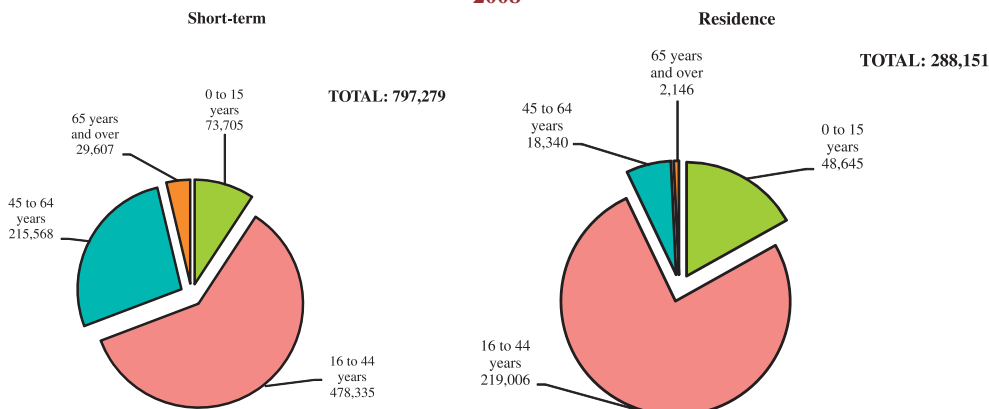
As we have seen, although women generally predominate (52.36%) over men (47.64%), the distribution by sex in each type of visa is very heterogeneous.

The number of women exceeds that of men in short-term and residence visas, but it is lower in transit visas. Looking at the **extended classification** of visas, we can see that **women** exceed 50% of the number of issued visas in the categories of residence without working visas (61.95%), family reunification visas (60.08%), study purposes visas (60.04%), short-term visas for relatives of European Community nationals (55.47%) and general short-term visas (52.15%). **Men** made up a majority in transit through Spain visas (84.74%), short-term visas for work purposes (81.88%), airport transit visas (67.10%) and residence and work visas (50.51%).

### Type of visa and age

People who were issued residence visas were **younger** than those issued short-term visas. In both residence and short-term visas, the **16 to 44** age group was the largest, although it represented 76.01% of the residence visas and 60.00% of the short-term visas.

### Issued short-term and residence visas by age group 2008



The **45 to 64 age group** was the second largest in short-term visas (making up 27.04%), and the youngest age group was the second largest in residence visas (16.88%).

The **0 to 15 age group** was the third largest in short-term visas (9.25%), and the 45 to 64 age group was the third largest in residence visas (6.37%).

In both short-term and residence visas the last position was held by applicants aged **65 and over** (3.71% in short-term visas and 0.74% in residence visas).

## METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The visa is the document which authorises a foreigner to enter Spain, unless the individual concerned does not require a visa for being included in the cases provided for in article 6 of the Immigration Regulations, approved by Royal Decree 2393/2004 of December 30th, or for being a national of a country exempt from the obligation of holding a visa to cross the external borders of the E.U. ((EC) Regulation 539/2001, last amended by (EC) Regulation 1932/2006).

There are four types of visas:

**Airport transit:** Authorises a foreigner, specifically subject to this requirement, to remain in the international transit zone of a Spanish airport, without entering the country, during stopovers or flight connections.

**Transit through Spain:** Authorises a foreigner to cross Spain during a journey from a third State to another which accepts the individual concerned, for a maximum period of five days.

**Short-term stay:** The situation of a foreigner who does not hold a residence permit but is authorised to remain in Spain for an uninterrupted period or a sum of successive periods whose total length does not exceed ninety days per six-month period as of the date of the initial entry, without prejudice to that established for students or researchers and their relatives. Based on the purpose of the visa, a distinction is made between **general short-term visas** (for tourism or similar purposes), short-term visas issued to **relatives of European Community nationals** and those issued for **work purposes**.

**Residence:** The situation of a foreigner in Spain who holds a residence permit. It is also issued to foreigners holding a permit to study in Spain. Based on the purpose of the visa, a distinction is made between:

- **Family reunification visa.**
- **Residence without working visa:** authorises the holder to reside in Spain without performing a labour or professional activity.
- **Residence and work visa:** authorises the holder to perform a labour or professional activity, either on an employee or self-employed basis.
- **Study visa:** authorises the holder to stay in Spain whilst doing a course, research work, studying or training.

For further information, please see the Statistical Yearbook on Immigration at <http://extranjeros.mtin.es>