Reasons for moving to Spain’s Costa Blanca: A comparison between British and German retired migrants

Raquel Huete
Tomás Mazón
University of Alicante
Spain

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Last year, 1/3 of all European retirees registered in a Spanish town did it in the Costa Blanca.

In 16 municipalities, foreigners are more than Spaniards.

Most old-age pensioners are British or German in many towns, e.g., Calp 80%

Motivation seems to be the key to understand this kind of mobility known as leisure migration or international retirement migration.
METHODOLOGY

- Both qualitative and quantitative research.
- 10 in-depth interviews to key informants.
- A personal in-home survey with a sample of 667 interviews to German and British retired citizens.
  - Confidence Level: 99% (2σ)
  - Confidence Interval: +/- 5%
  - Systematic sampling with random grid position.
  - 12 towns.
WHO ARE THEY?

We estimate:

- 50,000 German retirees.
- 156,000 Britons.

Average age: 62.6 years old.
- German older than Britons.

High education level: higher in British population.
When did they move to the Costa Blanca?

- Before 1980: Germany (1%), UK (2%)
- 1981-1989: Germany (7%), UK (7%)
- 1990-1999: Germany (17%), UK (52%)
- 2000 or after: Germany (39%), UK (75%)
What is their main reason for living on the Costa Blanca?

- **Weather**: 64% (Germany), 50% (United Kingdom)
- **Quality of life**: 22% (Germany), 39% (United Kingdom)
- **Other**: 13% (Germany), 11% (United Kingdom)
QUALITY OF LIFE

Mediterranean lifestyle?

- Relaxed life
- Valuable environment
- Social relationship factors:
  » Associations (British +)
  » Cultural events (=)
  » Neighbourhood relationships (Germans +)
- Health services (British +)
- Sports facilities (British +)
QUALITY OF LIFE

Urbanisation process:
- Unplanned, non-sustainable
- Low quality of houses
- Overcrowded spaces

Culture and language difficulties.

German opinions about public services more negative than English.
Socio-cultural aspects become a pull factor as important as the geographical conditions of the destination.

New requirements and facilities in the future.

Consequences for local economy, culture and environment are both positive and negative.
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Raquel Huete
Tomás Mazón
Dept. Sociology I
University of Alicante
Spain

r.huete@ua.es