

# PART THREE

**Country Notes**

**ARGENTINA**

**BRAZIL**

**CHILE**

**COLOMBIA**

**COSTA RICA**

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

**MEXICO**

**PERU**

**STATISTICAL ANNEX**

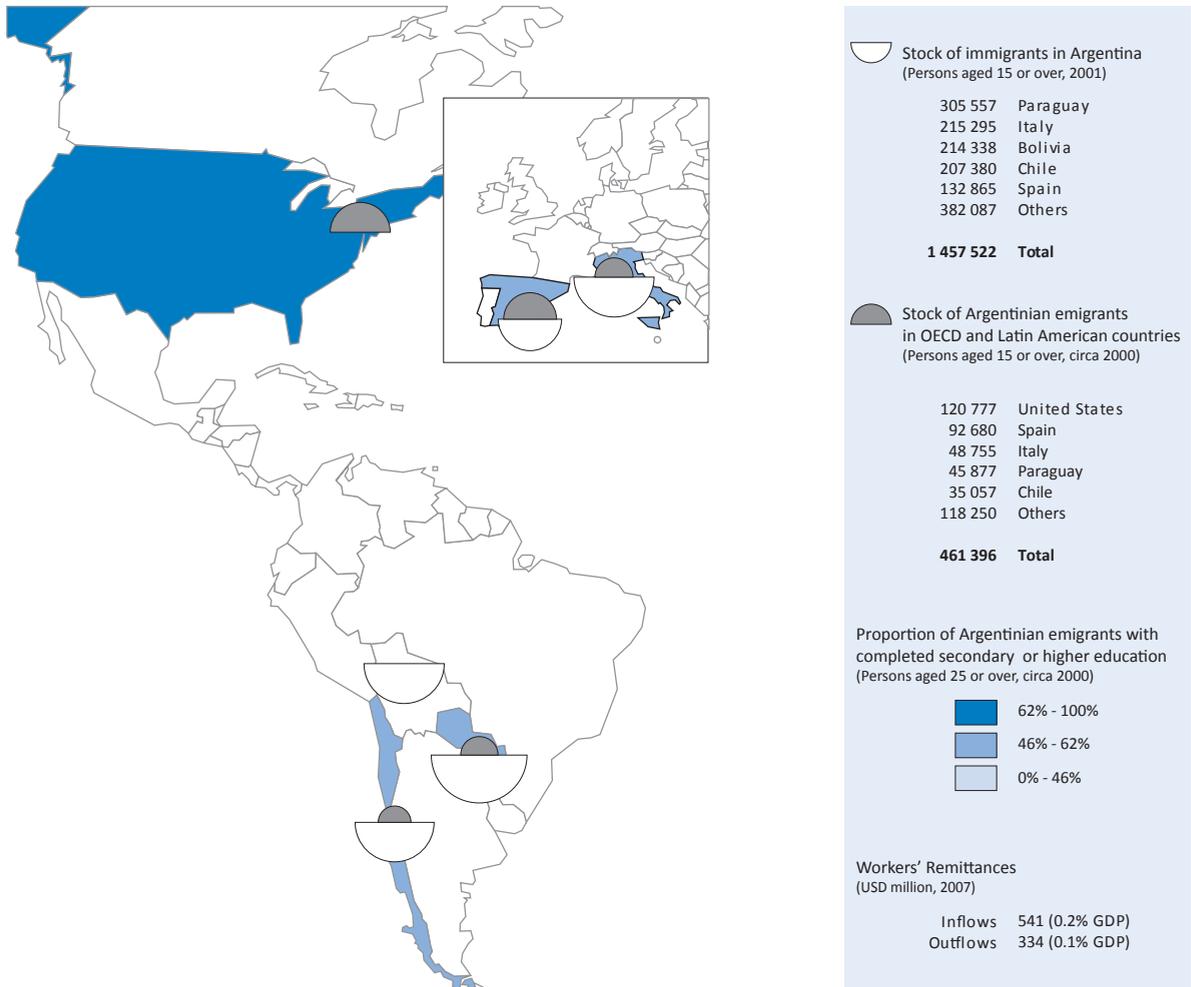


# ARGENTINA

## Argentina

Argentina has a long history of immigration, yet global forces and recent economic, political and social instability have gradually transformed it into a simultaneous sender, recipient and transit pole.

**Figure 1. Stock of Migrants and Level of Education of Argentinian Emigrants to OECD and Latin American Countries**



*Note:* This figure reports the stock of migrants recorded in national censuses and workers' remittances in balance-of-payments data. It will therefore not reflect unrecorded formal or informal flows, which may be material.

*Source:* For details on definitions and sources, please refer to the Statistical Annex.

- Argentina** is a net immigration country, attracting the largest number of migrants in the region (5.6% of the total population). Most immigrants come from neighbouring countries and, to a lesser extent, Italy and Spain.
- Since** the late 1990s Argentinians have begun to emigrate in larger numbers, principally to the United States and Europe. Emigrants represent 1.8% of the total population.
- Argentinian** emigration is generally of people with a medium or high educational level. More than 62% of Argentinian emigrants in the United States have secondary or higher education.

## Migration History and Policy Developments

Historically, Argentina has been a magnet for foreign workers, attracting the largest number of immigrants in the region (around 1.5 million people). European immigrants, principally from Italy and Spain, form the core of this historic migration, which was underpinned by the entry and integration measures provided by the Avellaneda Law (Act N° 817 of 1876). The bulk of European migrants arrived in Argentina between 1890 and 1950, and their relative share of the population is in a steady decline.

According to the 2001 Census, the largest group of more recent immigrants come from neighbouring countries, mainly Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay and Peru. These migrants face a very different policy setting. Since 1960 entry standards have become steadily more restrictive. In 1981 the Videla Law (Act N° 22.439) specified a long list of factors disqualifying candidates for immigration and denied labour and education rights to those who did not have formal migrant status.

Most recently Argentina has moved again toward a more open conception of immigration. The Mercosur Free Movement and Residence Agreement (2002) and the new Migration Law (Act N° 25.871 of 2003) embody this shift. The Law incorporates two new features: a human rights perspective and a regional approach. The Law recognises the right of people to migrate and guarantees education, health and social assistance rights to all immigrants (including those in an irregular situation). From a regional perspective, the Law explicitly recognises the role of migration from neighbouring countries and implements the Mercosur-derived free movement of people. In addition, the "Patria Grande" National Programme for the Regularisation of Immigration Documents was established in 2004 to regularise the immigration status of immigrants from Mercosur and associated states, providing a path to legal residence in the country.

In the late 1990s, new flows of Argentinian emigrants appeared, primarily directed toward the United States and Spain. These flows are dominated by highly skilled middle-class people. These new flows accelerated with the contraction of Argentina's labour market and the rise in unemployment in the wake of the economic crisis of 2001. The 2003 Migration Law also addresses the situation of Argentinians abroad, facilitating voluntary return and seeking to strengthen ties between Argentinians abroad and their home country. The R@ices programme seeks to bolster the nation's scientific and technological capabilities by linking local researchers with Argentinians living abroad, aiming both to discourage migration and encourage the return of Argentinian researchers currently abroad.

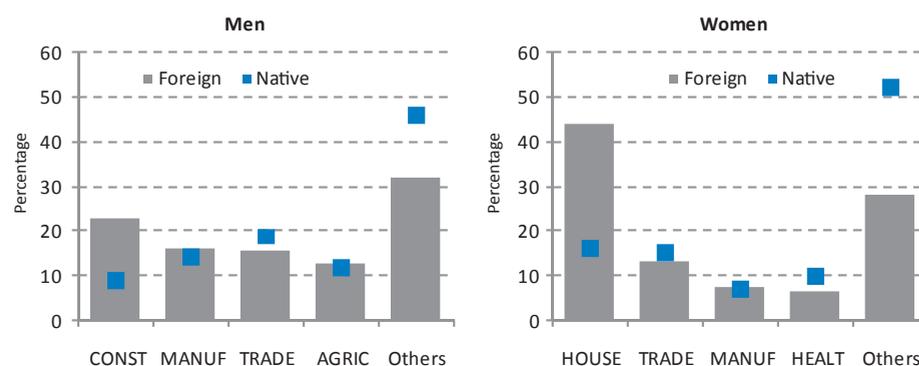
## Labour Market

Labour-market participation rates of Latin American immigrants tend to be higher than those of Argentinians, evidence that immigration from neighbouring countries is generally economic in nature.

Figure 2 shows the occupational distribution of employed males and females, both migrant and native-born. The occupational profiles of the two groups are distinct. This segmentation suggests that immigrant workers are complementary to the native-born workforce, occupying positions that natives reject. In particular, immigrants are concentrated in construction (for men) and domestic service (for women).

Migrants' employment also reflects differences in educational attainment between these two groups. With the exception of Peruvians, immigrant workers from OECD countries and Latin America are less likely to have completed secondary school than native Argentinians.

**Figure 2. Distribution of Workers in Argentina by Activity and Origin**  
(Latin American and Argentinian workers aged 15 or over, 2001)



Note: Sectors of activity are recorded according to the International Standard Industrial Classification, Rev. 3. The following abbreviations are used AGRIC: Agriculture and fisheries; CONST: Construction; HEALT: Health and social work; HOUSE: Employment in private households; MANUF: Manufacturing; and TRADE: Wholesale and retail trade.

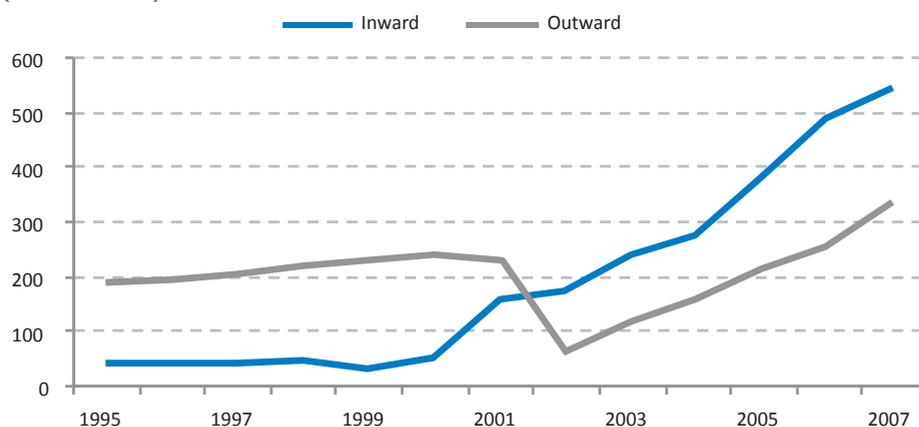
Source: OECD Development Centre calculations, based on the 2001 National Census of Argentina (processed with ECLAC Redatam+SP on-line).

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/716544610278>

## Relationship with the Country of Origin and Integration in the Host Country

Remittance inflows and outflows account for 0.2% and 0.1% of Argentina GDP in 2007, respectively; these magnitudes are low relative to the regional average (6.6% of GDP). Figure 3 shows that remittance inflows surpassed outflows for the first time in 2001. This reflects two factors linked to the deterioration of economic conditions in Argentina during the last decade. First, the rapid increase of Argentinian emigrants to OECD countries (mainly Spain and the United States) driving inward remittances, and second, the general rise in unemployment and the impact this has on the capacity of foreign workers in Argentina to make outward remittances.

**Figure 3. Remittance Flows in Argentina**  
(USD million)



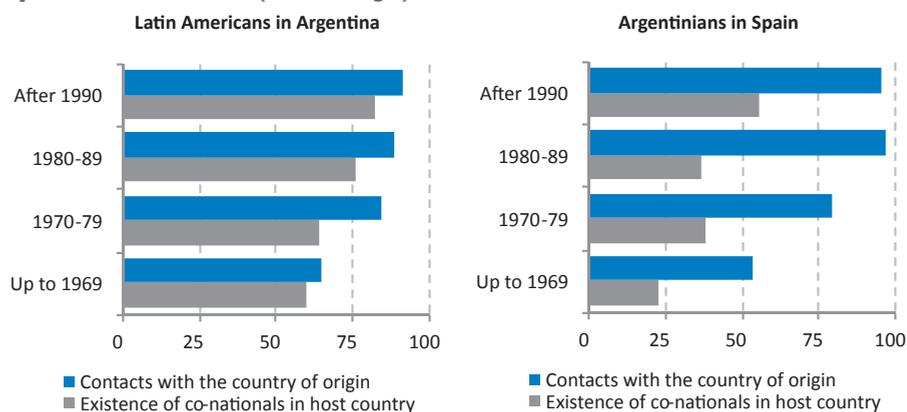
Note: Remittances are measured using the estimates of workers' remittances in the balance-of-payments current transfers account.

Source: IMF, Balance-of-Payments database.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/716653001523>

Diaspora communities often influence the decision to migrate, and the choice of destination. This is confirmed for Argentinian emigrants in Spain and Latin American immigrants in Argentina. Migration surveys in Argentina and Spain show that 67% and 51% of immigrants, respectively, say that their decision was influenced by a co-national who had already migrated.

**Figure 4. Existence of Links in the Host and Origin Country by Year of Arrival (Percentage)**



Source: Indec Argentina, Complementary Survey on International Migration and INE Spain, National Survey of Immigrants.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/716700653631>

Another interesting aspect of migrants' life is the relationship they maintain with their country of origin. Migration surveys highlight the high degree of contact that immigrants maintain with their relatives and/or friends. In Argentina and Spain, respectively, 80% and 93% of immigrants keep these links alive, percentages which are indirectly related to the length of stay in the host country.

In order to benefit from the strong networks that exist with migrants abroad, the Argentinian government established the programme Provincia 25. This seeks to ensure the exercise of political rights of Argentinians abroad, promote their integration and strengthen the links between them and the Argentinian state.