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Africa – Spain: **THINK TANK MEETING ON MIGRATION**

December, 4 · 2024

Casa África, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain

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Casa África's headquarters are located in a historical building in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in the Canary Islands. The facilities host most of the events the institution organizes, including conferences, round tables, B2Bs and cultural events.

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Casa África
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"About Casa África"



Introduction

Migration is a *necessary* phenomenon of contemporary societies. It is so in the broadest sense as a historical fact and structural dynamic of a globalized and unequal world. It is also so in the more specific sense related to the economic and social sustainability of both origin and destination countries. Among the latter, the context of the European Union represents a paradigmatic case. During the years of the “refugee crisis”, on average, each migrant contributed more than 1,500 euros net to the economy of the member states; 47 times more than the native population (Fiorio et al. 2022¹). The aging population, the reduction of the native workforce, and the deterioration of fiscal variables make immigration an irreplaceable asset for the progress of the EU (Defensor del Pueblo, 2020).

In Spain, the most significant impact of immigration has been demographic, with a growth of 8 million people since the beginning of the century, exclusively due to immigration growth. However, this growth has not been accompanied by an increase in productivity. Between 2000 and 2022, in fact, the gap between the Spanish GDP per capita and that of the rest of the EU-15 countries has widened (González Enriquez 2024²). This result points to structural limits of the Spanish productive model, which constrain the benefits and opportunities of immigration and harm the rights and opportunities of migrants. As noted in the report on the Integration of the Foreign Population in the Spanish Labor Market (Maia and Medina, 2022³), the average salary of foreign workers from Africa is 34% lower than that of Spaniards. This gap widens in the case of women. The combination of lower employment and stagnation in low-skilled (and low-paid) jobs places a consistent part of the immigrant population at risk of poverty or even material deprivation.

The migration phenomenon also has crucial consequences in the countries of origin. The impact can be positive, if we think, for example, of the aggregate effect of remittances on economic, social, and political progress in home countries, as recently demonstrated by Escribá-Folch, Wright, and Meseguer (2022⁴). But it can also be negative, depriving the countries of origin of human capital. Ebeye and Lee (2023⁵), for example, have very clearly detailed how the brain drain phenomenon in the health sector negatively affects the development dynamics of African countries, weakening their health systems.

The impact of migration on destination countries, origin countries, and the lives of migrants is the result of a complex system of agency, institutional, and structural elements that vary over time and geographically. This complexity requires careful reflection by all policymakers and stakeholders involved in migration governance, in order to limit its negative consequences and enhance its positive effects.

Such reflection, however, seems increasingly difficult in the current political debate, marked by growing polarization and focused exclusively on border control and the fight against irregular immigration.

This event seeks to advance in the opposite direction, bringing together experts for a shared reflection on the challenges and ways to improve migration governance between Africa and Europe. In doing so, it follows a precise approach: 1) **Directed at Sub-Saharan African countries**, not only as a key origin of migratory flows, especially along the Canary route, but also as key institutional interlocutors for Spain and the European Union, bearers of essential interests and perspectives for the sustainability of migration governance; and as sources of inspiration, as receiving countries in the African context. 2) **Pragmatic**, focused on **empirical evidence** as an indispensable condition for fair, viable, and effective governance, and oriented towards existing **good practices** in both origin and destination countries. 3) **Focused on work**, as a fundamental dimension of integration and an essential prerequisite for social cohesion.

Structure and Methodology

The meeting is structured into three thematic closed-door roundtables. The debate will revolve around key questions related to each theme. The objective is to identify shared guidelines to improve migration and integration governance, as well as their political and institutional narratives. The first two roundtables will follow the same format: diagnosis of the African, Spanish, and European contexts, followed by a debate on the main challenges and solutions. The third roundtable will be an open debate based on practical cases and involving participatory exercises.

¹ Fiorio, C., Frattini, T., Riganti, A. and Christl, M., *Migration and public finances in the EU*, European Commission, 2022, JRC129747.

² González Enríquez, Carmen, 2024. *Inmigración, trabajo, productividad y desigualdad en España*. Real Instituto Elcano.

³ Mahía Casado, R., & Medina Moral, E. (2022). *Informe sobre la Integración de la población extranjera en el mercado laboral español*. Observatorio Español del Racismo y la Xenofobia (OBERAXE), Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones.

⁴ ESCRIBÀ-FOLCH, A., MESEGUER, C., & WRIGHT, J. (2022). *Migration and Democracy: How Remittances Undermine Dictatorships*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1j6669c>

⁵ Ebeye, T., Lee, H. Down the brain drain: a rapid review exploring physician emigration from West Africa. *glob health res policy* 8, 23 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41256-023-00307-0>

Participants



Nasara Cabrera
Professor of Sociology

**Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
(ULPGC)**
Canary Islands, Spain

Nasara Cabrera Abu is a professor of Sociology at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. She holds a Master's in Feminist Studies and is an expert in international cooperation project management. She is part of the scientific committee of the Tenerife Immigration Observatory (OBITen). She has a professional background as a consultant and project technician in public policies on equality, cooperation, and interculturality. Her area of expertise includes migrations. She has several publications on diasporas, human rights, and Islamic feminism. She also held the position of Director General of Economic Affairs with Africa for the Government of the Canary Islands in the previous legislature.



The University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC) is a Spanish public university, located in the Canary Islands. It was created in 1989 as the Polytechnic University of the Canary Islands supported by other higher education centres, some of which originated in the 19th century. In 2023 the ULPGC joined the European Reform University Alliance (ERUA). The university community of the ULPGC is made up of more than 19,000 students, around 1,500 teachers.

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Souleymane Aliou Diallo
President

Otra África NGO
Dakar, Senegal

Souleymane Aliou Diallo is a consultant analyst in migration and decentralised cooperation, and the President of the NGO Otra África, through which he works on various initiatives to support migrants and promote safe, legal migration pathways. His efforts include advocating for better visa processes and highlighting the issues faced by migrants, such as exploitation and the difficulties in obtaining legal documentation. In addition to his work with Otra África, Diallo is a prominent figure in Senegal's governmental efforts to manage migration. He collaborates with international partners to develop policies that promote safe and legal pathways and improve the conditions for migrants both within Senegal and abroad.



Otra África is an association that brings together Spaniards and immigrants from various African countries, working together to offer a better image of Africa. The objectives of Otra África are to provide help and assistance to migrants in need, raise awareness, promote intercultural relations, organize cultural and sports events, and carry out international cooperation and co-development actions.



Dr. Bréma Ély Dicko
Professor of Sociology

**Université des Lettres et des
Sciences Humaines de Bamako**
Bamako, Mali

Bréma Ély Dicko holds a PhD in sociology specializing in "migration and interethnic relations" from the University of Paris 7, within the UMR URMIS. He is a full Professor at the University of Letters and Human Sciences (ULSH) in Bamako and from 2014 to 2019 he headed the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of FSHSE. He has conducted a series of studies on drivers of change in Mali (2013), the capitalization of co-development practices in Mali (2012), and circular migration between Mali and Spain (2009). Since 2008, he is a member of the Research Group on Malian Migrations and a member of the research consortium on migration and social tensions in Southern Mali (2007).



Université des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines de Bamako (ULSHB) is a public university in Bamako, Mali, funded in 2011.



Amal El Ouassif
Senior analyst

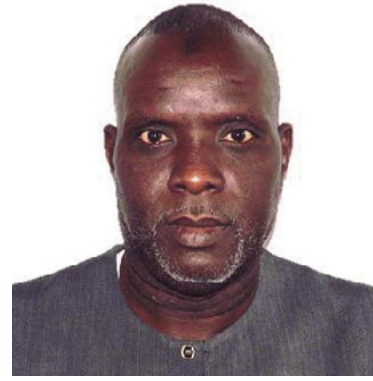
Policy Centre for the New South (PCNS)
Rabat, Morocco

Amal El Ouassif is an International Relations Specialist at the Policy Center for the New South. Prior to this, she worked as a program coordinator at the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and served as a consultant in development policies with the office of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in Morocco. She is also a former bluebook trainee in the Directorate General of Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion in the European Commission in Brussels. Amal has a Master of Art in EU's International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, from the College of Europe in Bruges and a Master in Development Studies from UPMF-Grenoble. Her area of interest include Africa- Europe cooperation and migration.



The Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) is a Moroccan think tank aiming to improve economic and social public policies that challenge Morocco and the rest of Africa as integral parts of the global South. The PCNS pleads for an open, accountable, and enterprising “new South” that defines its own narratives and mental maps around the Mediterranean and South Atlantic basins, as part of a forward-looking relationship with the rest of the world. Through its analysis, the think tank aims to support the development of public policies in Africa and to give the floor to experts from the South. Focused on dialogue and partnership, it aims to nurture the African expertise needed to address challenges and suggest solutions.

<https://www.policycenter.ma/>
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Mouhamadou Habib Faye
First Technical Advisor to the Minister of Vocational Training of Senegal in charge of apprenticeship

Ministry of Vocational Training, Apprenticeship, and Handicrafts of Senegal
Senegal

Manager, Administrator of vocational training programs and curricula. Instructor in management information systems, computer networks, and quality management. Focal point of the Ministry of Vocational Training on circular migration with the Global Skills Partnership (GIZ).



The Ministry of Vocational Training, Apprenticeship, and Handicrafts of Senegal is responsible for managing technical and vocational training disciplines, ensuring their alignment with the economy, and promoting the quality of education and training in all sectors. It also focuses on facilitating the integration of graduates, modernizing traditional apprenticeships, and supporting the development and export of handicrafts.



Amparo González-Ferrer

Deputy Director General of Reception in the Humanitarian and International Protection Programs, Senior Research Fellow

Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

Madrid, Spain

Amparo González-Ferrer is currently Deputy Director General of the Reception System at the Secretary of State for Migration, where she previously led the Unit for Migration Analysis. She is also Senior Research Fellow at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), and member of the Demographic Dynamics Research Group. She has extensively worked on family migration, political integration of migrants, and determinants of international migration. She coordinated the European Project TEMPER-Temporary versus Permanent Migration and led the Spanish team of the MAFE-Migrations between Africa and Europe.



The Reception Unit is attached to the Secretary of State for Migration and coordinates, within the General Directorate of the Reception System for International Protection and Humanitarian Assistance Program, the reception, allocation and integration itineraries of migrants, asylum applicants and refugees.

The Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) is the largest public research institution in Spain and one of the most renowned institutions in the European Research Area (ERA). It is affiliated to the Ministry of Science and Innovation through the Secretary General for Research.

@SEstadoMigr



Dagauh Komenan

Responsable de Actividades Formativa

Centro de Estudios Africanos (CEAF)

Sevilla, España

Dagauh Komenan is a historian from Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast, with a PhD in Historical Sciences from the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC). His thesis, "Canary Islands and development cooperation in response to security and migration challenges in the Western Sahel (2005-2021)," highlights his expertise in International Relations. He holds a master's degree in Contemporary History from Félix Houphouët-Boigny University and a master's in Hispano-African Relations from ULPGC. Komenan coordinated and contributed to "War and Peace in Africa" and authored essays like "Françafrique Seen from the South." He has written for *Africaye*, *Guinguinbali*, *Mundo Negro*, *The Conversation*, and more, and has taught at various universities.



The Center for African Studies of Seville (CEAF) is a space dedicated to research, training, and dissemination about Africa. It promotes knowledge of the African continent from a multidisciplinary and critical perspective, organizing academic, cultural, and cooperation activities. With a network of international collaborators, CEAF contributes to making visible and understanding the historical, political, and cultural dynamics of Africa in the global context.

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Óscar Mateos
Professor of International Relations

Ramon Llull University
Barcelona, Spain

Óscar Mateos is a Professor of International Relations at the Blanquerna School of Communication and International Relations (Ramon Llull University) and coordinator of the GLOBALCODES Research Group. He holds a PhD in International Relations from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB, 2012). His studies focus on armed conflicts and post-conflict peacebuilding processes in Africa, particularly West Africa. He worked at the School of Culture of Peace (UAB) and collaborated with organizations such as Médicos Sin Fronteras in South Sudan and Conciliation Resources in Sierra Leone. He was visiting professor at the University of Sierra Leone (2006-2008) and visiting researcher at SOAS (University of London). He is also an associate researcher at CIDOB.



Ramon Llull University (RLU), located in Barcelona, comprises 8 prestigious institutions of higher education and research and 1 affiliated centre. Its main goal is to provide quality training, focused on the person and responding to societal needs. The Blanquerna School of Communication and International Relations at RLU hosts the research group GLOBALCODES (globalization, conflicts, security and development), which aims to contribute to the scientific debate on how to respond to global challenges of globalization, sustainable development and security, including both conflicts and other threats, through the lenses of a variety of disciplines, such as international relations, communications, legal, economic, political and social sciences.

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Alberto-Horst Neidhardt
Senior Policy Analyst

European Policy Center (EPC)
Brussels, Belgium

Alberto Horst Neidhardt is a Senior Policy Analyst and Head of the European Diversity and Migration programme at the European Policy Centre (EPC). He works on with expertise on asylum and migration law and policies, multiculturalism, disinformation, and the politics of migration, EU citizens' rights, and free movement. Alberto obtained a PhD in EU law from the European University Institute. He lectures at the University of Antwerp on legal pluralism and at the Catholic University of Lille on EU governance and ethical policymaking.



The European Policy Centre (EPC) is an independent, not-for-profit think tank dedicated to fostering European integration through analysis and debate, supporting and challenging decision-makers at all levels to make informed decisions based on evidence and analysis, and providing a platform for engaging partners, stakeholders and citizens in EU policy-making and in the debate about the future of Europe. EPC aims to promote coherent, holistic and strategic policymaking by making links between and across different policy areas and policymakers, and it focuses on long-term sustainable solutions, especially in areas of critical importance for the future of European integration, Europe's role in the world and people's well-being.

<https://www.epc.eu/en/>
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Francesco Pasetti
Research Fellow

CIDOB in the area of Migrations
Barcelona, Spain

Francesco Pasetti is a Research Fellow at CIDOB in Migrations and adjunct professor at the Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI) and at Pompeu Fabra University. His interest in "migration matters" began at ASK Research Center (Bocconi University), focusing on diasporic media. He then studied migrant integration politics at GRITIM-UPF for his PhD, addressing integration policies in Europe through a mixed-method investigation. Pasetti's expertise on integration policy grew as a research collaborator for the Migration Policy Center (European University Institute) between 2013 and 2015. Since 2017, he has specialized in policy evaluation based on indicators and is currently focused on refugee policies and political discourses in Spain.



CIDOB is an international affairs research centre that analyses global issues that affect political, social and governance dynamics, from the international to the local. It aims to be a useful tool for society, to ensure open access to knowledge and to promote the study of the international issues that affect citizens' daily lives. CIDOB seeks relevance and social impact for its research and attends to public institutions' needs and requests for international information, aiming to influence decision-making processes and provide alternative visions. It promotes innovation in the analysis of global politics, transcending classical international relations structures and considering the growing impact of global phenomena on local realities.

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Lucas Pérez Martín
Professor

Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC)
Canary Islands, Spain

Lucas Pérez Martín is the Director of the Department of Private International Law at the ULPGC. He lectures on Private International Law, Islamic Private Law, Legal and Social Integration of Foreigners, Master's Degree in Immigration Practice and TFM, at the ULPGC and the UNED. He holds a Law Degree and Doctorate, a Political Science and Sociology Degree, a European Law Diploma, and is an Expert in University Teaching. He has been substitute Magistrate of the Provincial Court of Las Palmas since 2004, Secretary of the Canarian Council of the European Movement since 2011, and Vice-President of the Spanish Federal Council of the European Movement since 2014. He is Director of the International Campus of the ULPGC since 2021 and the Diploma in European Studies at the ULPGC since 2009, participating in 8 research projects.



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Oriol Puig

Senior Policy Officer in the Ministry for European Union and Foreign Action, Generalitat of Catalonia
Member of African Studies Group (GEA), Autonomous University of Madrid
Barcelona, Spain

Oriol Puig is Senior Policy Officer in the Ministry for European Union and Foreign Action of Generalitat of Catalonia as responsible of Sub-Saharan Africa. He is Associate Lecturer at UPF and UOC, teaching globalisation, post-colonialism, human mobility and interculturality. He is associate researcher at GRITIM-UPF (Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration), focusing on African migration, climate change and the externalisation of borders in the Sahel region, and member of the research groups Grupo de Estudios Africanos (GEA) at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and Grupo de Estudios sobre Sociedades Africanas (GESA) at Universidad de Lleida. He holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Barcelona, and his thesis on trans-Saharan mobility between Niger and Libya was awarded the 2017 UB extraordinary prize.



**Generalitat
de Catalunya**

The Ministry for European Union and Foreign Action of Generalitat of Catalonia has two government delegations in sub-Saharan Africa: one in West Africa, located in Dakar, and the other in Southern Africa, based in Johannesburg, from where it promotes its bilateral, multilateral and development cooperation relations and operates in the cultural, commercial and academic spheres. The Catalan government also has a document in which it frames all its external action in the area, called Africa 2030 Strategy, which gives continuity to the Africa 2020-2023 Plan, and which contemplates, among other issues, participation in reports, studies and projects on European governance of African migration.



Roberto Roca Paz
Data Officer

IOM's Global Data Institute (GDI)
Berlin, Germany

Roberto Roca Paz is a Data Officer at IOM's Global Data Institute (GDI) in Berlin, working on the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI). Roberto holds a PhD in Economics from the Friedrich Schiller University (FSU) Jena, and a MSc in Economics with a specialization in Public Sector Economics from the same institution. He also has working experience in public policy Institutes in Bolivia, Chile, and Canada. During his studies, he was awarded a scholarship from the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.



Established in 1951, IOM is part of the UN System and stands as the leading intergovernmental organization in migration. IOM promotes humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing support to migrants across the world, developing effective responses to the shifting dynamics of migration and advising on migration policy and practice. IOM established the GDI to harness the power of its data for operations, making meaning of global migration patterns, and informing foresight. GDI capitalizes on synergies between its two units – Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) and Global Migration Data Analysis Center (GMDAC) – and collaborates with regional data specialists to illuminate the global data story of human mobility.

<https://www.iom.int/global-data-institute>
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@UNMigrationData



Bárbara A. Rostecka
Professor at the Department
of Sociology and Anthropology

University of La Laguna (ULL)
Canary Islands, Spain

Bárbara Rostecka is a doctor in Sociology, professor at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of the University of La Laguna and the UNED (Spain), and member of the research groups “Migrations, gender and identities. Policy Analysis and Evaluation” (MIGEID), “Canary Islands-Africa Interuniversity Cooperation Networks” (CIMPI) and “Tenerife Immigration Observatory” (OBITEN). She is the author of about twenty articles and national and international publications. She is the technical secretary of the Cultural Chair Globalization, Migrations and New Citizenships attached to the University of La Laguna.



The **University of La Laguna (ULL)** is the oldest institution of higher education in the Canary Islands. The Cultural Chair Globalization, Migrations and New Citizenships is one of the chairs attached to ULL. Established in 2018, it aims to generate a space for meeting, dialogue, research and collective action around issues of relevance and social projection, related to the processes of globalization and their impact on the development of international migrations and the formation of new citizenships.



Germán Santana
Professor

Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC)
Canary Islands, Spain

Germán Santana Pérez is a professor at ULPGC in Modern History and the director of the Master’s program in Hispanic-African Relations at ULPGC. His research area includes the history of the Canary Islands, the history of Africa, and the comparative history of the Atlantic Islands, including Macaronesia, the Caribbean, and the African archipelagos. His current research focuses on the relationship between the Caribbean and the Canary Islands and the contacts between Spain and Africa.



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Laia Tarragona
Research Project Manager

CIDOB
Barcelona, España

Laia Tarragona works as research project manager at CIDOB (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs). She has a versatile profile, with broad experience in research project management in different research areas. She worked at CIDOB from 2011 to 2015, and then from 2023 onwards. From 2016 to 2022 she worked at the University of Deusto as research assistant and project manager in different European projects, as well as independent consultant in the field of online hate speech and counter-speech strategies, being one of the founders of Observatorio PROXI. In 2013 she was invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). She holds a law degree and a Master's in International Relations.

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Program

9.00 h WELCOME

José Segura Clavell, Director General of Casa África
Amparo González-Ferrer, Deputy Director General of Reception in the Humanitarian and International Protection Programs. Senior Research Fellow at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

9.20 h TOUR DE TABLE

9.30 h **ROUNDTABLE 1: INTEGRATION, WORK, AND SOCIAL COHESION**

The Spanish Way of Migrant Integration: Employment Access as the Beginning and End of the Migratory Project

Amparo González-Ferrer, State Secretariat for Migration, and Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

Pursuing Social and Economic Well-Being through Reintegration: Lessons Learned

Roberto Roca Paz, IOM's Global Data Institute (GDI)

Factors and Drivers of Labor Market Integration. Insights from Mali

Bréma Ély Dicko, Université des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines de Bamako

Moderated by: **Francesco Pasetti**, CIDOB

11.00 h Coffee break, central courtyard

11.15 h **ROUNDTABLE 2: TOWARDS A SAFE AND REGULAR LABOR MOBILITY BENEFITTING MIGRANTS, ORIGIN AND DESTINATION COUNTRIES**

Legal Barriers vs. Potential for Improvement in the Management of Labor Mobility Between Africa and Spain

Lucas Pérez Martín, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC)

The Uncertain Future of Regular Migration at the EU Level: Reflections on New EC Priorities

Alberto-Horst Neidhardt, European Policy Center (EPC)

Moving towards a labor mobility that is beneficial for migrants and origin countries

Souleymane Aliou Diallo, Otra África

Moderated by: **Amal El Ouassif**, Policy Centre for the New South

12.45 h **Lunch**, central courtyard

14.00 h **PARTICIPATORY SESSION: TOWARDS NEW NARRATIVES ON MIGRATION**

Group activity: Collective mapping of current narratives on migration

Group activity: Envisioning innovative migration narratives

Facilitator: **Laia Tarragona**, CIDOB

15.30 h **CLOSING AND “NEXT STEPS”**

Francesco Passetti, CIDOB

Yurena Ojeda, Head of the Economic and Social Development Area of Casa África

Visit Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria is the most cosmopolitan city of the Canaries and one of the cities with the best weather in the world thanks to its exceptional location with an average temperature of 17°C in winter and 25°C in summer. The capital has well differentiated areas: the historic old town and the port area, not forgetting the upper part of town. But Las Palmas de Gran Canaria is especially known for the Canteras Beach, one of the most recognised urban beaches in Europe. The Port of Las Palmas, La Luz Port, has also contributed to the city's carácter and its relevance due to its steady flow of people, goods and services. It is also the welcoming entrance to the city for tourism cruises with around 800,000 visitors every year.



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Playa de Las Canteras



Plaza de Santa Ana



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Consortio Casa África:

