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## Educational Profile of Moroccan Immigrants Enrolled in Schools in Navarra (Spain)

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### Abstract

An important immigration rise occurred in Spain during the last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first. The Spanish education system has been affected by this phenomenon. As a result, both the national government and the governments of the autonomous communities in Spain have developed measures regarding the access and integration of this population into the educational system. In particular, we present a statistical analysis of the educational profile of the Moroccan immigrants in the region of Navarra, as compared to the immigrants from other nationalities and to the native population. For that purpose, we consider the following educational stages: Pre-primary Education, Primary Education, Secondary Education and Vocational Training. In connection with these stages we analyze the kind of school in which they are enrolled (government schools or non-government schools) and the linguistic model they select (Spanish or various combinations of Spanish and other languages). The first results confirm that the percentage of Moroccan students enrolled in government schools is much higher than the percentage of the rest of the foreign and native population enrolled in these schools. Moreover, most Moroccan students pursue their studies in the linguistic model in which Spanish is prevalent. However, the percentage of Moroccan students who choose the *English Learning Program* model is greater than the percentage of students from other nationalities and the native ones who choose this linguistic model.

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The present research forms part of a wider project entitled Moroccan migration: perspectives on origins and destinations (*Migraciones marroquies: perspectivas de origen y destino or MOMIP*) funded by Research Plan of the University of Navarra (Plan de Investigacion Universidad de Navarra or PIUNA). The project aims to study the migratory process of the Moroccan families, their social integration and labor mobility, as well as the survival of their own way of life and family structure.

**Keywords:** Moroccan migration; Spain; Navarra; educational system; government schools; non-government schools; linguistic models in schools.

## 1. Moroccan population in Navarra

Navarra is a region located in the north of Spain, close to the border of France (see Fig. 1). Currently its population is 644 477 inhabitants (Institute of National Statistics - Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2014) and enjoys a high standard of living, based in a tertiary and industrial economy and a high quality of health and educational services that stand out from the rest of the whole nation.

The population of Navarra is mostly concentrated in urban areas (63.1% of the total). About 196 955 people gather in Pamplona, however in the entire metropolitan area the number of inhabitants is close to 350 000.

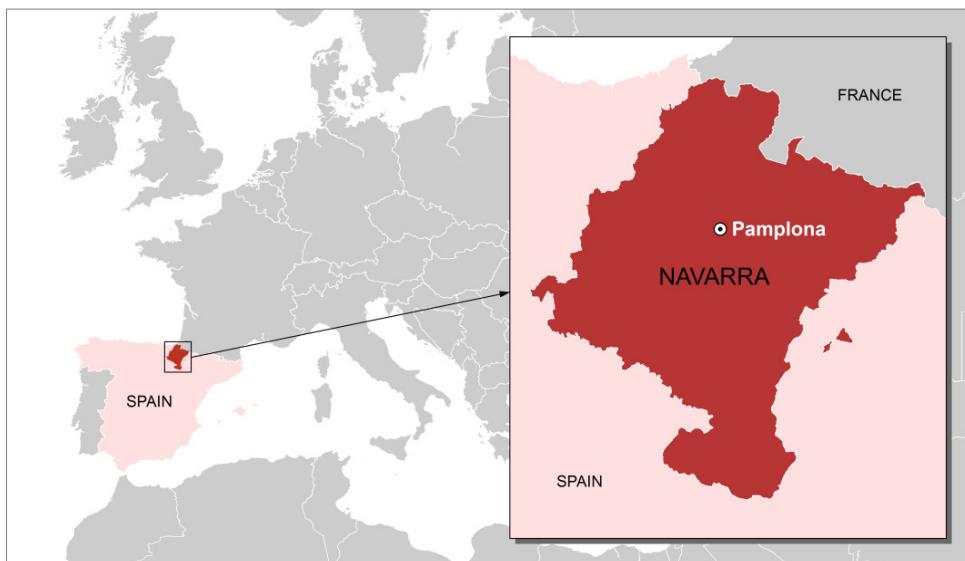


Fig. 1. Geographic Location of Navarra.

Slightly more than 10% of the population in Navarra is foreign, 67 892 people, and 11 006 of these are of Moroccan nationality. Bearing in mind that the number of Moroccans in the whole of Spain is 792 158, those who reside in Navarra represent just 1.4% of their total compatriots.

In spite of that, Navarra is ranked among the Spanish regions where the Moroccan population remains the highest percentage weight (1.7%). Moreover, this population has been settled in a very particular way, in some villages of Navarra all along the Ebro river valley. This behavior of territorial settlement has been observed two decades ago (Munarriz, 2004; Ferrer & Pons, 2004), but it has been consolidated in the course of the time. Nowadays, seven out of every ten Moroccans located in the region are living in such areas.

As a result, on the contrary of what happens to the Spanish population, and especially, with the rest of the immigrants whose settlement is mostly urban (Pons & Erneta, 2008), Moroccans inhabitants live, above all, in rural areas (71.3%).

The demographic profile of this population is characterized by a strong masculinization and a young-enough average age. The population pyramid, below, reveals both distinctive features. On one hand, the disparity between sexes (nearly 60% of the Moroccans are males, facing somewhat more than 40% of females) is especially evident from the 35 year to 54 year cohorts. On the other hand, the population youth, above all when compared to the profile of the group of residents in Navarra, since there are hardly old people among the value of those under the age of ten is higher than when we consider the entire population (22.4% of Moroccan children relative to 10.7% of group).

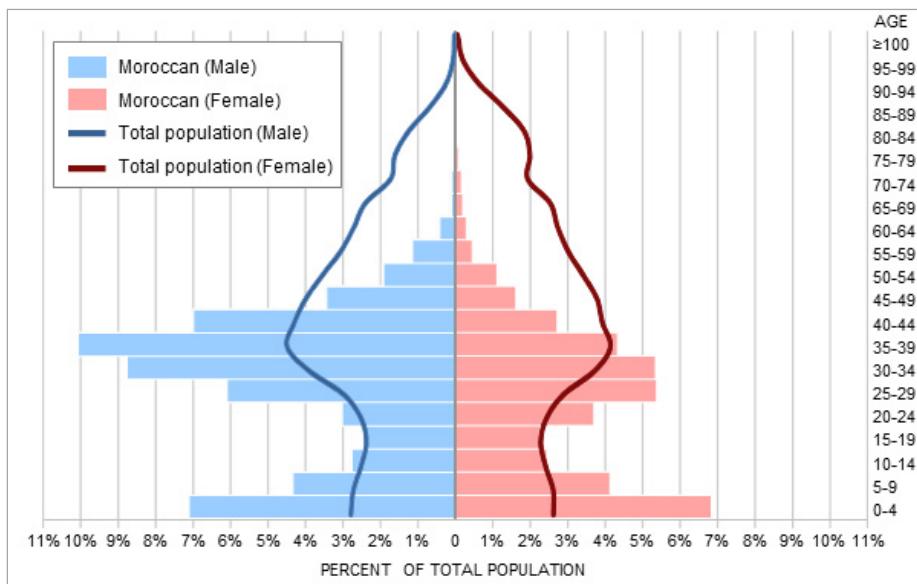


Fig. 2. Pyramid of Moroccan population in Navarra

## 2. Immigrants and education: Education system in Spain and Navarra

### 2.1. General considerations

It is commonly accepted that school is key to immigrant's integration, since it makes the cultural contact and the reciprocity between the new residents and the host country possible as well as allowing us to explain their future social and labor integration (Aparicio Gomez & Tornos Cubillo, 2006; De Celis, 2001; Del Valle Lorono & Usategui Basozabal, 2007; Gutierrez, Mato & Miyar, 2010).

The diversity the foreign students provide the school with comes from specific variables that affect the schooling process, among them, having a different culture or language or having enrolled in the school system of the new country too late (Aparicio Gomez & Tornos Cubillo, 2006; Alegre Canoso, 2008). There is no doubt that the mentioned variables must be taken into account in every country's educational planning in order to prevent the immigrants from being at a disadvantage in respect to the autochthonous population. However there is no single model to deal with such diversity in the education system of the different states in spite of being a permanent issue for discussion (McAndrew, 2007).

In that regard, in Spain, the state educational legislation highlights the school as a basic instrument of socialization and, to give a proper educative answer to the whole student body, assumes an inclusive approach. Therefore it is understood, that only thanks to the principle of inclusion "the development of everyone is guaranteed, equity is fostered and it contributes to a stronger social cohesion" (Law of Education 2/2006 - Ley Organica de Educacion or LOE). In this Law, the immigrant student body is not considered as a differentiated collective, but the autonomous communities in the framework of 'attention to diversity' carry out reception programs, initial evaluations and other measures for the immigrant students' integration in classrooms (Sotes-Elizalde, 2010, 2012).

Despite all these initiatives, some researchers prove that, as a rule, the foreigners are more likely to suffer school failure than the natives and present a lower rate of schooling at the post-compulsory stages (Aparicio Gomez & Tornos Cubillo, 2006; Fernandez Enguita, Mena & Riviere, 2009). This fact gets worse in the case of university studies, where the number of immigrant students experience very slow growth (Lebrero Baena & Quicios, 2010). If the socioeconomic family conditions are taken as a reference, the educative disadvantage of the student body does not exist. But the facts do not completely conform to reality in Navarra, because the students of African origin show lower efficiency regardless of their socioeconomic situation (Cebolla, 2012).

Concerning the Moroccan immigration, it can be pointed out that, even though it is one of the largest and the greatest tradition in Spain (Montoro Gurich, 2014), socially it is not the most integrated (Cebolla & Requena, 2010; Montoro Gurich & Lopez Hernandez, 2013). Furthermore, usually it does not achieve high academic levels, showing a higher tendency to early school dropout than the rest of the students (Aparicio Gomez, 2007). As a matter of fact, 60% of those born in Morocco but living in Spain had not completed their secondary studies (Cebolla & Requena, 2009).

But the variable referring to the date of the Spanish education system becomes more important here, because, according to Pereda, De Prada & Actis (2003), the Moroccans born in Spain or who start their schooling at early stages are more likely to succeed than the ones who join up from 11 years old. Nonetheless, once the stereotypes created at school on immigrants and their families have been analyzed, the immigrant students with the worse evaluation were the Moroccans (Del Valle Lorono & Usategui Basozabal, 2007).

From all these verifications it can be deduced that the Moroccan students living in Spain do not have a good academic level. Consequently, we intended to examine for that case in Navarra, what kind of educational school the Moroccan students are enrolled and the linguistic model they follow during their schooling, in order to compare it with the Spanish students and the rest of foreign students as well.

Before introducing the research we consider it convenient to describe these two variables, so that the reader understands the structure of the established system and observes the possibilities and limitations on studying the position of Moroccan students inside such structure.

## *2.2. Spanish education system and its characteristics in Navarra*

The different educational stages of the Spanish education system can be attended in ‘public schools’, ‘private state-funded schools’ and ‘private schools’. ‘Public schools’ are government schools and they are financed by public funds. The ‘private state-funded schools’ are in private ownership but receive public funds. ‘Private schools’ are in private ownership and do not receive public funds. State education law disposes that public schools and private state-funded ones must “undertake a social commitment with education” and carry out “non-exclusion schooling, reinforcing, in that way, the complementary nature of both school networks but without “loss of singularity”.

On that purpose, it lays down that there must be an equitable distribution of the students with special needs who require educational assistance, between public and private state-funded schools. Among these students we can find those who have joined the Spanish education system late, coming from other countries (LOE, 2006). This is compatible with the families’ option to choose school, although this possibility is subject to certain criteria and, in practice, presents some determinants. In the case of Navarra, the periods approached in this research, 60% of the students are enrolled in public schools, and almost all the private ones are state-funded schools.

Moreover, Spain is a country with high territorial decentralization, made up of autonomous communities with self-government capacity. They can tailor the state educational legislation to their own idiosyncrasy (Sotes Elizalde, 2008). Some of the autonomous communities have both Spanish and its own regional native language as official languages. In these cases there are specific school regulations that let one choose among the diverse linguistic models. Therefore, the foreign students living in Spain have to deal with an “inner-regional” linguistic diversity according to the community where they reside. In Navarra, the official languages are Spanish and Basque. Thus, in accordance with the Basque language law (Regional Law - *Ley Foral* 18/1986), there are three linguistic zones in this community: a Basque-speaking zone (with A, B and C linguistic models), a mixed zone (with A, B, C, D and G linguistic models) and a non-Basque-speaking zone (with linguistic models A and G). The characteristics of every model are as follows:

- Model A: Provides teaching in Basque, and the Basque language as a subject, in every stage, level and modality.
- Model B: Provides teaching in Basque, with the Spanish language as a subject and as a usual language in one or more subjects according to the teaching, cycle or stage.
- Model D: Provides teaching held entirely in Basque, except Spanish language subject.
- Model G: Provides teaching in Spanish and the teaching of Basque language is not included.

In addition, it must be said that recently the linguistic modality called Learning-in-English Program (*Programa de Aprendizaje en Inglés* or PAI) ruled by Regional Order - *Orden Foral* 110/2011 and Regional Order - *Orden Foral* 97/2012 has been consolidated. Considering the welcome acceptance to this option as expressed by the Government of Navarra, we wanted to confirm in this study its influence in the Moroccan student body by comparison with the Spanish nationality student body and other nationalities.

### **3. Moroccan students in Navarra: Type of school where they are enrolled and linguistic modality they study**

#### *3.1. Aims, sources, and methodology*

The work we present aims to determine, in the non-university educational stages, the kind of school where the Moroccan students, who live in Navarra, attend classes and the linguistic model chosen in comparison to the group of native and the other foreign students.

For this purpose, we have employed two main types of sources. First of all, we used the so called "Statistical Exploitation of the Continuous Census", taken from the National Statistical Institute. This source annually provides information about the population residing in Spain and lets us analyze some of the main socio demographic aspects: age, sex, birthplace, place of residence and nationality.

In this case, we used the municipal disintegration by age, sex and nationality belonging to 2013, as this is the most recent date that we have this information for. With these data, diverse maps have been made using a geographic information system (ArcGIS©v.10.2) as well as population pyramids and other graphics and tables. All these materials have been used to depict and better know the Moroccans, the people of Spanish nationality and the rest of the foreign immigrants.

The other statistical source we consulted is the database 'EDUCA', from the Government of Navarra that keeps information about more than 100 000 students of non-university ruled teaching who appear in the region. Expressly, a specific exploitation of those enrolled in the academic year 2013/2014 was applied. This material includes school, stage and academic year, linguistic model, student nationality and place of residence.

With this database, we made different groups of variables by nationality, school stage and linguistic model, which are finally used in the research.

#### *3.2. Results and discussion*

In Navarra there is a total of 1 902 students with Moroccan nationality signed up for non-university teaching. This figure represents fewer than 2% of the students and is accurate in the Moroccan population percentage present in the region.

There are not significant unexpected facts regarding the spatial localization either, since a great coincidence between the places of Moroccan population settlement and the presence of students with the same nationality exists.

Three of out every four, study in schools located in areas –preferably rural– in the southern region (Ebro Valley), whereas 14.2% of them study around the capital. The rest (11.5%) are dispersed all over schools and high schools in other zones of Navarra (see Fig. 3. a; b).

From the point of view of the Moroccan school population, impact in the schools is generally low. In the Pamplona metropolitan area, for instance, just 0.4% of the students are Moroccan, though on several occasions, some schools have more than 5% of students with this nationality.

However in the zone of the Ebro Valley, the general percentage is 6.6% and in several towns it can be much higher, as it occurs in a few municipalities, where about a third of the student body is of Moroccan nationality. If we add to the students of Moroccan nationality, those who appear as Spanish but with Moroccan origin family, the number of this population can grow notably (Pons Izquierdo, 2014).

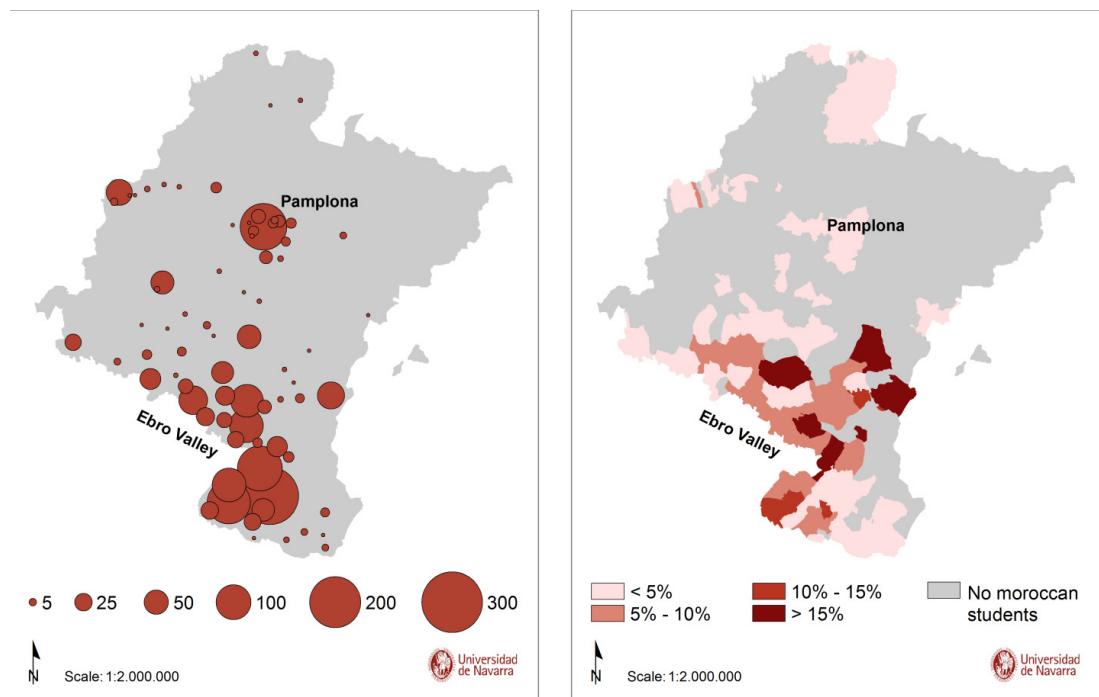


Fig. 3. (a). Location of the Moroccan students by place of residence; (b) Percentage of students with this nationality over the total of the school population in every town.

Nearly 90% of the Moroccan students are enrolled in the stages of second cycle of child education (20%), primary education (45%) and compulsory secondary education (ESO) (24%). (See Fig. 4).

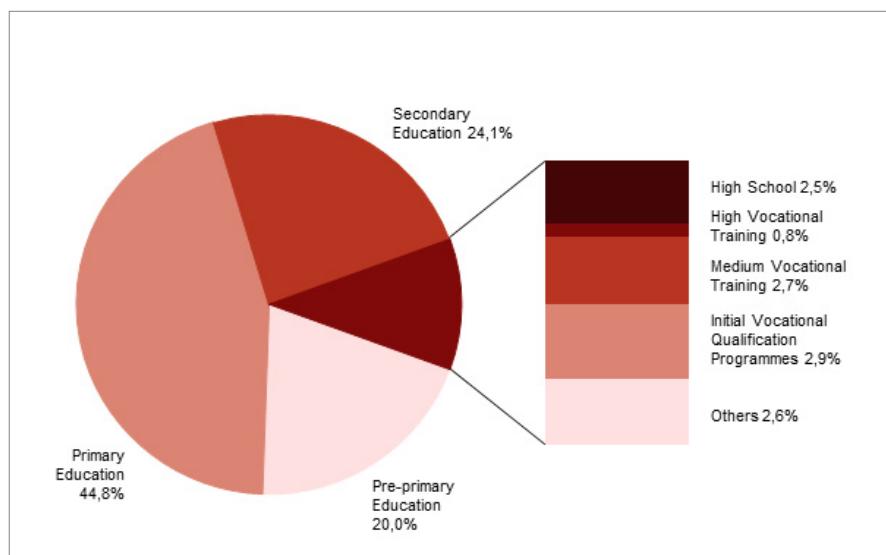


Fig. 4. Percentage Distribution of the Moroccan students according to educative stages.

In this sense, when one observes the non-compulsory educational levels, it is noteworthy to mention the low presence of Moroccan students in the higher educative stages: only 2.5% study in high school, 0.8% high vocational training and 2.4% medium level vocational training. By contrast, in the initial vocational qualification programs, the presence of Moroccans is far more significant (2.9%).

The initial vocational qualification programs - *programas de cualificacion profesional inicial or PCPI* represent an alternative for those students of 15 or 16 years old who are enrolled in compulsory secondary education, but fail to achieve the targets set for the stage. Their objective is to provide these students with the essential resources that let them reach the professional competencies suitable for a basic qualification and to make the labor insertion easier. If, during the program the students fulfil the special requirements, this allows them to get the essential competencies to access the post-compulsory studies.

However, when comparing those percentages with the rest of the population, the formative disadvantage of Moroccans is evident (see Fig. 5). One can see that there is not only a remarkable difference with the Spanish people, (as expected) but there is a clearly denoted inferiority in regards to foreigners with other nationalities.

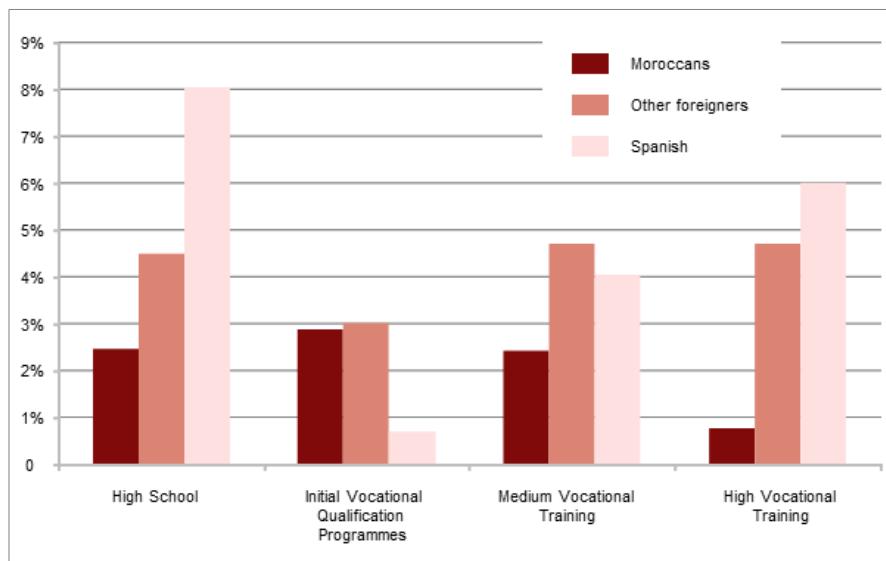


Fig. 5. Students in non-compulsory learning stages, according to nationality.

Regarding the ownership of schools, most of the Moroccan students living in Navarra are enrolled in public schools and only 3.7% enrolled in private state-funded schools. The difference in the school population in Navarra with Spanish nationality (36.8%) and the rest of the foreigners (20%) is very high. In this respect, it shows more similitudes to other immigrants from majority Muslim countries, like Algeria (2.6%). For this reason, one can argue the hypothesis that the Christian inspiration in the majority of the private state- funded schools can be a deterrent to the Moroccan population, almost entirely Muslim. Another key reason is the economic additional cost that the private state-funded schools represent for the families, because, despite the fact that the schools are mainly subsidized by government funds, they usually require a certain amount of money that is not paid in the public schools.

Notwithstanding, beyond these explanations, a territorial factor linked to the differences of spatial settlement of this immigrant community exists. As it has already been said, the location of Moroccans in Navarra differs very much from the rest of the population, that is chiefly urban. This fact makes the Moroccan accessibility to the private state-funded schools difficult, since they can only be found in 22 of the 272 municipalities in the region, mainly in the largest population settlements. Therefore, while 3 out of 4 Spanish students have offers of private state-funded schools in the same town they study, in the Moroccans' case the very same option is only available for 36.7% of the

students. The importance of this factor of spatial distinction is better appreciated if we analyze only the resident population in municipalities where there are private state-funded schools. Here the choice of the schools among the Moroccan population rises to 8.4% of the total.

Regarding linguistics modalities, as it has been commented before, Navarra is a multilingual region, in which there are different education models available that choose one or another language as the main one for teaching. In order to make the analysis easier, we have grouped the different models to three main categories: studies with Spanish language (models A, G), with the Basque language (models D, B) and with English language (PAI), the latest implementation.

At first glance, it is appreciated that the majority of Moroccan students (88%) choose the different linguistic models based on Spanish (A, G) (see Fig. 6). This choice shares a similar percentage to the rest of the foreigners, but it is well over the Spaniards own choosing, which is situated around 70%.

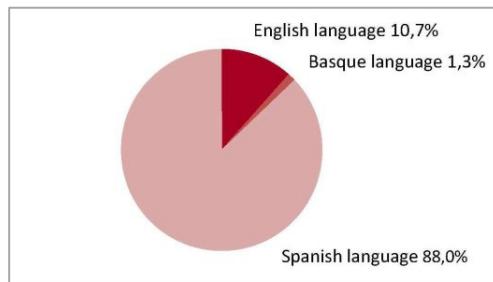


Fig. 6. Percentage distribution of the Moroccan students according to the vehicular language.

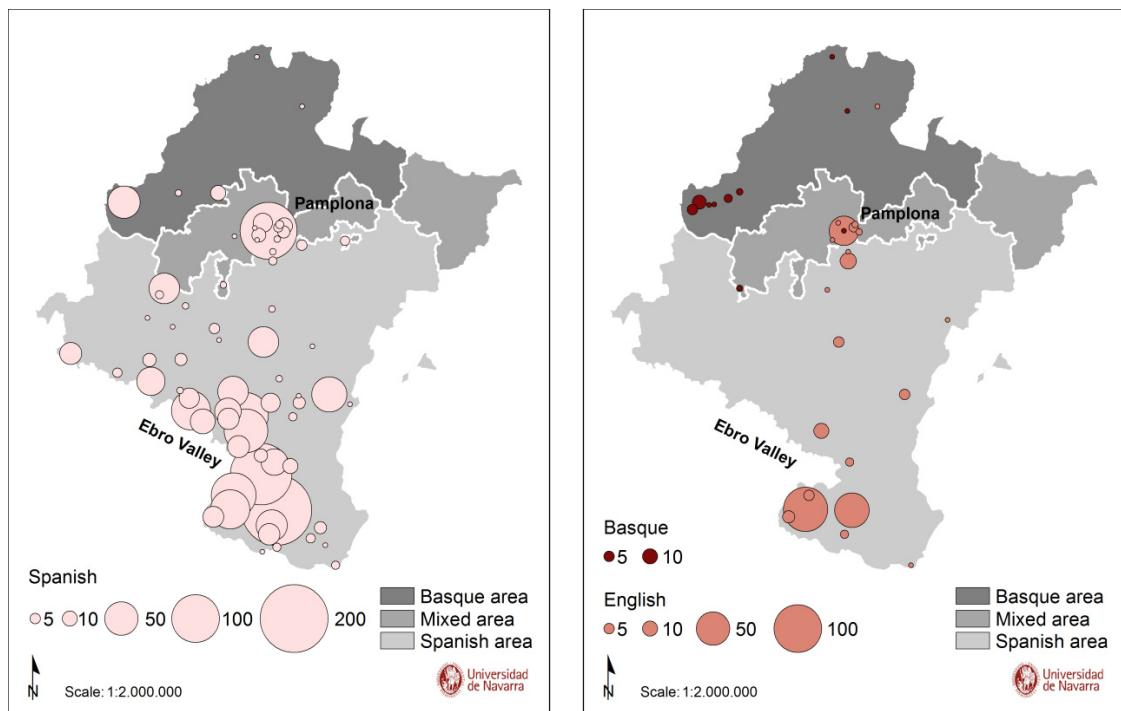


Fig. 7. (a) Location by the town of the Moroccan students with vehicular language in Spanish; (b) with Basque and English vehicular language.

Only 25 Moroccan students attend studies in linguistic models based in the Basque language (B, D) that is, 1.3% of the all enrolled Moroccans in Navarra. The majority of them are enrolled in zones in which the use of the language is more socially extended (see Fig. 7. a; b). But, in spite of that, as it happens that more than a half of the Moroccans who study both models, have to do it in locations where there is no other linguistic option On the contrary, when there are more alternatives, they incline towards them, even when they live in areas of strong Basque-speaking character.

English language choice is completely different, taken by 203 students (10.7% of the Moroccans). Among 22 locations in which there are students of this nationality enrolled, only in one municipality has no choice. So, the data suggests that there is an unequivocal option to study English. Therefore on the behalf of the Moroccans, there is a clear preference expressed in this model, more so than that of Spanish and other foreign students.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The specialized bibliography reveals that the Moroccan population living in Spain is in an evident educative disadvantaged situation compared to the rest of the population and, in a particular, in regard to the other foreigners. Through the research that has been conducted in Navarra, one can conclude that this model is fully valid in this region.

In effect, in the post-compulsory levels, which the students access after having got the Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate, the percentage of Moroccan students is lower than the rest of the population. In contrast, in the programs of initial professional qualification, that offers optional training to avoid school failure and early dropout, the Moroccan students are over-represented.

The weight of the geographic location of the Moroccan population concerning the choice of school and the linguistic model is very high, but not conclusive. As it has been proved by the results, most of Moroccans reside in rural locations where there is no possibility to choose private state-funded schools and consequently, they are enrolled mainly in the public network. However, when their place of residence has different options, we realize that the percentage of those who choose teaching in a private state-funded school is doubled. We can conclude, then, that this is a factor that more or less influences the choice of school, because the participation in private state-funded schools remains minor compared with the rest of the population.

Something similar can be said concerning the linguistic model. The students who are enrolled in the Basque models are preferentially located in zones where this language is usually spoken and more than half of them study in locations in which the only linguistic model offered is in Basque. But, in the most populated villages in the Basque area the option of choosing exists, and in those cases, the main preference of Moroccans is Spanish language.

Although with the variables and the methodology used in this research we cannot confirm a cause-effect relation between the nationality and the qualification that explain the small representation of the Moroccan students in the post-compulsory education in Navarra, the results indicate that the principles of equity established in the Spanish education system are not achieved. This leads us to consider the necessity to accomplish a deeper analysis of the educational inclusion policies and how to apply them. If, as mentioned elsewhere in this text, the socioeconomic variable is not exclusive to immigration and it is not the only one that explains the students higher or lower educative efficiency, it is necessary to study the difficulties that prevent the Moroccan students who live in Navarra from having more successful academic progress.

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