

WEEKLY ENGLISH PRACTICE

From Extremadura to Euskadi: Why Become a Migrant?

migrant | ˈmɪɡr(ə)nt | (noun)

a person who moves from one place to another, especially in order to find work or better living conditions.

At English Coaching Projects, we travel all over Álava helping employers and employees improve their English communication skills. Over the years, we've worked with dozens of firms and we can provide interesting **insights** into how our local economy works. So, here's one: industry in Álava is heavily dependent on migrant labour, both from Spain and from **abroad** (see [this previous WEP](#)).

This has, in fact, been the case for decades, especially since the 1950s, when workers were **hired** to come to Álava from all over Spain, especially Andalusia and Extremadura. As one of my current students moved to Álava from Extremadura just a few years ago, I decided to ask him about what motivated him to become a migrant.

Javi, originally from [Salorino](#), Cáceres, studied chemistry at university and, after graduating, studied a Master's in quality control, environmental safety and waste management. He explained that in the south, not only is there less heavy industry and therefore fewer employment opportunities for people with his **skillset**, but, at the same time, it is more attractive to work in companies in the north as there is more investment in the resources required to do his job properly. A more **thorough** enforcement of environmental and safety regulations, combined with the need to constantly innovate and improve quality to be able to compete on the global market require companies to employ qualified personnel. Javi makes the point that getting the job done - and having the resources to do so - brings great satisfaction.

But job satisfaction aside, what else attracts migrants here? "It's certainly not the weather!" jokes Javi. "**I don't want to sound funny** but it can actually cause health problems to those of us who aren't used to it." But on a more serious note, "If you lack opportunities, stability and a sense of future where you come from, you basically have nothing to lose by migrating," he explains. "Spaniards went to the Americas for this reason, and now Americans are coming here, as well as Asians and Africans."

I ask if he will **settle** or eventually return. "What keeps a lot of migrants here is the **tertiary** sector," he says. Going home means sacrificing a higher standard of living and the wide availability of cheap and accessible public services. "Homesickness tempts you into going back, but comfort will keep you here." *Turn to page 2* 🗨️ 🗨️

27/05/21 / **Keyword: migrants**

Javi is one of many migrants from the south of Spain who came north in search of meaningful work and a sustainable future. ECP coach (and migrant) Rob asked him about his experiences.



Useful vocabulary

insight: an accurate and deep understanding

to hire: to employ someone

skillset: a range of skills or abilities

thorough: done with great care and completeness

"I don't want to sound funny":

expression used when making a serious point that people might understand as frivolous or trivial

to settle (down): to adopt a more stable style of life (in a job or home)

tertiary sector: the part of the economy concerned with the provision of services

a living: (to earn/make) an income sufficient to live on

Let's chat about that!

1. **Have you moved from your original home in order to find work? If so, explain why. If not, would you?**
2. **Do you know many migrant workers? If so, where are they from and what do they do?**
3. **What are the disadvantages of being a migrant worker? (Why not ask your ECP coach?)**
4. **Describe your skillset.**
5. **Imagine you work for your local council and have to attract workers to your area. How would you 'sell' it?**

LIVE! English Events Come and socialise in English!

Cinema Nights

Friday **28th May & 25th June** at 18:15
Send a WhatsApp to John on **657731354**

Coffee Saturdays

Final meet-up on **5th June** at 11:00
Panadería Bertiz, Calle Francia 23

Useful words and phrases for talking about work

What do you do for a living?
to apply for a job, to take a job
a full-time job, a part-time job
to be unemployed, to be out of work
to fire somebody, to sack somebody
to hand in one's notice, to resign, to quit
to work shifts, to work overtime
a skilled worker, unskilled labour
an employer, an employee
I set up a business
She runs her own business

I enquire if his foreign colleagues feel the same. "Perhaps my workmates from Pakistan and Latin America think more about their families back home. Just like generations and generations of Spaniards have done while working all around the world, they send back economic support and maybe purchase property to which they plan to return to **settle down** and start a family," he explains. "But it all depends on the relationships you build in your new home. Once you have children that grow up there, the whole concept of 'home' changes."

What is clear, is that Álava's migrant workers - your ECP coaches included - have come here to earn a decent **living** and build a sustainable future. Whether that future is here or 'back home' is another question, as Javi explained with a wink: "When I'm old, I'll probably buy a flat in the lovely south to retire to. But I doubt I'll want to live there all year round!"

I think I should ask Leo Messi - Spain's most famous migrant worker - or Dusko Ivanovic - Baskonia's much-loved head coach - what their plans are for the future. Now, where did I put their phone numbers?

Written by ECP coach Rob Hextall.

A big thank you to Javi for taking time to answer all my questions!

Don't forget you can access the last 8 years of the Weekly English Practice on our [website!](#)

KATHLEEN TURNER NICOLAS CAGE
peggy sue got married

Friday 28th May at 18:30

Peggy Sue Got Married is a 1986 American fantasy comedy-drama film directed by *Godfather* director, Francis Ford Coppola, starring Kathleen Turner as a woman on the verge of a divorce, who finds herself transported back to the days of her senior year in high school in 1960. Despite Nicolas Cage.... it's still a good movie!

Message John on 657731354 to reserve your place

THANK YOU

A big "THANK YOU!" to everyone who gave us a review on Google!

