

## MIGRATION PATHWAYS

# Collective Management of Hiring in the Country of Origin

### Overview

The program allows firms to recruit foreign workers to fill seasonal vacancies in the agricultural sector. Work permits are temporary, have a specific duration, and can be used only for activities related to seasonal activities. Ministerial orders regulate the annual number of seasonal workers hired through the program. The workers recruited can receive work permits for up to nine months a year. After the permit expires, they are required to return to their country of origin.

### Why was it started?

The program was conceived in response to shortages of workers in the agriculture sector during the 1990s and 2000s. Since then, it has been used in provinces in southern and northern Spain. The program also aimed to enhance circular migration. Its goals are in line with those of the EU Migration Agenda.

### How does it work?

To apply for the program, countries must have a bilateral agreement with Spain. Firms apply for the program by offering jobs. Recruiters in the origin country then screen and pre-select candidates. Employers or their representatives make the final selections, visiting the countries of origin. The program helps obtain visas and work permits for the workers recruited.



Country of Destination  
**SPAIN**

Country of Origin  
**PREDOMINANTLY MOROCCO  
AND COLOMBIA**

Skill  
**AGRICULTURE** 

Skill Level  
**LOW**

Timeline  
**2000–ONGOING**

Beneficiaries  
**20,000 IN 2020**

*Countries all around the world utilize migration pathways to train and bring over workers with needed skills. The CGD Migration Pathways database documents these pathways to promote innovation in this space. To explore the database, visit [GSP.cgdev.org](https://GSP.cgdev.org).*

## What impact has it had?

More than 330,000 seasonal work permits were granted between 2003 and 2009. Those numbers declined significantly following the Great Recession. Broad supervision of the process by various actors, including unions, contained some forms of exploitation, but some participants reportedly faced abusive conditions, particularly related to housing. In 2020, the government authorized 20,000 workers, more than 13,000 of whom were repeaters.

## Further readings

Achón, O. 2011. *Contratación en origen e institución total. Estudio sobre el sistema de alojamiento de trabajadores agrícolas extranjeros en el Segrià (Lleida)*. Doctoral dissertation, Universidad de Barcelona.

López Sala, A. M., Y. Molinero Gerbeau, M. Jolivet-Guetta, T. Eremenko, C. Beauchemin, S. Samuk, and E. Consterdine. 2016. "Seasonal immigrant workers and programs in UK, France, Spain and Italy." Temper Working Paper, Proyecto Temper. [www.temperprogram.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Working-Paper-1-DF2.pdf](http://www.temperprogram.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Working-Paper-1-DF2.pdf)



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