



Territory, Migration & Identity

Ceuta-Melilla Case Study

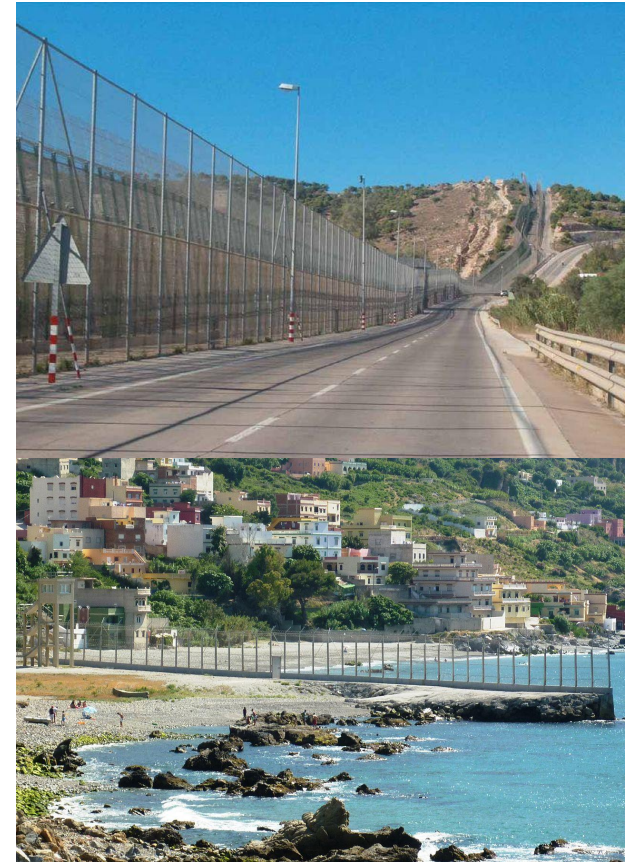
Introduction

- History of the Spanish enclaves in Northern Africa.
- Why is there a Spanish presence in these specific places?



Approach

- We choose to address the topics of territory, identity, and migration in our case study of the Spanish territories Ceuta and Melilla, located in Northern Africa, because these issues relate to the conference theme of Identities, Territories, Stakeholders: Challenges and Opportunities for Cooperation.



Outline

Territory

A Spanish Enclave -
Europe's African Border:

- a. Population composition of Ceuta & Melilla
- b. Living in the cross-border region

Migration

A model border or source of issues?

- a. Morocco: Critical partner of the EU
- b. May 2021 migration crisis - Starting anew?

Identity

A Hispanic, Moroccan or unique identity?

- a. Moroccan and Spanish heritage in the enclaves
- b. Ceuta-Melilla - A Distinct Identity

1. Territory: A Spanish Enclave - Europe's African Border


A. Population composition of Ceuta & Melilla:

- High rate of income inequality and unemployment- particularly between civil servants and the rest of the population;
- Large military and police presence;
- Large Muslim population - only Spanish territory where Islam is historically present;
- Muslims' and Catholics (40%-60%) co-exist peacefully;
- Ceuta - strategic free port in the Strait of Gibraltar;
- Diplomatic tensions with Morocco.




1. Territory: A Spanish Enclave - Europe's African Border

B. Living in the Cross-Border Region:

- Many Moroccan families earn a living by hawking goods in Ceuta-Melilla;
 - COVID: Possibility of border closures produce economic problems, particularly on the Moroccan side;
 - Ceuta is well-integrated in Spanish economy, unlike Melilla which relies heavily on Morocco.
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2. Migration - A Model Border or Source of Issues?

A. Morocco: Critical Partner of the EU

- Morocco retains a good relationship with Spain, France, and the EU regarding Migration control;
 - Cooperative border management - one of the most militarized borders in the world, while also being one of the least deadly migration routes in the Mediterranean;
 - Strong cooperation with Spain since 1992 regarding migration - creation of Moroccan-Spanish border controls in 2003;
 - Growing awareness at the regional level for heightened cooperation in migration and border control in the 2000s - regulation needed at the European level, but also at the African level;
 - Several EU programmes dedicated to this border and the control of movement;
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2. Migration - A Model Border or Source of Issues?

B. May 2021 Migration Crisis - Starting Anew?

- 2005: Large scale movement of African migrants over the Moroccan-Spanish border fence - overwhelmed border patrols and police
 - Spain welcomed the leader of Front Polisario (Brahim Ghali), a group defending the independence of Sahara Occidental - causing diplomatic tensions between Spain and Morocco
 - March 2020: COVID crisis significantly impacted economic activity in Morocco, leading to mass migration of 6000-9000 Moroccan people over the border to seek economic opportunities
 - Due to diplomatic tensions, Morocco did not prevent movement over the border
 - May 2021 crisis demonstrates that border control is less about physical barriers than it is about government cooperation
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3. Identity - Hispanic, Moroccan or Unique?

A. Moroccan and Spanish Heritage in the Enclaves:

- Strong Spanish influences in architecture, symbolism, and language;
- Highly multicultural city with different religious groups;
- Confrontation between Spanish and Moroccan groups;
- Significant stigmatization of Moroccan people in Ceuta-Melilla;
- Due to geographic location and large presence of Muslim communities in both cities, Morocco denounces Spain's colonial legacy and continued presence.



3. Identity - Hispanic, Moroccan or Unique?

B. Ceuta-Melilla - A Distinct Identity:

- 2019 elections brought an extreme right party into power in Ceuta, and a coalition party led by a Muslim man into power in Melilla;
- Muslim communities in Melilla are more integrated with Moroccan society due to geographic proximity - whereas Ceuta is much closer to Spain.



Vision

Cooperation

Cross border cooperation can be strengthened by hearing out the needs of every stakeholder: Moroccan and Spanish governments, as well as the concerned populations.

Economy

The economic situation, that was worsened due to the COVID pandemic, demonstrates the need for further collaboration at the border, and an improved facilitation of movement.

Territory

Due to their geographical position, an integration with Morocco is inevitable and should be fostered, in order to improve cooperation.