Irregular migration and migration policies in Spain

Joaquín Arango
Universidad Complutense, Madrid

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A high proportion of migrants in irregular condition

- A chronic, structural feature
- Despite frequent opportunities for regularization
- Plus mechanisms for legalization on individual bases
The ‘irregularity equation’

• A vigorous demand for foreign labor, mostly unskilled or semi-skilled

• A narrow ‘front door’

• A large underground economy

• Acute difficulties for controlling flows
Inability to control entries

- Location and physical characteristics
- High rates of circulation (a strong tourist industry)
- Visa exemptions and easy access to tourist visas
- Loopholes in ‘Schengenland’
The inability to control stays

- A large informal sector
- The weakness of labour inspection
- A lax, permissive legal and civic culture
- Difficulties to expel