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Social integration and multilocality among retired migrants in Spain: a multivariate study on lifestyle migration --Manuscript Draft--

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Title: Social integration and multilocality: a multivariate study on lifestyle migration

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Social integration and multilocality among retired migrants in Spain: a multivariate study on lifestyle migration

Abstract

Within the lifestyle migration studies, a relation between mobile patterns of retired migrants and the propensity to get some socio-political integration is not a common theme. This paper aims at deepening into this relationship by questioning to what extent some multilocal behaviours may, or not, drive to an integration at destination. To this objective, a combination of a survey questionnaire and in-depth interviews directed to North-European retirement migrants, over 50 years old, in Spain has been deployed. Variables related to multilocality are the time of annual residence in Spain, the maintenance of property in their country of origin and the number of times they travelled to their country of origin in the year before. Social integration has been measured through variables such as daily social relations, voting in municipal elections, membership in clubs and associations, registration with the local register, trust in Spanish institutions and interest in Spanish political issues. Results from the multivariate statistical analysis and qualitative research indicate that multilocality is associated with migrants' specific social and political integration in Spain since migrants enter the receiving society unevenly. While they show a certain degree of integration, their social relations tend to stand aside from the whole Spanish population. Collected data suggest that, on the one hand, research on lifestyle migration should develop explanatory models open to the different dimensions of the integration processes, and, on the other, that theory on social integration can be improved by considering contemporary mobilities as a field of research.

Keywords: multilocality; social integration; lifestyle migration; international retirement migration; Spain

1. Framing the retirement migration in Spain

Lifestyle migration refers to the migration of relatively affluent people who, partially or permanently, move to places they associate with a higher quality of life (Benson and O'Reilly 2009). Under this conceptual framework, privileged mobilities (Croucher 2012) involving retirees (Giner-Monfort et al. 2016), entrepreneurs (Eimmermann 2015)

or young people (Korpela 2016) are under research. Concepts used, such as choice (Lawson 2017), lifestyle (Benson and O'Reilly 2016; Huete et al. 2013) or search for the good life (Åkerlund and Sandberg 2015), connect with theories that describe contemporary society and culture in terms of mobility (Castells 2005), individualization (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2003), lifestyles (Giddens 1999) or self-realization (Bauman 2012). In this context the purpose of this research is to expand the state of scientific knowledge by examining the relationship between multilocality and social and political integration in lifestyle migration. The study uses a multivariable approach to identify groups of migrants within a broad sample. The starting hypothesis is that diverse types of multilocality helps to understand how the retired migrants in Spain behave regarding their social and political integration which ranges from the sociopolitical level and social networks to the interest and trust of migrants in institutions in Spain.

Under the new mobilities paradigm (Urry 2007), multilocality, or the practice of daily life in more than one residence and between them in a given time, is related to other behaviours that make up contemporary migrations (Castles et al. 2013). Multilocality is associated with other concepts (Halfacree 2012) and used in the research of several disciplines (Cohen and Cohen 2012; King 2012), to study aspects of the mobility of people that are explained from a transnational (Levitt 2001) or translocal perspective (Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013). Issues identified as related to the multilocal behaviour are the geographical distance between the residences (Duchêne-Lacroix 2013), available communication and transport technologies (Kivisto 2001) and individuals' motivations –either as producers or consumers (Bell and Ward 2000). Other social factors would be families living transnationally (Hardill 2004), the support networks developed (Dobrowolsky 2016), the social structures that arise in the spaces involved (Amelina and Faist 2012) and the identities and forms of sociability generated (Schiller et al. 2011). Research on multilocality also covers different social profiles and contexts, such as skilled workers and low-income households (Dick and Reuschke 2012). A closely related category is lifestyle migration, which is composed of a range of mobile behaviours (Benson 2011a). These patterns are based on the use of different dwellings, in a country or in different countries, as a strategy to achieve the good life (Gustafson 2009). It has also been observed that multilocality is influenced by sociodemographic

variables and that it explains the social integration pattern in the place of destination (Rodes and Rodríguez 2018).

Under the concept of social integration, the process of incorporation of immigrants to a single society has been described (Thomas and Znaniecki 1996). However, its specific meaning is different from one theoretical point of view to another (Solé et al. 2002). It is a multidimensional concept and there is no agreement on its most relevant components; some approaches emphasize its structural dimension as others highlight the social-cultural one (Snel et al. 2006). Consequently, different research indicators are used in regard to labour and residential integration, political participation and the adoption of cultural elements from the host society (Solé et al. 2002).

There is a large amount of literature on social integration among migrants triggered by economic reasons (González-Rábago and Blanco 2016; Koramaz 2014), as to lifestyle migration a research line is still in development. Although the concept has not been operationalized in the same way, explanatory factors have been identified at a general level. Lifestyle migration is essentially defined as a leisure-oriented mobility (Williams and Hall 2000), so living in a different cultural context is not defined by the retirement migrants as a problem (Rodríguez et al. 1998). Pioneering studies have stressed the scarcity of intercultural relations (Arrones 1990). This means that migrants maintain the home country lifestyle, the relationship with the local population being superficial compared with those that they develop within the community of people of the same nationality (Gustafson 2001; Huete and Mantecón 2012; Matarrita and Stocks, 2013). In many cases social and political integration is hindered by limiting factors such as the social networks built at destination (Benson 2010), the cultural and ethnic background (Hayes 2015), the length of time abroad (Lardies-Bosque et al., 2016), the lack of interest in benefitting from the integration (Parreño and Dominguez. 2016). A widely discussed topic about integration is the language skills of migrants, acting as a barrier (Torkington 2009; Rojas et al. 2014). Participation in volunteer activities is identified as a source of experiences of cohesion and sociability within the retirees' community (Haas 2013). In addition, leisure activities have been highlighted as they generate resources for the migrants, fostering shared interests and feelings of belonging while they live abroad (Casado-Díaz 2009). Intercultural friendships and marriages as well as participation in local associations (Lizárraga et al. 2015) are common issues valued.

Furthermore, social integration has been investigated by analysing the narratives of migrants (Lawson 2017; Lundström 2018). From this point of view, social integration shapes the identity of migrants according to moral standards of greater or lesser integration (Hayes 2015). Another perspective is focused on how European citizenship is built, stressing the relationship between the daily social practices of migrants and the current legal framework (Ferbrache and Yarwood 2015). Migrants' political integration in destination areas (Durán 2010; Durán and Martínez 2008) and their status of citizenship as they move freely from one country to another are topics of interest (Ackers and Dwyer 2004; Echezarreta 2005), in many cases linked to social practices in local environments (Janoschka and Durán 2013; Durán 2018).

Finally, the transnational approach is another way to understand migrants' social integration. At this level, social integration is understood as the set of dynamics and processes that connect the place of retirement and the country of origin (Gustafson 2008). Mobility, belonging and cultural adaptation are depicted as part of transnational lifestyles (Gustafson 2001). There is academic interest in the processes by which subjects articulate their social networks in Spain and the contact with the country of origin (Huber and O'Reilly 2004). In this context, the role played by home ownership in both countries (Rodes and Rodríguez 2018), the use of communication technologies (Huber 2005) and visits to the country of origin and those received from friends and family (Casado-Díaz et al. 2012) is proved. [In this vein, the concept of exclusive transnationalism describes retired migrants' lifestyle as one that combines multiple contacts with the community of origin and a low level of integration in the host society \(Lizárraga et al. 2015\).](#)

2. Sources and Methodology

The MIRES / 3I Project¹ was carried out in 2010 and during its quantitative research phase 720 questionnaires were distributed. The group under study was composed of people over 50 years, born in countries belonging to the European Union (EU 15)² plus Switzerland and Norway, retired from their main labour activity and living more than three months in Spain in the last year prior to the fieldwork. The sampling process was

¹ International retirement migration to Spain: identity, impacts, integration. Founded by the State Ministry of Science and Innovation (Ref.CS02008-06458-C02-01/GEOG).

² Germany, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom, Austria, Finland, Sweden.

adapted to the distribution of the target group according to the Padrón Continuo. Nevertheless, a recognized universe is not available, as a consequence of the mobile nature of the group under study and its relative invisibility to the population registers. The cluster sampling was stratified by municipalities having at least 15% of their populations composed of retirement migrants, sections within each municipality and retirees residing in each section. In each region the municipalities were stratified by rural and urban areas and by their location on the coast or inland, or by being located north or south from the capital of the region. The regions chosen were those that had a greater number of retired foreigners: Malaga, Almeria, Granada, Alicante), Balearic Islands, Canary Islands, Gerona and Murcia. The interviewees were distributed by age (50–59, 60–69 and 70 years and over), by gender and country of birth. Each interviewee was contacted at home, through a self-administered questionnaire distributed by an interviewing agent. Most of the questionnaires were supervised (60%), both personally and by telephone. Questions asked to the retired pointed to their migratory process, their social relations, their feelings of identity and belonging, their participation in Spanish life, the access to health services or the recognition of individual rights. The end questions dealt with sociodemographic issues.

In-depth interviews were carried out among [all-countries](#) retirees living in Spain, mainly British and Germans, [the most numerous groups](#), and [other people involved in the retirees' communities \(as newspaper editors, town councillors or health care providers\)](#). [Interviews took place in the Spanish main destinations \(Alicante, Malaga, Balearic Islands and Canary Islands\)](#). A total of 36 in-depth interviews were collected using a similar criterion to the survey sampling. [Qualitative research tries to gain a deeper interpretative approach to people's experiences \(Hennink et al., 2011\)](#), by [ratifying the contexts and arguments behind the retired multilocal behaviour and their integration in Spain, previously derived from the questionnaire' quantitative analysis](#).

The quantitative analysis begins with the description of frequencies of the variables and ends with a multivariate analysis. On the one hand, the variables related to the multilocality of the retired migrants are analysed: a) the time of annual residence in Spain; b) the maintenance of property in their country of origin; and c) the number of trips to their country of origin in the year before they filled the questionnaire. [Rodes and Rodríguez \(2018\) clustered the 694 individuals studied into three categories of multilocal retired people in Spain. The first group is the *based retirees*, 453 cases](#)

(65%), who stay longer in Spain, where they have their only property, and have less mobility to the country of origin. The *multilocal retirees*, 202 cases (29%), is the second cluster, those who have a property in each country and remain, comparatively, for fewer months in Spain, sharing a longer annual stay in their country of origin. The third group is composed of the *retired travellers*, 39 cases (6%) distinct from the rest by their *relatively high annual mobility between countries*. On the other hand, the concept of social integration has been analysed through six variables, such as the people closest to the retirees in their daily lives, their membership in clubs and associations, registration in the municipality of residence, voting in municipal elections, trust in institutions and the interest in political issues.

The first step of the multivariate analysis explores whether the groups of retirees identified have a different behaviour related to their social integration in Spain. With regard to these data, the cross-tabulations collect only the statistically significant information in the bivariate analysis (χ^2 less than 0.05). The later correspondence analysis has tried to identify groups of retirees contrasting their multilocal behaviour with their degree of socio-political integration. To do so, an aggregate variable has been used, including the answers to the questions related to the vote in municipal elections, membership in clubs and associations and registration with the local register. The common answers 'Yes' and 'No' have allowed the following categories to be built: 'no integration' means a negative response to the three questions, 'high integration' means answering affirmatively at all levels, while 'basic integration' and 'intermediate integration' result from answering affirmatively to one or two of the three questions.

The next part of the statistical study deals with the social integration of retirees in Spain according to their trust in institutions and their interest in political issues. The first variable measures trust at different levels (from the national government to the health service). The second explores the level of interest focused on the area where the informant lives and the whole of Spain. Through a factorial analysis, *variable items have been reduced into* a minimum number of statistically significant factors. The later correspondence analysis explores relationships between the groups of retirees and the factors that summarize their trust towards the institutions and the interest in political issues. All the statistical analyses have been carried out through the SPSS v. Program. 22. The findings of the quantitative analysis were later contrasted in the speeches of

retirees and other agents. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed through the MAXQDA v.11 program.

3. Research Findings

3.1. General Features

The retirees' sociodemographic profile is presented in Table 1. The retired migrants in Spain have not yet reached the oldest ages, since four out of ten have not reached the age of 65 and only 11% of the respondents are older than 75 years. Informants living alone in Spain (28%) are a minority group, while 68% are married or have a partner. Women and men are equally distributed in the sample. The informants who were born in the United Kingdom (44%) are the majority, a quarter were born in Germany and less than a third came from another European country. The largest group consists of households earning between 1,500 and 3,000 euros per month, so retirees who migrate to Spain can be defined as middle-class immigrants. In line with this profile, informants are more likely to have completed secondary studies (57%) compared to the upper and lower levels of education.

Table 1. Retirees' sociodemographic profile

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Gender (N=720)</i>		
Male	369	51.3
Female	351	48.7
<i>Age (N=720)</i>		
<65	296	41.1
65–74	346	48.1
>=75	78	10.8
<i>Birth country (N=720)</i>		
United Kingdom	320	44.4
Germany	179	24.9
Other	221	30.7
<i>People living in the household (N=720)</i>		
I live on my own	201	27.9
Two persons	483	67.1
Three or more persons	36	5.0
<i>Family status (N=720)</i>		
Single	47	6.5
Married/Cohabiting	493	68.5
Divorced, separated/ Widowed	180	25.0
<i>Highest educational level attained (N=719)</i>		
No graduation/	173	24.1

Compulsory school		
Secondary school/ Professional education	407	56.6
University/Postgraduate	139	19.3
<hr/>		
<i>Income of the household (N=645)</i>		
Lees than 1,500€	226	35.0
1,500, to under 3,000€	252	39.1
More than 3,000€	167	25.9

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

Dwelling property in the country of origin is a factor that divides the sample into two large groups, the most numerous is composed of those retirees that have their only property in Spain (58%) (Table 2). Respondents can opt for two different residence patterns: almost seven out of ten live in Spain more than 10 months a year, while 23% of cases choose to reside in Spain for less than 6 months a year. Broadly speaking, mobility between countries is a frequent behaviour among retired migrants: while one in five has not travelled to the country of origin in the last year, 43% have done so more than once.

Table 2. Retirees' multilocality

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<hr/>		
<i>Still maintain the property in the country of origin (N=714)</i>		
No	414	58.0
Yes	300	42.0
<i>Months living in Spain in the last year (N=720)</i>		
3–6	168	23.3
7–9	51	7.1
10–12	501	69.6
<i>Visits to the country of origin in the last year (N=718)</i>		
Never	188	26.2
Once	221	30.8
More than once	309	43.0

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

Table 3 describes the people [with a close relationship with the informants in their daily lives in Spain](#). *N* shows the frequency accumulated within the different types of people analysed for each response option. [The option 'yes, some' means that some of those people pertains to the categories under study and this](#) collects the greatest number of responses if all categories of people are considered, as it appears to be the most common behaviour among the retirees. Those 'retirees living in Spain permanently' (19%) and 'retirees living in Spain part of the year' (18%) stand out slightly from the rest. Each

one of these represents almost one-fifth of the total (3,035 responses). The minimum percentages belong to the categories ‘other persons living and working in Spain’ (15%) and ‘Spaniards’ (15%). Other interesting data are found in the distribution of the answers for the options ‘yes, all’ (415) and ‘no, none’ (680). At the first level, the greatest number of frequencies is concentrated in the category ‘people of my own nationality’ (29%) and ‘people who speak my own language’ (27%). At the second level, the categories are ‘other persons living and working in Spain’ (28%) and "Spaniards" (28%).

Table 3. People closest to retirees in Spain

	Retirees/pensioners living permanently	Retirees/pensioners living part of the year	Other persons living and working in Spain	People of my own nationality	People who speak my own language	Spaniards	Total
	Row %						N
<i>Yes, all</i>	17.8	8.2	7	28.7	27.5	10.8	415
<i>Yes, some</i>	18.8	18.2	15	16.5	16.4	15.1	3,035
<i>No, none</i>	7.8	14.1	28	10.6	11.3	28.2	680
<i>Don't know</i>	16.3	22.5	24.5	12.2	10.2	14.3	49

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

Research reports that 87% of respondents were registered as residents in the municipality where they live (Table 4). This ratio cannot be compared to the informants’ political participation and their membership in clubs and associations. Only 29% of the cases reported have voted in the Spanish local elections. The percentage of respondents’ belonging to clubs and associations is even lower (27%).

Table 4. Retirees’ socio-political integration in Spain

	N	%
<i>Membership of clubs or associations (N=719)</i>		
Yes	198	27.5
No	521	72.5
<i>Registered as resident (N=719)</i>		
Yes	623	86.6
No	96	13.4
<i>Voting in local elections (N=711)</i>		
Yes	208	29.3
No	503	70.7

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

The health service is, by far, the Spanish institution that inspires the most trust (Table 5). Six out of ten responses for this category are concentrated in the upper part of the scale, that is, ‘high trust’. The opposite is the case regarding the political parties, since 49% of the responses are located in the lower part (‘low trust’). It should also be noted that around 50% of the responses collected for the rest of the items are concentrated in the indeterminate zone, ‘neither high nor low trust’.

Table 5. Trust in institutions in Spain

	<i>Low trust</i>	<i>Neither high nor low trust</i>	<i>High trust</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Row %</i>			<i>N</i>
The public administration in general	29.4	49.9	20.7	667
The government (national)	29.0	55.3	15.7	667
The political parties	49.1	41.0	9.9	659
The communal government of the municipality I live in/lived in	26.4	50.0	23.6	674
The justice and police	24.5	46.8	28.7	658
The health service	11.2	28.6	60.2	686

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

Data related to migrants’ interest in politics regarding Spain shows that frequencies are distributed regularly (Table 6). Approximately half of the retirees valued as ‘high interest’ the political issues that occur in Spain, while about a third stated ‘neither high interest nor low interest’. Informants’ greatest interest is directed towards the issues that take place in the most immediate surroundings of their residence: the area (54%) and the municipality where they live (52%).

Table 6. Interest in politics regarding Spain

	<i>Low interest</i>	<i>Neither high interest nor low interest</i>	<i>High interest</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Row %</i>			<i>N</i>
Spain	16.9	32.9	50.2	706
The autonomous community you live in	16.6	37.6	45.8	705
The area that you live in	15.7	30.5	53.8	705
The municipality that you live in	15.8	32.1	52.1	707

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

3.2. Depicting multilocality and socio-political integration

Table 7 shows those social integration variables that are statistically associated with multilocality. It is observed that multilocality is a factor to take into account to explain registration patterns and voting in local elections. Dealing with trust in institutions in Spain, multilocality is only statistically related to the municipal government and the health service. Trust towards the more distant institutions does not vary significantly if multilocality is taken into account. A similar result is observed when the interest in political issues is analysed. Multilocality only explains at the level of the immediate surroundings of the retirees: the region, the area and the municipality they live in.

Table 7. Social integration variables statistically associated to multilocality

	Sig.*
Registering with the local register	.000
Voting in local elections	.000
Trust in communal government of the municipality	.029
Trust in health service	.006
Interest in autonomous community politics	.007
Interest in area politics	.021
Interest in municipality politics	.038

*The chi square test is significant at 0.5.

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

Significant differences between the groups of retirees are found in relation to the ‘socio-political integration’, which aggregates the answers about voting, membership in clubs and associations and registration at Town Hall (Table 8). While 28% of multilocal retirees show no integration, only 4% of based retirees behave in the same way. When the highest level of integration is analysed, this difference tends to be larger (14% of the based retirees compared to 3% of the multilocal group). On the other hand, the travellers show their own pattern: 22% are positioned in the category ‘no integration’ and 12% in the category ‘high integration’. More generally ‘basic integration’ is the most chosen category for all retiree groups.

Table 8. Retiree clusters’ socio-political integration

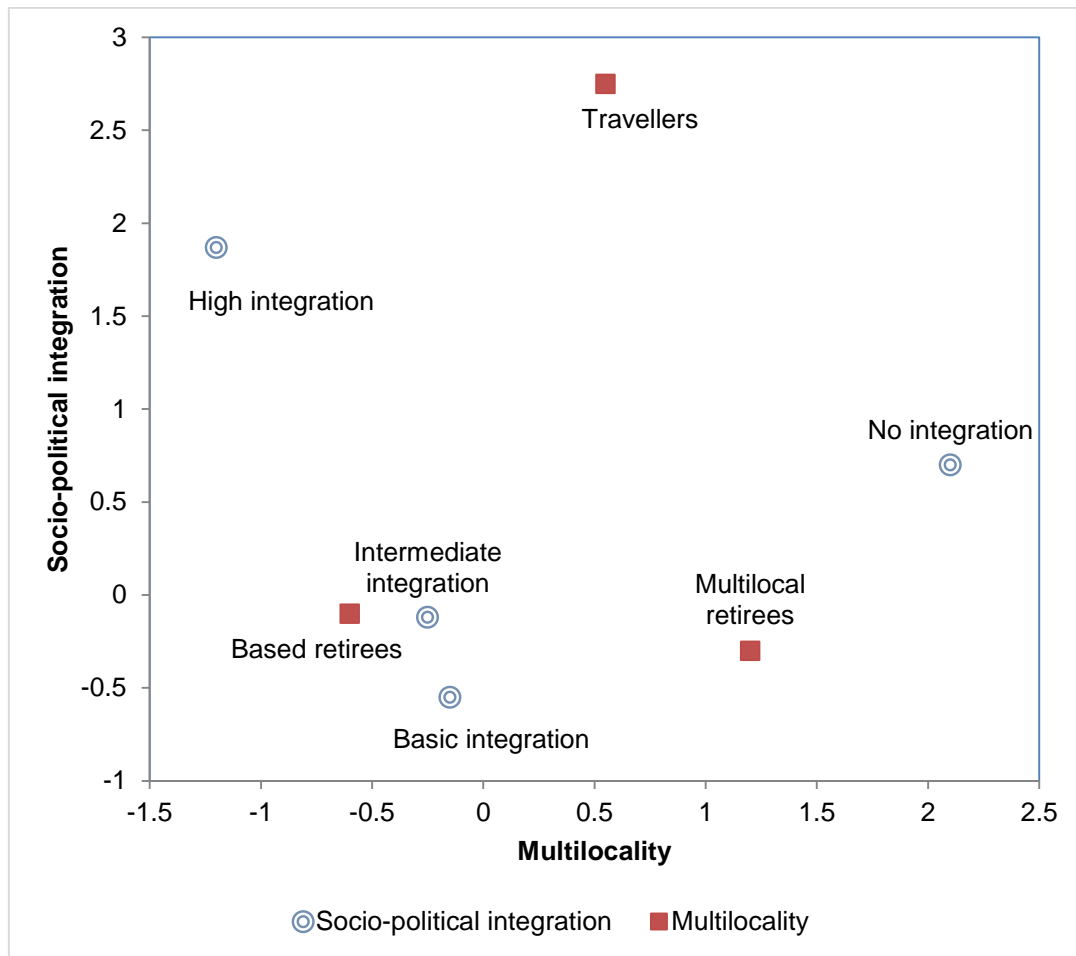
<i>Multilocality</i>	<i>Socio-political integration</i>			
	<i>No integration (%)</i>	<i>Basic (%)</i>	<i>Intermediate (%)</i>	<i>High (%)</i>
Multilocal	28.3	41.0	27.8	2.9

retirees				
Travellers	22.5	35.0	30.0	12.5
Based retirees	4.6	46.0	35.1	14.3
TOTAL	12.4	44.0	32.7	11.0

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

The correspondence analysis, as exploratory technique to describe the correspondence between row and columns in a table, confirms that there is a statistical relationship between multilocality and respondents' degree of socio-political integration (Figure 1). Total inertia (0.602, 60% of the variability explained) indicates dispersion of the scores that theoretically represent the retirees groups. Inertia, as similar to X^2 , is explained by two factors contributing unequally (Dimension 1: 0.676, Dimension 2: 0.528). Dimension 2 is clearly represented by the *socio-political integration*, since it registers a higher value (0.590) than *multilocality* (0.466). This is not shown in Dimension 1, because socio-political integration (0.679) and multilocality (0.674) score similarly.

Figure 1 shows how the different categories are distributed in the plane, with those more related to each other being closer. As a consequence, the categories 'no integration' and 'high integration' occupy the most extreme positions in Dimension 1. Both register scores away from the three retirees clusters. The intermediate categories of socio-political integration appear near the group of the based retirees since they score closely to 0 in Dimension 1. The multilocal retirees appear further away along Dimension 1 and closer to the 'no integration'. The travellers group is the most different because of their high score in Dimension 2. Multilocal retirees and based retirees score differently within this dimension, the first group scores being closer to the basic integration (negative value) and the second group closer to the category 'intermediate integration' (value close to 0).



MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

Fig.1 Correspondence analysis between retiree clusters and socio-political integration categories.

Table 9 shows the factor analysis results. The factors obtained explain more than 66% of all the variation contained in the variables under study. This is an acceptable result taking into account the number of issues included. By the method of the main components (Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization) the analysis converges after three iterations³. Factor 1, representing the ‘general interest in Spanish political issues’, explains 33.8% of the total. The analysis highlights the contribution of the variables related to the retirees’ municipality they live in and their closest environment. Factor 2, ‘trust in institutions in Spain’, explains 33% of the total and is defined by two elements: trust in general institutions (public administration, national government, political parties, municipal government and justice and police) and trust in the health service.

Table 9. Factor analysis rotated component matrix

³ Rotation is set up to get the results more clarified and explainable without changes after analysis. Varimax rotation is a common procedure in factor analysis.

<i>Extraction sums of square loadings</i>			
<i>Factors</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%Variance</i>	<i>%Cumulative</i>
1	3.38	33.80	33.80
2	3.30	33.00	66.80
		<i>F1</i>	<i>F2</i>
Interest in municipality		.924	.179
Interest in area		.921	.134
Interest in autonomous community		.900	.197
Interest in Spain		.845	.213
Trust in public administration		.172	.813
Trust in government (national)		.185	.776
Trust in political parties			.758
Trust in government municipality		.242	.756
Trust in justice and police			.731
Trust in health service		.141	.471

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

Multilocal retirees can be considered as different to other groups as they show less trust in the health service in Spain (Table 10). Compared to the based retirees, they more frequently report ‘low trust’ or ‘neither high nor low trust’. Simultaneously, less than half (48%) of multilocal retirees state they feel very confident. A higher proportion is observed among the based retirees (64%). The travellers behave as if they were living permanently in Spain. Two-thirds of them trust in the Spanish health care service, possibly because they use the system frequently. Analysing retirees’ general interest in Spanish political issues (Table 11), polarization around the extreme points is found. However, different attitudes can be identified among the retirees. On the one hand, those who live in Spain more permanently (based and multilocal retirees, 49% and 41%) report being more interested. On the other hand, the travellers show less interest (26%). However, the overall rate of retirees having ‘low interest’ in political issues is quite high. Percentages close to 40% among all groups are observed.

Table 10. Retirees groups’ trust in the health service in Spain

<i>Multilocality</i>	<i>Health Service in Spain</i>		
	<i>Low trust (%)</i>	<i>Neither high nor low trust</i>	<i>High trust (%)</i>
Multilocal retirees	14.7	36.9	48.4
Travellers	7.9	26.3	65.8
Based retirees	10.0	25.8	64.2
TOTAL	11.2	28.9	59.9

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

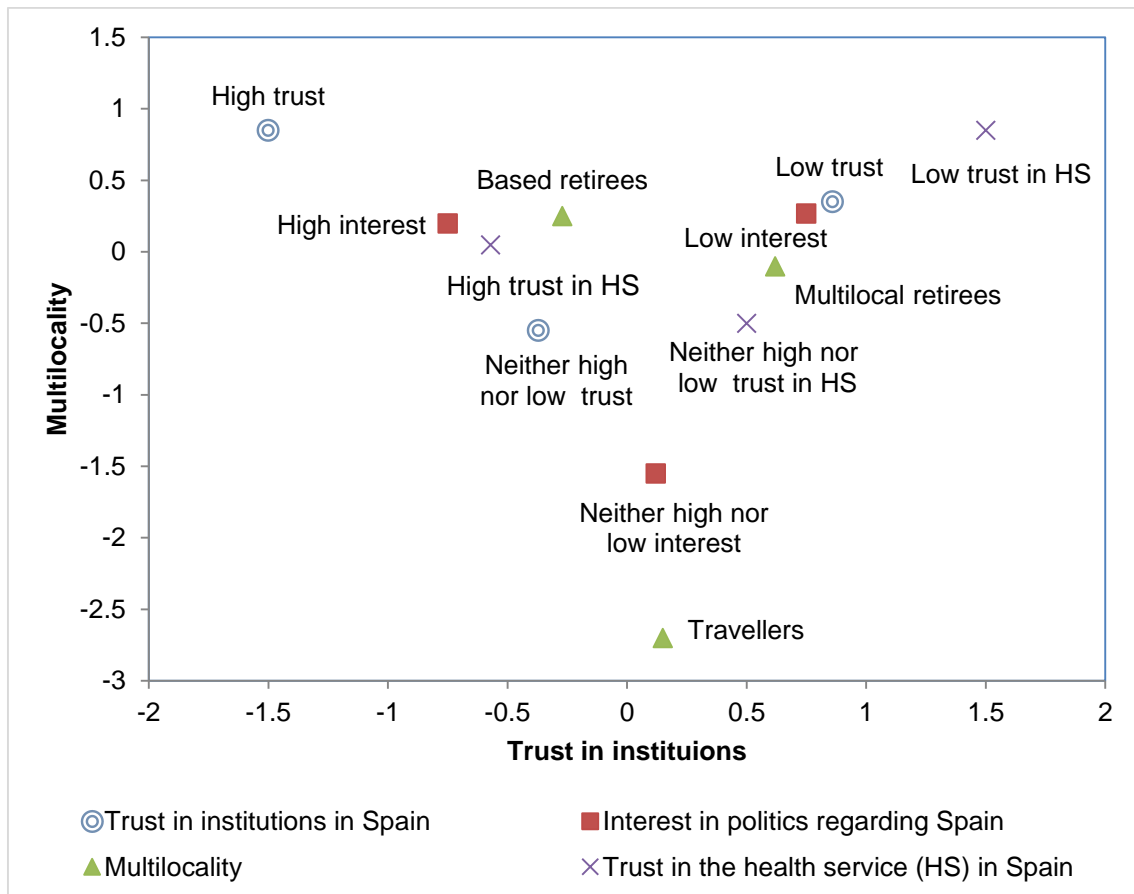
Table 11. Retirees groups' general interest in politics regarding Spain

<i>Multilocality</i>	<i>Politics regarding Spain</i>		
	<i>Low interest (%)</i>	<i>Neither high nor low interest</i>	<i>High interest (%)</i>
Multilocal retirees	45.1	13.7	41.2
Travellers	42.1	31.6	26.3
Based retirees	38.7	12.3	49.0
TOTAL	40.8	13.7	45.5

MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

The correspondence analysis indicates that there is a statistical relationship between the respondents' multilocal behaviour and their interest in political issues and their trust in institutions (Figure 2). The total inertia points to dispersion of the scores representing the retiree groups (0.715, 71% of the variability explained). Inertia is explained by two factors, although Dimension 1 contributes more strongly (0.408) than Dimension 2 (0.306). Dimension 1 is better defined by the *trust in the set of institutions* (0.571), since the confidence with regard to the health system (0.474) and the interest in political issues (0.444) score less. Multilocality is the variable that contributes the least (0.145). Dimension 2 is defined by *multilocality* (0.441). Interest in political issues is the next variable in terms of importance (0.376). Finally, trust in institutions (0.256) and trust in the health system in particular (0.152), make a smaller contribution.

Figure 2 shows that the three retiree groups are positioned differently along Dimension 1. The multilocal retirees score positively. The travellers also score positively, although closer to 0. The based retirees deviate from the others as they register a negative score. The result of the values recorded for Dimension 2 lead to the conclusion that the travellers (negative score) are significantly different from the rest of the retirees (scores around 0). The two-dimensional plane shows that, on the one hand, the based retirees are close to the category 'high interest' in politics regarding Spain and the category 'high trust' in the Spanish health service. On the other hand, the multilocal retirees are more closely related to the 'low interest' in political issues and the 'low trust' in the other institutions under research, while travellers do not show a clear pattern of association.



MIRES Project. Own elaboration.

Fig.2 Correspondence analysis between retiree clusters and trust in institutions – interest in politics regarding Spain categories.

4. Discussion on the socio-political integration of retired migrants

Discussion is needed to calibrate the meaning of the retired migrants' socio-political integration by getting their narratives in context with the statistical analysis results and the evidences taken from literature. As expected, richer contents from interviews could arise to help to better understand the limits and contradictions in the pattern of social and political integration of migrants in Spain.

From the statistical analysis, the based retirees show the highest level of socio-political integration. Despite the fact there is a tendency to under-register among the study group (Rodríguez et al. 2010), they are the most likely group to register in the municipality they live in. Generally speaking, migrants who decide to register as residents have sold their properties in their country and do not imagine leaving Spain in the future (Rodes 2011). Multilocal retirees' attitude towards registering as residents is explained by other factors. Registering involves a focused life in Spain, where certain advantages are

supposed to be obtained (Gustafson 2009). Not registering allows retirees access to certain services in their country of origin, especially the medical ones. This behaviour is also observed when retirees anticipate returning to the country of origin (Rodes 2011). Qualitative research shows retirees' doubts when they decide whether to be registered as residents in Spain. Klaus travels to Germany to meet his doctor and to take care of the maintenance of his apartment. Klaus does not register because he wants to avoid more taxes and because he wants to leave open the possibility of returning to Germany. He fears that he will not be able to manage by himself if his pension devaluates:

If you move here at a certain age, you shouldn't close all doors to Germany. We know many cases where people couldn't finance their lives with a pension any more where it would have been enough 10 or 15 years ago. That means you reach the poverty line pretty fast and in Spain there is no social net like in Germany that helps you. (*Klaus, multilocal retiree, German, 79 years old, Santa Ponsa, Mallorca*)

Different studies have shown that there is a low voter turnout among retirement migrants. Existing research describes this behaviour as conditioned by retirees' identification with local authorities and the aim of enjoying environmental conditions as being the main goal of migration (Durán 2005). It is observed that voting in the municipal elections correlates positively with the retirees' experience as residents in Spain (Janoschka and Durán 2013). In-depth interviews support the statistical relationship noticed between the based retirees and a higher level of general interest in politics regarding Spain and participation in local elections. According to the informants, being politically active is a proof of their integration in the community: they don't perceive themselves as tourists but local residents. Many of the retirees state a shared feeling of identity with their Spanish neighbours since they define themselves as European citizens (Durán 2015). Nigel asks for extended political rights for registered residents like him:

We always go on vote. That's something, we should do and I would like to vote in the general elections. That is not possible and I don't see the logic in being able to vote for local council, the European elections, but not in the general ones. (*Nigel, based retiree, British, 68 years old, Calvià, Mallorca*)

The statistical analysis stresses based retirees' trust in the Spanish institutions closest to them. Among them, the health service is highly important. The quality of the services of the Spanish health system is valued positively (Legido-Quigley et al. 2014). In fact, it is a reason for locating their residence in Spain, and even more so if dissatisfaction with

available services in the country of origin is expressed (Hurtado 2013). Throughout the interviews, the Spanish health service is positively valued for its source of medicines and fast and specialized treatments. Informants feel safe having transferred their health care rights from the country of origin. Ted explains why Spain is a better place to grow older with this judgment of his on the health service:

That opinion has strengthened in the last 12 months. Because of the health care. I find the health care is better than we expected. (*Ted, based retiree, British, 69 years old, Cómputa, Málaga*)

Formal and informal social networks are mentioned as a retirement migrants' resource while they live in Spain (Casado-Díaz et al. 2014). Current research has noted an international social capital that explains migrants' satisfaction with their lifestyle (Casado-Díaz et al. 2012). **Informants interviewed declare** this capital is generated by combining relationships within migrants' communities, with return trips to the country of origin, communication technologies and visits to Spain by friends and family. Collected data suggest that participation in clubs or associations is a variable that does not change significantly when based retirees and multilocal retirees are compared. From in-depth interviews it is confirmed that participation in associations focuses on leisure and volunteering activities open to all retirees, regardless of how long they have lived in Spain. Frank participates in all of the activities. Once he was settled in Spain, he began to volunteer to be busy during his free time:

We volunteer on Tuesdays and we do a little charity helpline. We do the helpline, 24-hour helpline, on Wednesday [...] we belong to a social club in Torrevieja, the same with some of the other members here, it's the 'Torrevieja retired activity club'. And we do quizzes with friends and so we don't know how we've got enough time to do anything else really. Yeah we do really enjoy it. It's good. (*Frank, based retiree, British, 61 years old, Torrevieja, Alicante*)

The statistical analysis has found that retirees' closest people categories do not differ significantly between the clusters under study. This result leads to the suggestion that migrants' social relations are not totally explained by multilocality. The based retirees report having improved their social networks, favoured by a lifestyle associated with leisure. However, the number of Spanish friends is much smaller than they expected. This gap between expectation of integration and reality has been noted by other studies (Benson 2011b; Lawson 2017). In terms of retired migrants' social capital, links with relatives or people within the same ethnic group are more important than those connections that link people belonging to different social groups (Casado-Díaz 2009).

Thus, the lack of a certain type of social capital at the local level is compensated, reinforcing ties based on family and friendship (Casado-Díaz et al. 2014). It follows from this that retirees living in Spain tend to organize their daily lives within the international community of residents (Lundström 2018). *Some of the retirees interviewed* regret not having the possibility of expanding their social circle in Spain and state that contexts of social interaction such as bars, markets or residential areas handicap the scope and depth of these relationships. Ted and his wife Liz bought a holiday home on the coast of Andalusia. Twenty years later they decided to move to the inland areas, avoiding the tourists arrived from their own country. However, they regret not having made more friends among the Spaniards. Liz explains the cause:

I think that's because we live outside the village. If you are in the village and have a town house, then you have got Spanish neighbours and you are going to mix with them and your Spanish will improve. (*Liz, based retiree, British, 69 years old, Cómputa, Málaga*)

From the migrants' words, a feeling of integration increases when they manage to be part of a community shared with the Spaniards. Participating in the same clubs and activities or attracting more interest from their neighbours increases their sense of belonging. Martina, based in Spain since the nineties, speaks of integration in terms of participation and interest in Spanish life:

Well, I think you have to be part of the normal life, the normal Spanish life in order to be integrated. That is to say you have to go to a celebration sometimes or do something cultural and have to be interested in that [...] You just have to join them to get in touch. (*Martina, based retiree, German, 55 years old, Santa Ponsa, Mallorca*)

Language skills is found as a cross-cutting issue regarding social integration. It is observed that retirees normally communicate in English or other mother tongues as a consequence of their limited knowledge of the language spoken in receiving societies (Gustafson and Cardozo 2017). This issue is mentioned as a limiting factor in retirees' relationships (Karisto 2005). The so-called 'language barrier' is linked by the interviewees to issues such as the settlement process in Spain, relationship with institutions, involvement in politics, knowledge of the local culture, management of health care and participation in the life of the community. Language learning is one of the most valued practices by migrants in terms of them fostering their social integration and improving their own perception (Hayes 2015). In fact, retirees' social integration arises from their ability to speak Spanish: a better understanding of the language is also

associated with fewer visits to the country of origin and more contact with the local population (Casado-Díaz et al. 2014). According to Georg, editor of a newspaper distributed in a Spanish coastal region, retirees can participate in Spanish society but only if they have certain skills:

There are different steps of integration and I can choose them à la carte, and that's ok, that's a fine thing. And I believe that of the foreigners only very few use these possibilities. Which has do with the language competence on the one hand and with the fact that "I am among my own kind, that's easier, that's much more clearly laid out" (*Georg, newspaper editor, Benissa, Alicante*).

The use of the language also concerns retirees' self-image as migrants. At this level, based retirees openly report feeling dissatisfied. They recognize that speaking Spanish is essential to be integrated and that to achieve this is their own responsibility. Multilocal retirees share a similar voice. Judith assesses her degree of integration according to her language skills:

I think we would never feel fully integrated until we were fluent Spanish speakers. That is probably the barrier. More than anything, I would say. (*Judith, multilocal retiree, British, 68 years old, Torrox Pueblo, Málaga*)

After 15 years living permanently in Spain, Inge states that language is the main barrier to achieving integration. In her speech this topic appears connected with the fear of being sick:

The biggest barrier is the language. And that is my problem. I could have taken more trouble to learn it. But I came here at the age of 60. They say you can learn even though you are older, but it is a lot harder [...] But what if I have to go to hospital one day? (*Inge, based retiree, German, 73 years old, Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife*)

While retirees adopt the integration pattern described above, they keep in touch with social networks located in the place of origin. The transnational practices identified among retired migrants take place in the social, cultural and economic fields. They are favoured by their socio-economic status and maintained regardless of the year of arrival at the destination, length of stay or age in response to the migrant's loss of social and cultural position (Lardiés-Bosque et al. 2016). In fact, it is known that multilocal behaviour is related to a planned return to the country of origin (Giner-Monfort et al. 2016). Furthermore, multilocality is seen as a positive experience that contributes to retirees' perceived quality of life (Gustafson 2001, 2008). Many of the migrants under study try to combine the economic and service level of their own country and the

feeling of freedom and escape they find in Spain. In this context it is reported that they hold feelings of multiple belonging (Huber and O'Reilly 2004). However, identification with Spain does not always mean migrants' social integration. Likewise, to live most of the year in Spain does not mean full integration, or cutting all ties with the home country, or a substantial change of migrants' identity (Rodes 2011). Judith is a representative case of the limits of multilocality. She and her husband have decided to maintain a property in the United Kingdom to make the most of two countries. This means combining the Spanish climate, which allows them to do more outdoor activities, with visits to the United Kingdom to meet their grandchildren and attend cultural events:

We still want to spend about half of the time there. To see friends, to see family, to pursue our interests. We have different interests in the United Kingdom to the ones we have in Spain. (*Judith, multilocal retiree, British, 68 years old, Torrox Pueblo, Málaga*)

Judith recognizes that, despite the advantages mentioned, multilocal life can be difficult:

There are some social difficulties; for example, you might belong to a group and then you are only there part of the time. It's not always easy to switch back in. Or there is a danger that you may feel that you won't get fully involved with anything, because you are living half of the time in one place and half of the time in the other. (*Judith, multilocal retiree, British, 68 years old, Torrox Pueblo, Málaga*)

Huber and O'Reilly (2004) demonstrate that there is a behavior pattern when migration is focused on enjoying a better climate and a lower cost of living in comparison with achieving social integration. It is highlighted that retired migrants have a liminal position in the host society since they do not need to be fully integrated to feel satisfied with their lives (O'Reilly 2002). Paradoxically, retired migrants can, on the one hand, feel welcome in the host society and identify themselves as residents. On the other, it is observed that they participate poorly in the receiving communities and feel frustrated by their lack of linguistic competence (Rojas et al. 2014). Migrants' perceptions result from their personal experience and their position on values and discourses shared in the social context of lifestyle migration (Lawson 2017). Through the interviews, it is observed that retirees can negatively assess their integration in Spain and, at the same time, report that they are able to cope with living abroad. Tourist areas, where English is widely spoken, makes it easier to achieve the migration goals. Nigel clarifies the importance of speaking Spanish where he lives:

We are very lucky over here, because of the Balearics [...] A lot of people do speak English. I've been to Menorca a couple of times for holidays and over there, the English is so very widely spoken. Like an ex-British colony. It amazes me. You greet them in my Spanish and because of the accent, they every time reply in perfect English. (*Nigel, based retiree, British, 68 years old, Calvià, Mallorca*)

5. Conclusions

The general hypothesis, whether the diverse types of multilocality helps to understand how the retired migrants in Spain behave regarding their social and political integration, has been proved. Both quantitative analysis and qualitative narratives have offered evidences to indicate that multilocality, as a common behavior among retired migrants in Spain, is associated with some aspects of retired migrants' social and political integration in Spain.

The based retirees achieve the highest level of socio-political integration. Migrants tend to have a more based life when they have sold their properties in their country of origin and have reduced their international mobility. Moreover, they tend to register as residents in Spain, focusing there the access to the services they need. It is also observed that based retirees are more likely to vote and show more interest in politics regarding their place of residence. This fact reflects migrants' approach to social integration. That is, to be interested and participate in Spanish life as members of the community in which they live, and to differentiate themselves from tourists and holiday-home owners. Feeling as European citizens is reported as an identity shared with the Spaniards. It is also observed that feeling European is translated in trust in institutions in Spain, especially in the health service. The perceived quality of health care has an influence on the choice of country in which to grow older.

Data suggest that social integration is not fully explained from the multilocality variables. There are no significant changes in migrants' closest people in Spain if they live as based retirees. Defining Spain as home does not mean closer relationships with the Spaniards. Membership of clubs and associations, found as a generator of social capital within the national or language community, is not significantly different if the based retirees and the multilocal retirees are compared. Not having as many Spanish friends as they expected is a recurring issue in retirees' complaints when they value their life experience in Spain. At this level, a **language barrier** is frequently perceived. What is more, language skills are proven to determine participation in the host society

and in the exercising of rights. Despite being frequently mentioned in interviews as a barrier, retirees' languages skills do not stop them from leading a satisfactory life.

This study contributes to research on lifestyle migration by having identified differences in a large sample of retirees through a multivariate analysis. Data confirm that the fact of maintaining a property in the country of origin is a key issue in retirees' migratory project. It is also concluded that it is a selective behaviour, related to social profiles according to the level of income or the country of origin (Rodes and Rodríguez 2018). The findings point to a specific social and political integration pattern among the retirees. When migrants decide to live in Spain as based retirees, they show a certain degree of integration, although their social relations tend to stand apart from the Spaniards as a general reference population. As retired migrants enter the receiving society unevenly, [future](#) research on lifestyle migration should develop [understanding of the different dimensions of the integration processes](#).

Retirees' economic and family situation, available means of communication and transport, tourist areas consolidated in southern Europe and mobility facilities between national borders suggest that this migration trend will succeed in the future. [It is a common trend that an undefined portion of the European population decide to live their retirement as migrants, so their social and political integration in the receiving areas raises a complex scenario, which will deserve to be studied](#). However many retirees are permanently based in Spain and are integrated at a socio-political level. This group resides officially and sees itself as part of the community in which it lives. They address their needs through voting, they are interested in politics at the local level and they trust the Spanish health service. [Probably Brexit will have an outstanding influence among the British retirees, which a deeper insights will be need in the future. Newspapers, municipal officers and local reports notify that they demand all kinds of public services and, especially, those that cover the needs of the ageing process](#). Collected data show a based migrant community that participates partially in the host society. This study highlights as a research topic how migrants manage to get involved in different support networks as a way to understand their integration processes. Their 'socialisation' is seen as part of a specific lifestyle as 'migrants' that gathers transnational connections, relationships within the community of retirees and tourists and interaction with some members of Spanish society. Another issue to take into account is policies to expand the social integration pattern observed to other social groups that live in retirement places.

Local authorities will be pushed to keep the retired migrants covered by social programs and policies.

With regard to the social impacts on the receiving areas, the multilocal migrants' situation is more difficult to assess. This group shows less integration at the political level and tends to be invisible to population registers. However, this group is likely to cover certain needs through the private sector and frequent stays in the country of origin. Membership in clubs and associations formed by other North-Europeans living in Spain is another field of analysis to understand retirees' integration [in the future](#). This behaviour is proved to generate support networks and to channel demands in non-institutional areas. It is also of interest to know how multilocal retirees use their properties over time, either as a place receiving tourist visits from friends and family or as a residence for new migrants.

The main finding of this research is to prove that multilocality is associated with a specific social and political integration pattern. In the context of lifestyle migration, it is observed how this integration happens unequally in certain areas. From this perspective, more studies are needed to focus on migrants' resources and strategies that result in selective forms of residence and social participation in receiving and sending societies, as they age as migrants abroad .

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