

## 5 Solving labour market disequilibrium in the Spanish hotel and tourism sector - The supply side

In this section first of all overall information on Mexico as a possible country of origin for migrant workers in Spain shall be collected and displayed. A brief overview of the hotel and tourism industry in Mexico shall be provided. Consequently, the main part of this chapter – the results obtained from the surveys conducted – shall be presented. The findings shall be used to identify Mexico as a suitable country for labour migration in the hospitality industry considering the main characteristics of the sector and the disposition of future Mexican professionals to work in Spain.

### 5.1. Panorama Mexico

Mexico, officially the United States of Mexico, is located in Central America. It is bordered to the North by the United States of America, to the East with the Pacific Ocean and to the West by the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. To the South, Mexico borders with Guatemala and Belize.

With a surface of more than 2 million square kilometers it is one of the largest countries in the world; according to the population it is moreover considered the most populated Hispanic country and ranks within the 15 most populated countries of the world. In 2008 the population density was 56.53 persons per square kilometer (CIA World Factbook, n.d.).

The UN division CEPAL estimates the population of Mexico in 2008 around 107.677.000 with an annual growth rate of 1.1% between 2005 and 2010. Population growth has been slowing down in the past and is expected to further slow down in the next decades by 0.1% to 0.2% each five years until 2050. This leads to a projection of the population of 131.586.000 in 2050 (CEPAL, 2008). Table 5.1. shows past and expected population and population growth from 2005 to 2010.

Table 5.1: Population, 2000 to 2050 in thousands

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total population	104.266	105.342	106.535	107.801	109.071	110.293
Annual growth rate in %	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1	

Source: LABORSTA, n.d.

Mexico has been conquered by the Spanish and finally gained its independence in 1810. Still, besides a big variety of native languages<sup>9</sup> such as for example nahuatl and its dialects, Spanish is the predominant and de facto the official language of Mexico.

As a result of its geographical and cultural diversity, its rich history and because of its climate, Mexico has become one of the most important tourism destinations of the world.

Analogically to the outline of the panorama of Spain, the gross domestic product (GDP) in combination with the inflation rate shall be displayed as important economic indicators: the GDP of Mexico has grown in 2008 with a growth rate of only 1.3% which compared to the growth rate of 3.3% in 2007 and of the average growth rate between 2002 and 2006 is quite alarming. Due to its strong integration with the US, the effects of the financial crisis are expected to pass on the Mexican economy – first evidence can already be observed. GDP growth for 2009 is projected to be -0.6, exports growth is expected to crash from 7.6% growth in 2008 to -15.0% in 2009 (EDC Export Development Canada, 2009). The recovery of the annual GDP growth will start slowly in 2010, before picking up to an average 3.8% until 2013 (The Economist: Country Profile Mexico – Forecast, n.d.).

Despite the still acceptable forecasts for the inflation rate in 2008 of around 3.5%, the actual rate reached 5.1% in 2008. Table 5.1 shows the inflation rates estimates as projected by the Economist for the next years.

Table 5.1: Consumer price inflation rates

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Inflation rate	4.8	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.3

Source: The Economist: Country Profile Mexico, n.d.

The dramatic increase of inflation seems to have finally come to a standstill and inflation is expected to ease in the future. Decreasing prices for commodities and government actions aiming at a stabilisation of energy prices should help to ease inflation pressures. Still, currency risk remains an important issue. Only during the second term of 2008 the peso fell from MXN10/USD (August 2008) to more than MXN14/USD in March 2009 (EDC Export Development Canada, 2009). The investor and consumer confidence level is sinking constantly and down to the lowest values that have been observed in 2001.

Despite the strengthening democratic transition of the country, corruption persists as a severe problem in Mexico and will remain an inhibition factor for the business environment. Even though president Calderon's actions focus

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<sup>9</sup> Besides Spanish the Mexican government recognizes 63 Amerindian languages as national languages.

on anti-corruption measures there is still a long way to go in order to improve the economical and political environment. (Acus Consultores S.C., 2009)

The labour markets in Mexico are characterized by high rates of informal work and self- and family-employment is a very common form of economic activity. Subsequently, numbers of economically active population and unemployment rates are relatively low. In 2005 about 43.374.000 Mexicans (or approximately 42% of the total population) were economically active, of which 28.036 or almost 65% were men. Economically active population for 2010 is estimated to be at 48.790.000, women’s participation is expected to rise slightly from 35% to 37% (CEPAL, 2008).

The unemployment rate has been slightly rising during the last years but due to the mentioned rather informal structure of the Mexican labour market it persists on a low level.

Table 5.2: Employment and unemployment rates, 2005 - 2008

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Economically active population	43.594	45.030	44.908	45.695
Employment population ratio	41,8	42,8	42,2	42,4
Unemployment rate	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.9

Source: ILO, EAPEP - Economically Active Population Estimates and Projections 1980-2020, 2009

## 5.2. Labour supply from Mexico

This sub chapter aims to give a brief overview of the hotel and tourism sector in Mexico. It shall provide the most important information to be able to compare Mexico and Spain and the labour market situation. In contrast to the previous chapter the focus shall not be on the analysis of statistical data but the results from the surveys conducted shall be presented and analyzed in a more detailed way.

### 5.2.1 The tourism industry in Mexico

Due to the richness of culture and as a result of Mexico’s geographical diversity, the tourism industry has become one of the most important sectors of the economy. Mexico ranks within the world eight top tourism destinations.

Main tourism destinations in the country are Cancun and Acapulco but also the colonial cities in Central Mexico and the sites with important Mayan remains (U.S. Commercial Service, 2009).

In spite of the economic crisis, the number of visitors in 2008 to Mexico rose by 14% in January in comparison with the same month in the previous year. In total, approximately 20 million of foreigners visited Mexico in 2008, with income of the tourism industry of 13.200 million USD the tourism sector was the third most important income source (El Economista, 2009).

In the Competitiveness Report 2009 of the World Economic Forum, Mexico ranked at the 6<sup>th</sup> place within the Americas behind countries such as Canada, the United States and Brazil and ranks at 51<sup>st</sup> place in the overall comparison. The highest evaluations reached were in the category of natural resources, cultural resources and human resources. Especially in terms of availability of qualified labour Mexico reached a very good assessment with 5.5 of 7 available points (WEF, 2009).

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2009) the travel and tourism industry accounts for 4% of total employment in Mexico in 2009 and is expected to make up to a total of around 2 million jobs until 2009.

## **5.2.2 The structure of Mexican education related to the hotel and tourism industry**

In order to obtain information about the structure of Mexican education related to the hotel and tourism industry a survey has been conducted upon responsible or directors of tourism related careers that are offered at universities or hotel schools in Mexico (see appendix). As described in Chapter 3.2 of this thesis a standardized questionnaire has been distributed by the UDLA's director of the Department for Tourism to selected colleagues of the CONPEHT, the Confederación Panamericana de Hotelería, Gastronomía y Turismo.

Of the approximately 40 Mexican members that were contacted, seven participated in the survey. We can assume that the answers given are reliable and that in spite of the small database some general tendencies can be detected.

### **5.2.2.1 General data**

The participating universities indicated were the School of Administration of Institutions of the Pan-American University (ESDAI), the Technological University of Bahía de Banderas, the University of Guanajuato (Division of Economic-Administrative Sciences), the University Institute Washington S.C. and the Faculty of Tourism and Gastronomy of the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico.

Most of these Institutions are located in the State of Mexico and in the Federal District, but there also participated one University from Guanajuato and the University of Bahía de Banderas which is in Nuevo Vallarta.

The careers offered by the participating universities were:

- § Tourism (6 mentions)
- § Gastronomy (4 mentions)
- § Administration of Tourism Resources
- § Administration of Services in the Hospitality Industry
- § Program of Gastronomy Entrepreneur Education
- § Certification in Strategic Hotel Administration
- § Program of High Direction of Food and Beverage
- § Administration of Institutions
- § Industrial Maintenance<sup>10</sup>
- § Information and Communication Technologies<sup>11</sup>
- § International Business and Customs
- § Tourism Studies
- § Lecture in Tourism

### **5.2.2.2 Objective 1**

- § Identify the most demanded and least demanded careers; find an approximate number of graduates in those programs.

The most demanded programs were – as it is also reflected in the frequency of career offerings – the bachelor programs in tourism and gastronomy. The institutions indicated a relation of 2/1 related to the number of students and graduates in these careers: subsequently we can assume that only around 50 to 60% of the students in tourism related careers graduate from their university. The least demanded programs were Industrial Maintenance and Information and Communication Technologies.

### **5.2.2.3 Objective 2**

- § Determine the purpose of the offered education, focusing on the perspectives of graduates related to hierarchical level and most common jobs accepted by recently graduated students. Spot the main focus of education concerning operative or administrative formation.

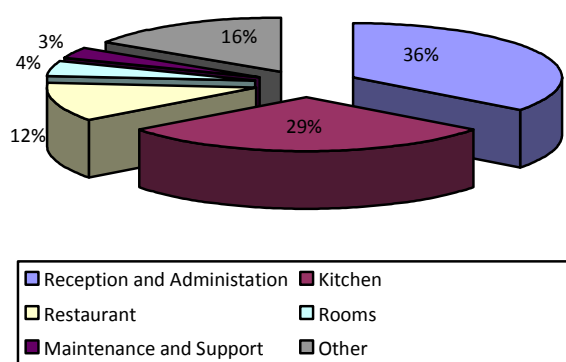
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<sup>10</sup> Career offered by the Technological University of Bahía de Banderas, all careers offered are related to tourism.

<sup>11</sup> Career offered by the Technological University of Bahía de Banderas, all careers offered are related to tourism.

Approximately 60% of the interviewed institutions stated that the education received at their institution prepared their students mainly for positions at high hierarchical level. 40% indicated that their students were prepared for positions at medium hierarchical level. None of the polled said that students were prepared principally for jobs at low hierarchical level. Nevertheless, the interviewed said that only 40% of the students would take on principally administrative tasks after graduation while 60% indicated that their students would mainly perform operative tasks in hotels and restaurants in direct contact with the clients. According to working area, they estimated a distribution of their recently graduated students by the following pattern:

Graphic 4.13: Estimated distribution by working area.



Source: Own elaboration based on survey conducted, 2009

We can observe that as estimated by the interviewed the recently graduated students will principally perform jobs on high and medium hierarchical level. But they also included some jobs at lower hierarchical level. Nevertheless, the most common jobs mentioned for graduates were according to areas:

Table 5.3: Estimation for most common jobs for graduates.

Reception and Administration	Kitchen	Maintenance and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Booking Manager</li> <li>§ Receptionist</li> <li>§ Assistant Receptionist</li> <li>§ Office Manager</li> <li>§ Reception Manager</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Executive Chef</li> <li>§ Sub Chef</li> <li>§ Chef</li> <li>§ Assistant Chef</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Maintenance Officer</li> </ul>
Restaurant	Rooms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Food and Beverage Manager</li> <li>§ Waiter</li> <li>§ Barman</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Head Room Clean Manager</li> </ul>	

Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

### 5.2.2.4 Objective 3

§ Find out if Institutions maintain active contacts with companies related to tourism, especially with Spanish companies. Figure out if institutions offer possibilities to students to study or work abroad, especially in Spain.

Six institutions maintained active contact with businesses of the hospitality industry. Only one institution indicated that they had no interaction with companies of the sector. Two third of the institutions that answered the previous question with “yes” also maintained contacts with Spanish companies. Two of 6 educational institutions that maintained contacts with businesses of the sector did exclude Spanish ones.

Almost all universities that participated offered possibilities for their students to work/study abroad. Only one institution neither offered a dual program nor an exchange with other countries. Half of the universities that offered an exchange program, indicated that it was possible for the students to go to Spain. Dual programs are not yet common – no more than one institution had available such an offer to their students.

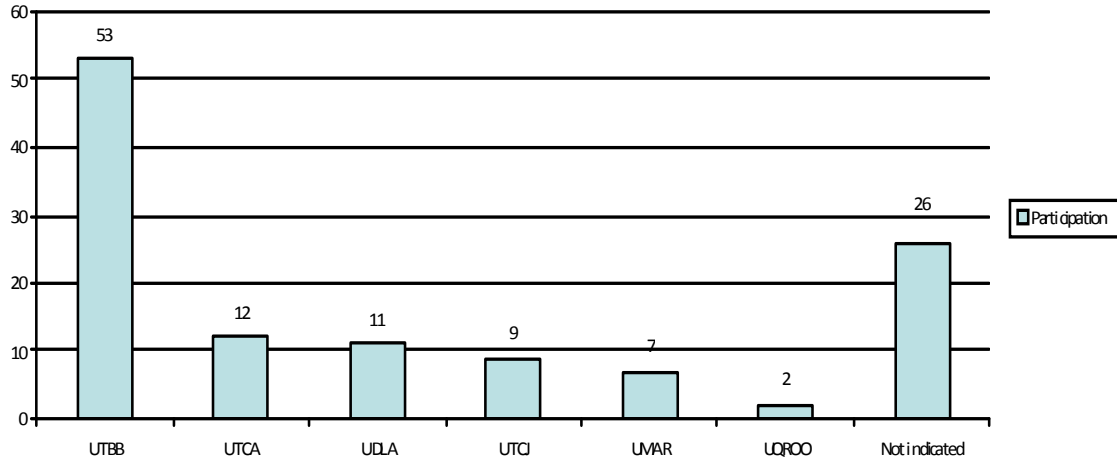
## 5.2.3 Emigration to Spain: an option for future Mexican professionals?

This part of the study is based on a survey conducted as described in Chapter 3.2 of this thesis. A standardized questionnaire addressed to Mexican students studying careers relevant to the hotel and tourism industry has been distributed to educational institutes that offer the respective careers with the request to distribute the survey/a link directing to the survey online amongst their students. Over a period of approximately two months (first request via email 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, reminder 26<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, link open until the first days of April) the students could answer the questionnaire online or fill in the survey in a word document and send it back. Of the 121 responses obtained, more than 90% were answered online. In order to facilitate the analysis the answers obtained via email (document) were transmitted manually into the online tool. In the following analysis of the results no distinction will be made according to the way of transmittal. The analysis shall be based on the objectives established in advance.

### 5.2.3.1 General data

Tourism students of the Universidad Tecnológica de Bahía de Banderas (UTBB) Nuevo Vallarta, state of Nayarit with between one and two years left until graduation, accounted for around half of the counted answers. Other Universities with high participation rates were the Universidad de Turismo y Ciencias Administrativas (UTCA), Federal District of Mexico, the Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez (UTCJ), state of Chihuahua, the Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLA) and the Universidad del Mar (UMAR), Campus Huatulco, state of Oaxaca. Furthermore two students from the University of Quintana Roo, Campus Cozumel participated in the study. 26 students didn't indicate which university they were from.

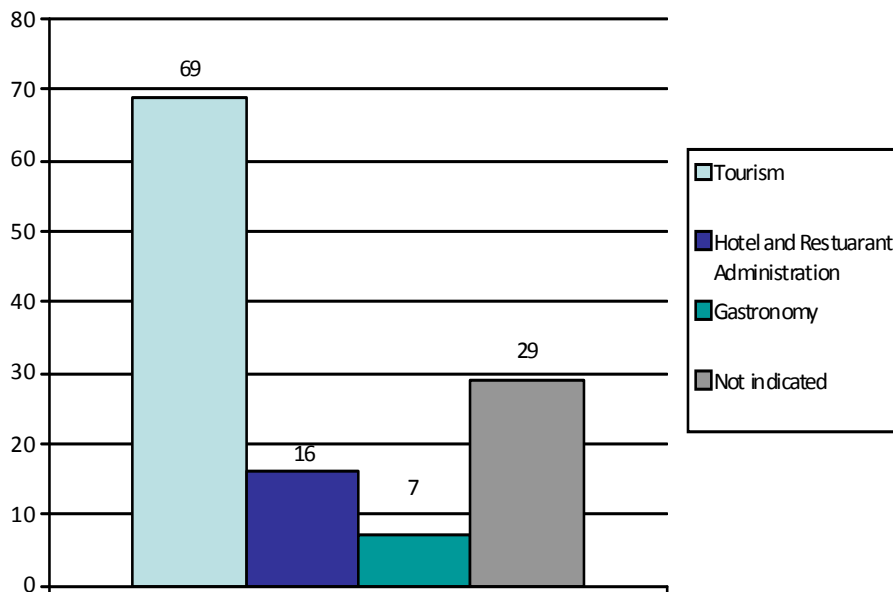
Graphic 5.1: Participating Universities



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

In addition to students inscribed in tourism which accounted for more than two thirds of the population, there were also some students that indicated “Hotel and Restaurant Administration” or “Gastronomy” as the studied career. We must consider that usually also a great fraction of tourism students aspires to work in hotels, restaurants or gastronomy. The term distinction is not very accurate and gives way to misunderstandings.

Graphic 5.2: Represented Careers

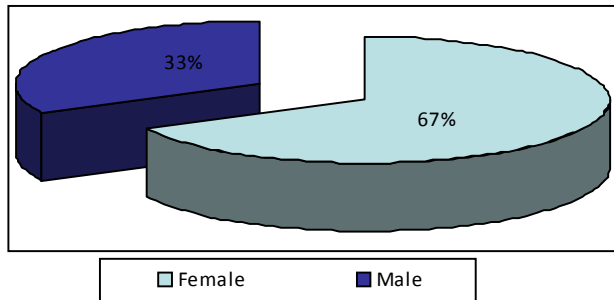


Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009



Approximately two thirds of the students that answered the questionnaire are female. Tourism is still often considered to be a “feminine” career; therefore the high representation of women is not surprising.

Graphic 5.3: Gender distribution



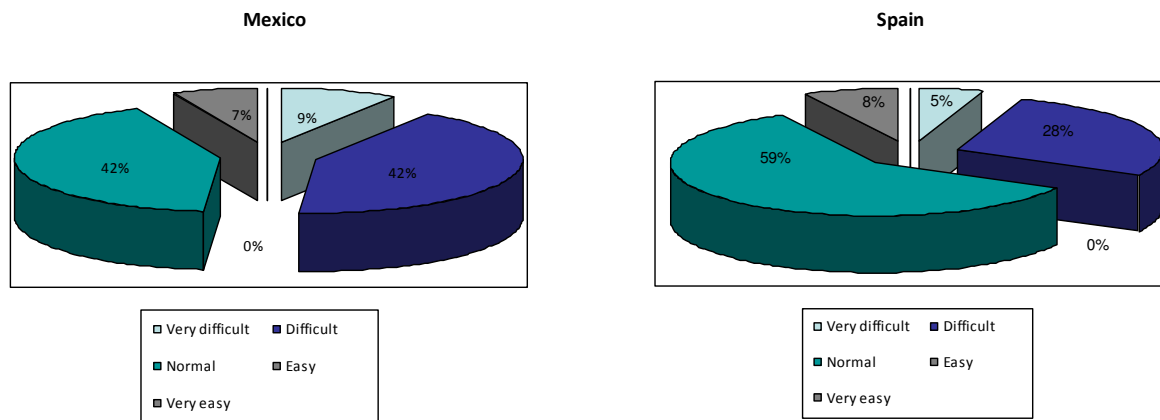
Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

### 5.2.3.2 Objective 1

- § Determine expectations of Mexican students concerning the labour market in Mexico including aspects as difficulty to find a job, hierarchical level, functions and responsibilities (operative vs. administrative focus), applicability of knowledge acquired during studies, preferred working area and willingness to get employed in certain positions/jobs, evaluation of working conditions.
- § Determine expectations concerning the Spanish labour market including the same aspects.
- § Comparison of expectations; confirm or disconfirm the assumption that expectations differ at the moment of evaluating the perspectives of graduates in Spain and Mexico.

In general, expectations Mexican students have concerning the mentioned points don't differ too much if we compare expectations for the Mexican and the Spanish labour market. Still, slight differences in expectations can be observed. Thus Mexican students consider it slightly easier to find a job after graduation in Spain than in Mexico: 42% of the students thought it would be “Normal” to find a job in Mexico, another 42% considered it would be “Difficult”. For the Spanish labour market only 28% of the students suppose it would be “Difficult”, 59% answered with “Normal”. None of the students think it is “Very Easy” to find a job.

Graphic 5.4: Expected difficulty degree of finding a job. Mexico/Spain.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

Some students made reference to the actual economic recession. They consider that it will worsen the situation but that - especially in the state of Nayarit (and in other major tourism destinations of Mexico) there is still labour demand.

*"It will be harder because of the crisis and because it's not possible to work half turns."*

*"At least here in Puerto Vallarta there is a lot of offer that aim at students of our career. Same as in other tourism destinations."*

Even though the students state that there is "a lot of competition" the major concern of the students is not to find a job, but a job that meets their interest and that is connected to what they studied. Above all they are concerned about the low wages in the industry in Mexico.

*"Usually you find a job but it is very uncommon that the job fits your (financial) interests and that it really pleases you. "*

*"The job I would want or need will be hard to find."*

*"It is not very difficult to find a job. The hard thing is to find a job that meets your economic needs, and your needs for self-development."*

*"There are a lot of jobs but most of the times those don't go with what we studied."*

*"It will be difficult in terms of receiving a good remuneration."*

In spite of the lower assessment of the difficulty degree to find a job in Spain, the students have some doubts concerning their employability in Spain. The financial crisis is also a topic.

*"I think it would be more difficult as in Mexico due to being a foreigner."*

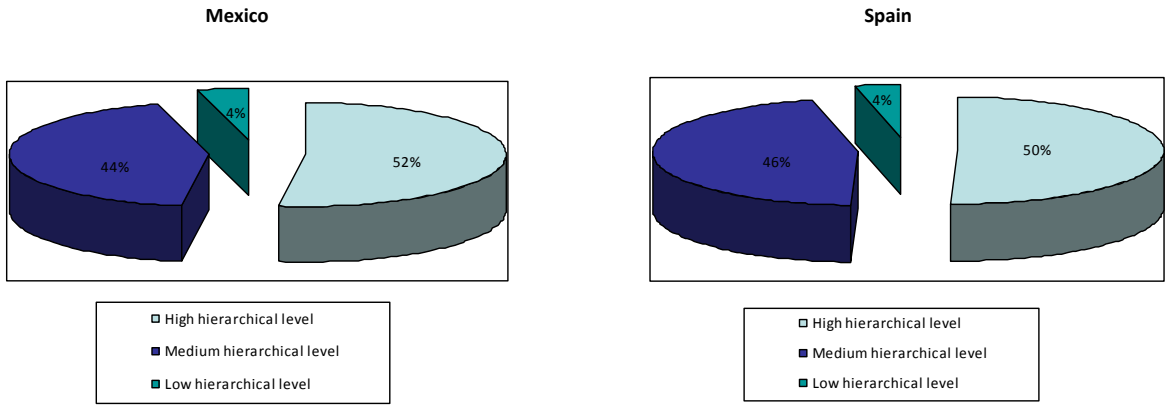
*"I think it would be a little hard as a result of difficulties in comparing qualifications of foreigners."*

*"In Spain there is a lot of competence, too. There are a lot of immigrants."*

*"The crisis is also affecting Spain and I heard of many people in Spain that have lost their job recently."*

The expectations with respect to the hierarchical level the students expect to work at after graduation don't vary significantly between the two countries. In both cases approximately half of the students indicate that they would expect to work at high hierarchical level, only 4% of the students consider working at low hierarchical level after graduation. Between 44% (Mexico) and 46% (Spain) of the students expect to work at medium hierarchical level.

Graphic 5.5: Expected hierarchical level after graduation. Mexico/Spain.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

It is clear that the students aim to reach a high hierarchical position. But they also consider that they can not initiate their careers from the top and adjust their expectations accordingly. In the tourism industry it is even more important than in other sectors that managers have an idea of the every-day work and the activities that are carried out behind the scenes.

*„Even if we would like to have a job at high hierarchical level, it would be difficult if you have no experience as your work would be affected by the fact that you don't know how the areas you would manage work and you could fail. I also doubt that you get offered a job at high hierarchical level if you have never worked before."*

*"I will need to start from the bottom to become an idea of how you work, in order to work at a high hierarchical level in the future."*

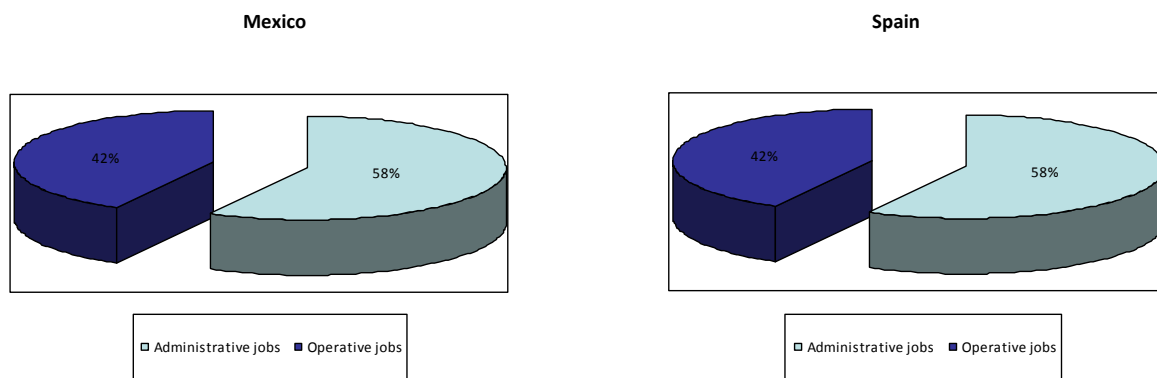
Comparing expectations between the two countries, two different approaches can be observed: students that have the same expectations and students that would only be willing to work in Spain if their prospects regarding the hierarchical level would be better than in Mexico.

*"If I decided to go to Spain it should be worth it. Therefore I would expect to occupy a position at higher hierarchical level than in Mexico."*

*"I think it is very important to understand the processes and how things work in order to later work efficiently. I would expect to start from zero, same as in Mexico."*

The same cluster can be observed with regard to the expectations related to the type of tasks that will be realized regularly. In Mexico and in Spain 42% of the polled students expect to become mainly involved in operative tasks whereas 58% of the students think they will be realizing administrative activities.

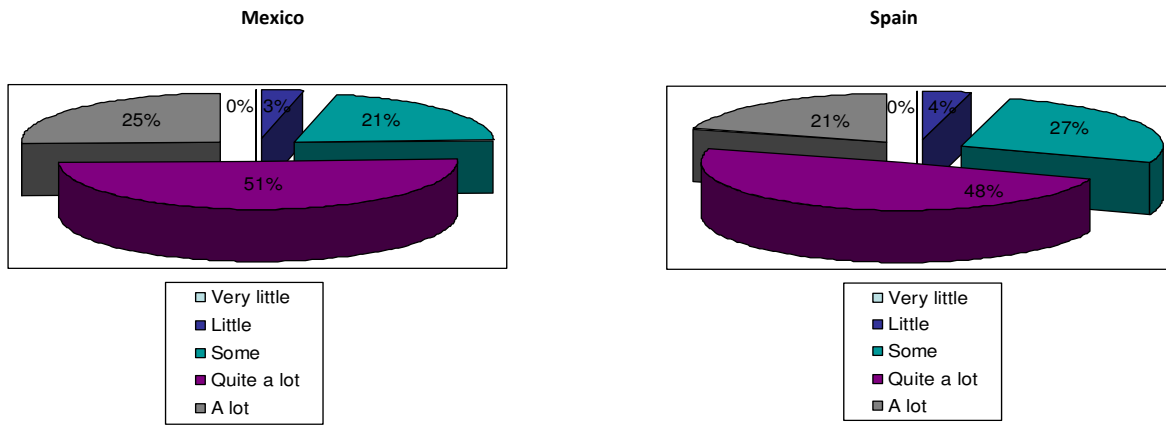
Graphic 5.6: Expectations in relation to task type that will mainly be realized. Mexico/Spain.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

Concerning the statement obtained from the previous two questions, it is quite surprising that the students expect a higher skill-utilization in Mexico than in Spain.

Graphic 5.7: Expected career-specific skill utilization. Mexico/Spain.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

Nevertheless students that have already worked in the sector state that even though theoretical knowledge and skills are important, the reality in the hotel and tourism sector is different and that degree of skill utilization is generally limited within the industry.

*“University is the element for learning the basics. In the praxis other things are required that are incomparable to what you learn at school.”*

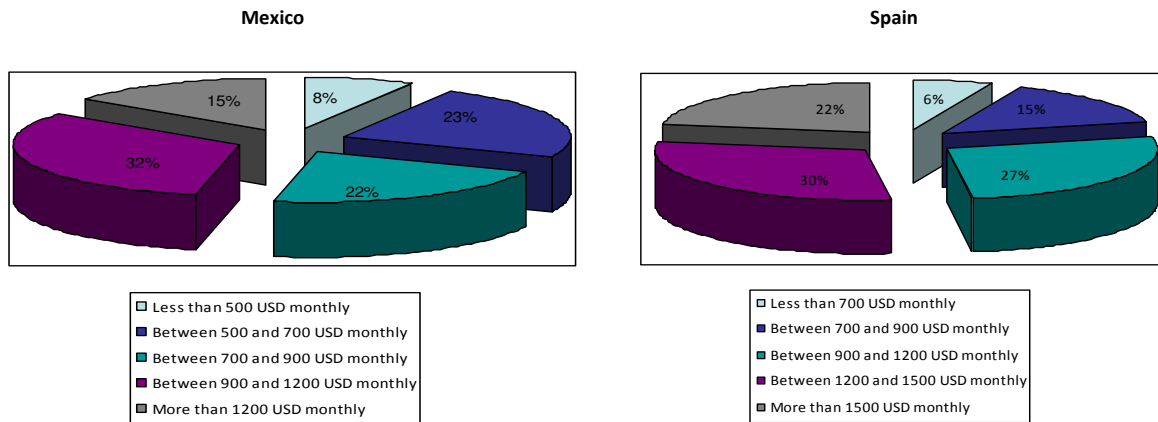
*“At university we get a theoretical basis. The reality is different.”*

*“Usually, when you start to work you get the impression that nothing you’ve learned helps you.”*

In terms of wages, the pattern obtained from the student’s answers is also similar when we consider that living expenses are higher in Spain<sup>12</sup>. The distribution within the groups (lowest to highest value) stays approximately the same.

<sup>12</sup> The differences have been taken into account and represented in the questionnaire through different categorization (starting in Mexico from 500 USD and in Spain from 700 USD).

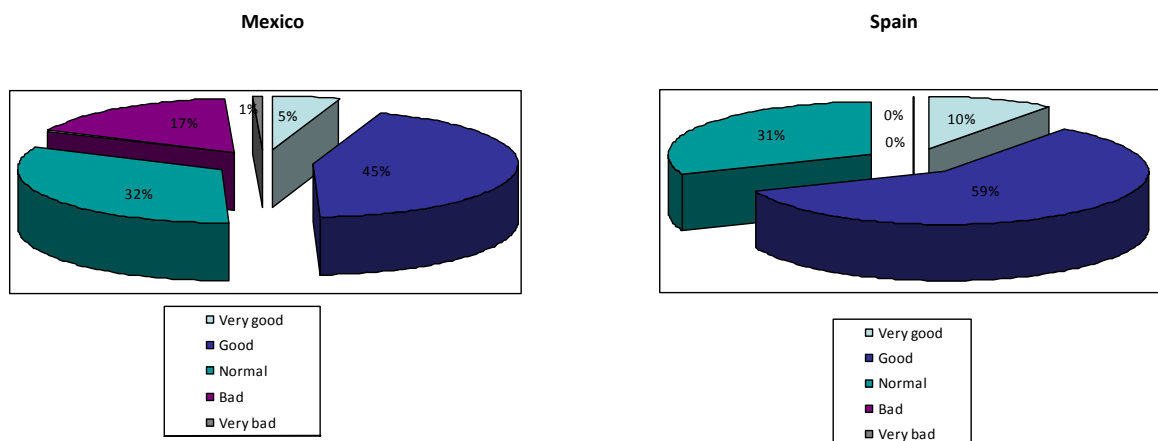
Graphic 5.8: Wage expectations. Mexico/Spain.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

In contrast to the majority of the previous questions the evaluation of the overall working conditions differs significantly between Mexico and Spain. Mexican students evaluate the overall working conditions in Spain considerably more positive than the conditions in Mexico. In Mexico, the majority of 43% classifies the working conditions in the hotel and tourism industry as “Good”, 37% think the working conditions are “Normal” and 17% believe they are “Bad”. The extremes “Very good” and “Very bad” score with 1% and 5%. In contrast almost 70% of the students think that the working conditions in Spain are “Very good” or “Good”, 31% of the polled students believe that the working conditions in Spain are “Normal”. None of the students chose the options “Bad” or “Very bad” for Spain.

Graphic 5.9: Evaluation of working conditions. Mexico/Spain.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

They state unprofessionalism and unsatisfactory human resources practices as well as wage policies and a lack of working culture as the main reasons for their discontent with the working conditions in Mexico.

*„There is a lot of improvisation in the reality of hotel businesses. It is necessary to professionalize the management in order to achieve higher indexes of customer satisfaction.”*

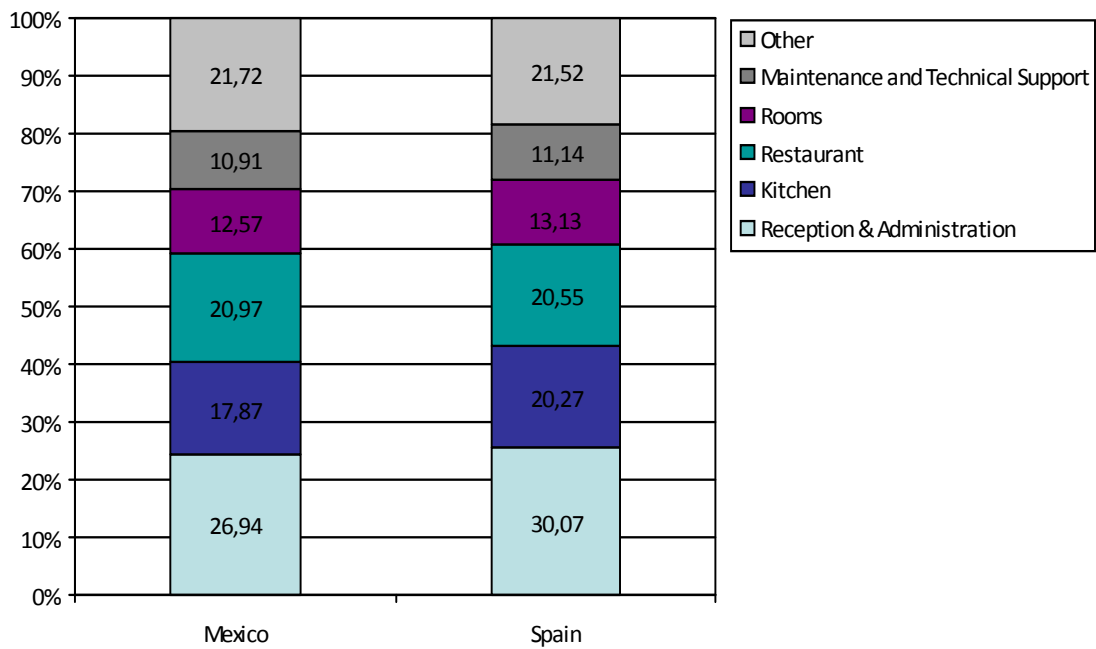
*“I think there should be more consciousness related to what the sector needs in terms of employment.”*

*“There are too few opportunities to ascend”.*

*“Because of the culture.”*

The preferences indicated by the students in relation to the working area don't differ significantly when comparing the areas of interest between the two countries. The slight deviations observable are supposedly due to the remittent responsiveness in the second part of the survey<sup>13</sup>.

Graphic 5.10: Area Preference. Mexico/Spain.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

<sup>13</sup> For this question the answers counted were 118 for the expectations concerning the Mexican labour market have been 113, for the evaluation part for Spain only 78 responses were counted.

### 5.2.3.3 Objective 2

- § Find out if Mexican students are willing to be employed in Spain at jobs/positions different to jobs they would be disposed to carry out in Mexico.

The following charts compare the indications of the polled students in relation to the jobs/positions they would NOT be willing to take on in Mexico and Spain. Because of remittent responsiveness in the second part of the survey (concerning labour expectations for the Spanish labour market) a comparison is quite difficult. The lower number of responses in the case of Spain leads logically to a higher percentage unwillingness to realize certain jobs in Spain. One graph per working area will be illustrated in the following. In order to maintain relativity in the first graph the percent distribution over all mentions will be shown. As pointed out before we must consider that for Spain the mentions were generally lower.

The comparison shows that the percent distribution stays practically the same. Only two very slight and rather insignificant tendencies can be observed which are:

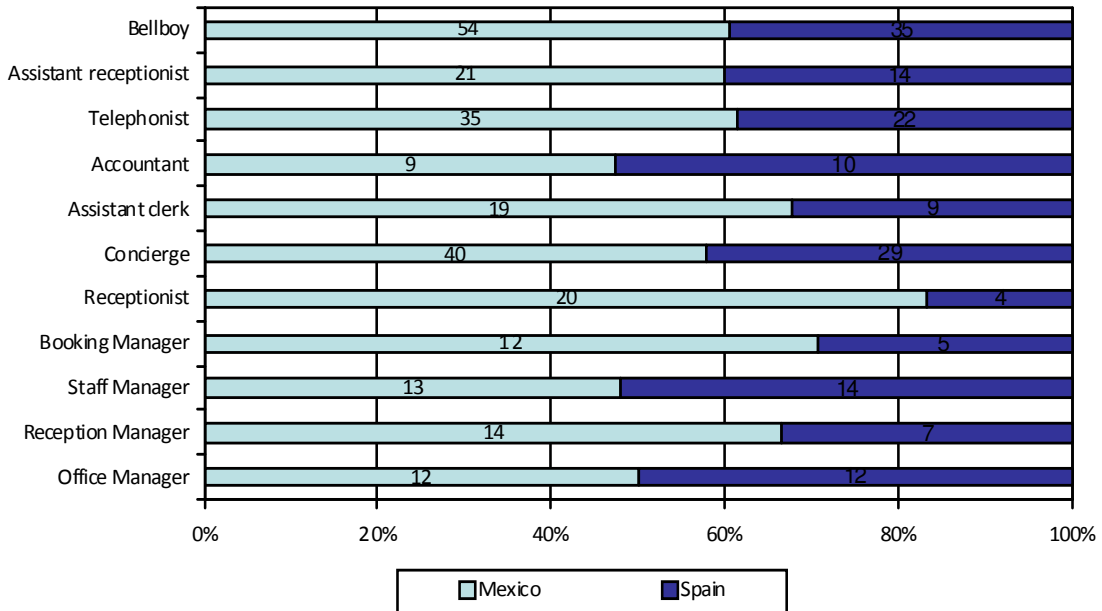
- § Fewer dispositions to take on jobs/positions whose functions might not be completely clear to the students such as Concierge and Second Maitre d'.
- § Marginally higher disposition to take on responsibilities at medium hierarchical level such as for the position as Waiter and Room maid.

The following graphs display the results obtained. Due to default of the responsiveness changes between the two survey parts, no general interpretations shall be made. The deviations that can be observed could indicate a trend or tendency but they could as well be a product of eventualities.

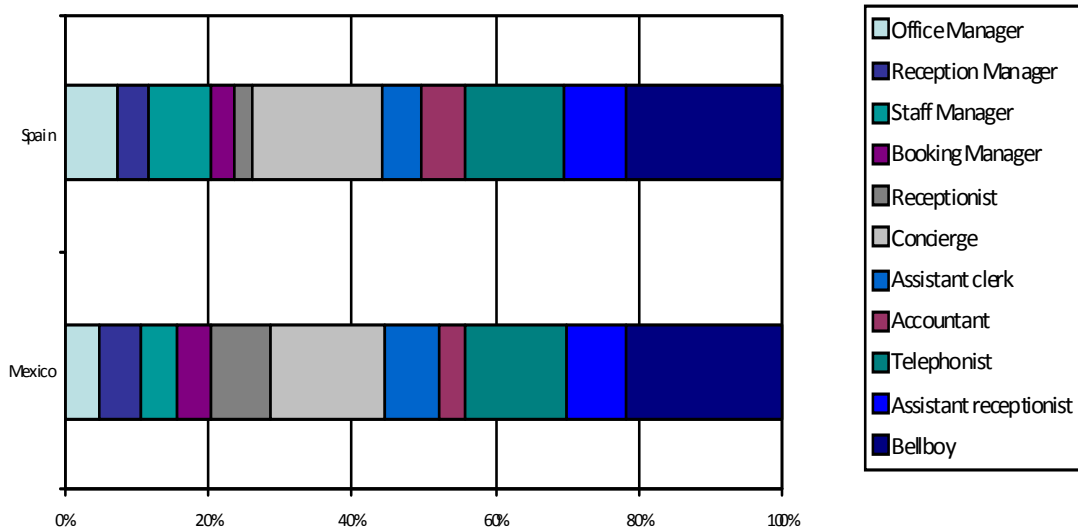


Graphic 5.11: Reception and Administration: NO disposition to take on the position/job.

a) Mentions as a fraction of 100 per cent.



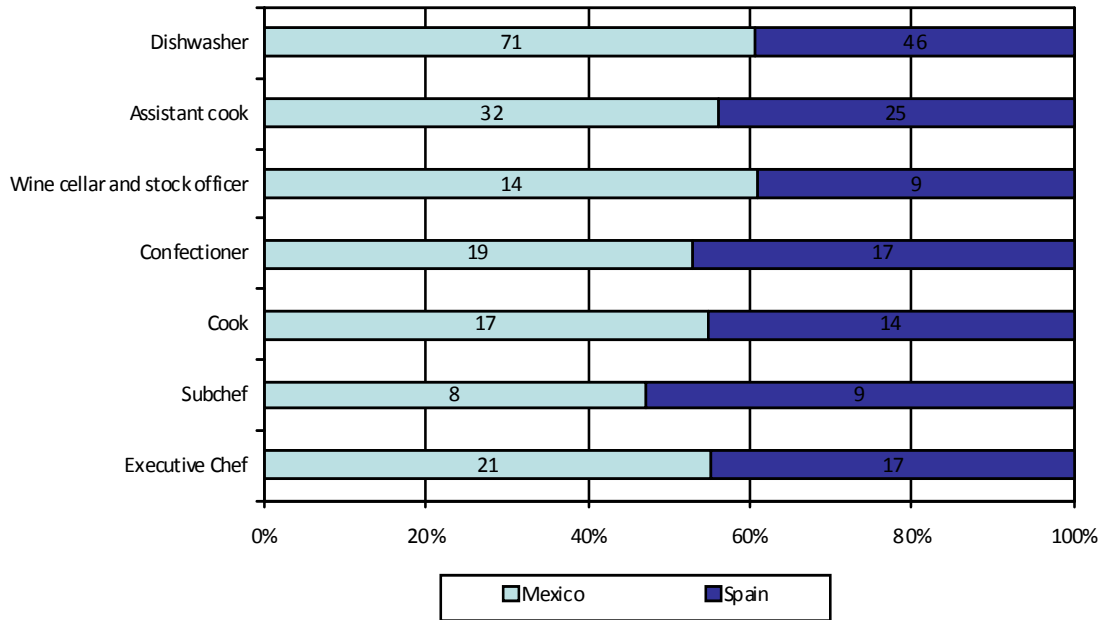
b) Mentions per country as a fraction of 100 per cent of country.



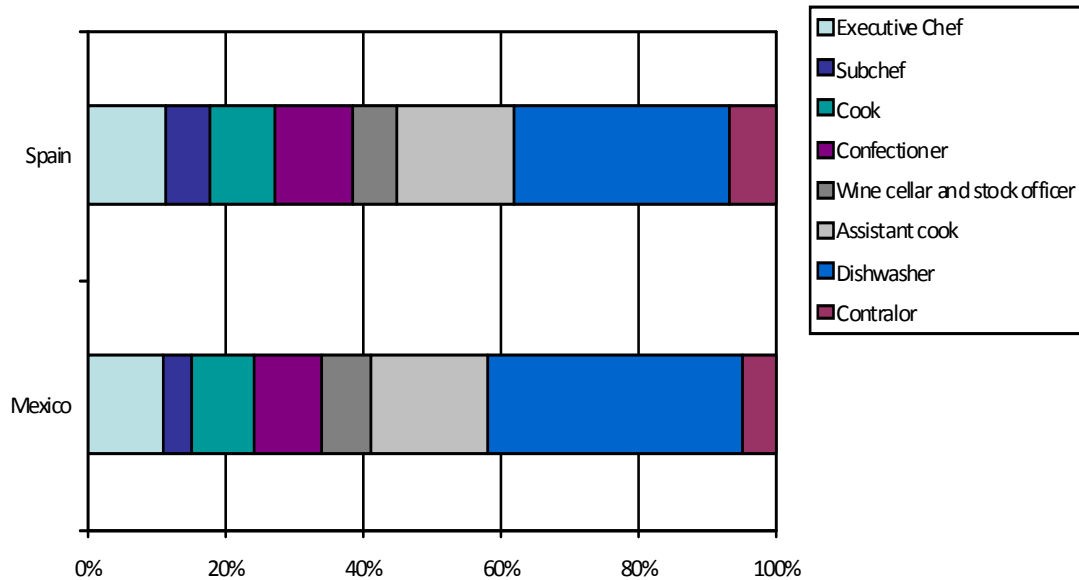
Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

Graphic 5.12: Kitchen: NO disposition to take on the position/job.

a) Mentions as fraction of 100 per cent.



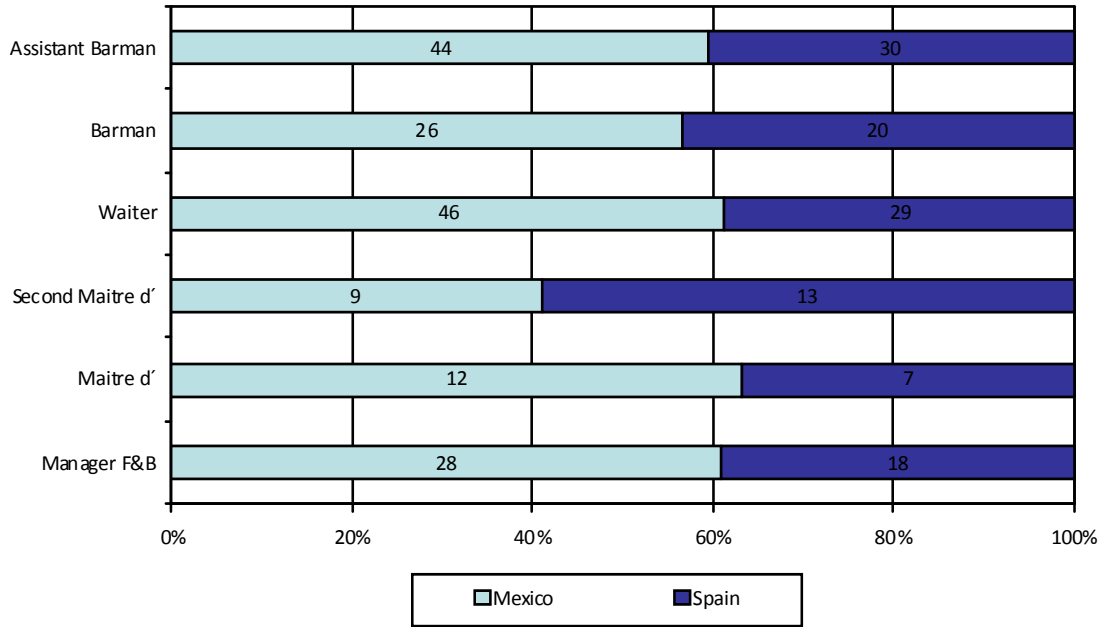
b) Mentions per country as a fraction of 100 per cent of country.



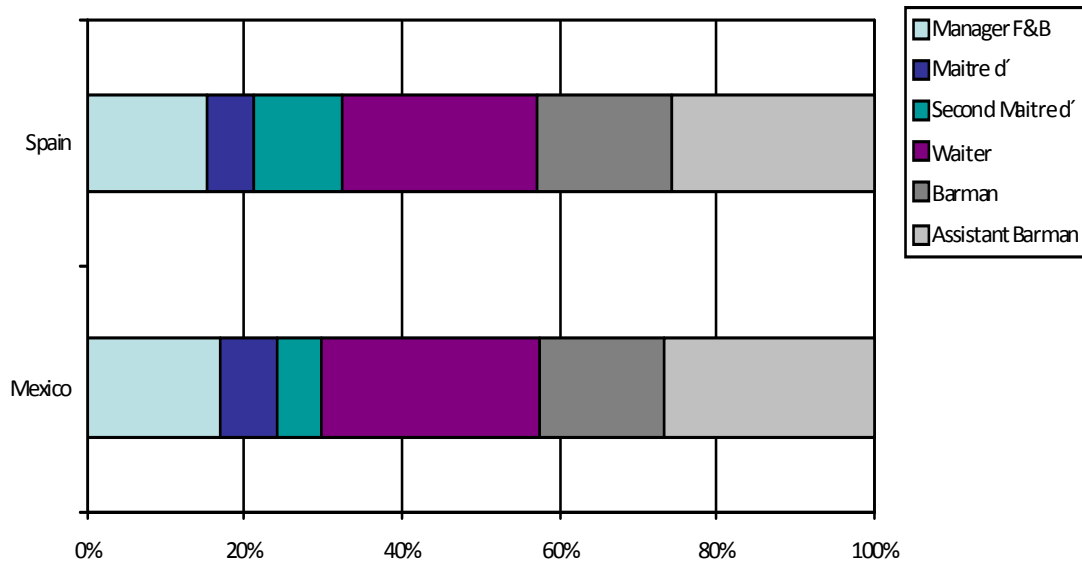
Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

Graphic 5.13 Restaurant: NO disposition to take on the position/job.

a) Mentions as fraction of 100 per cent.



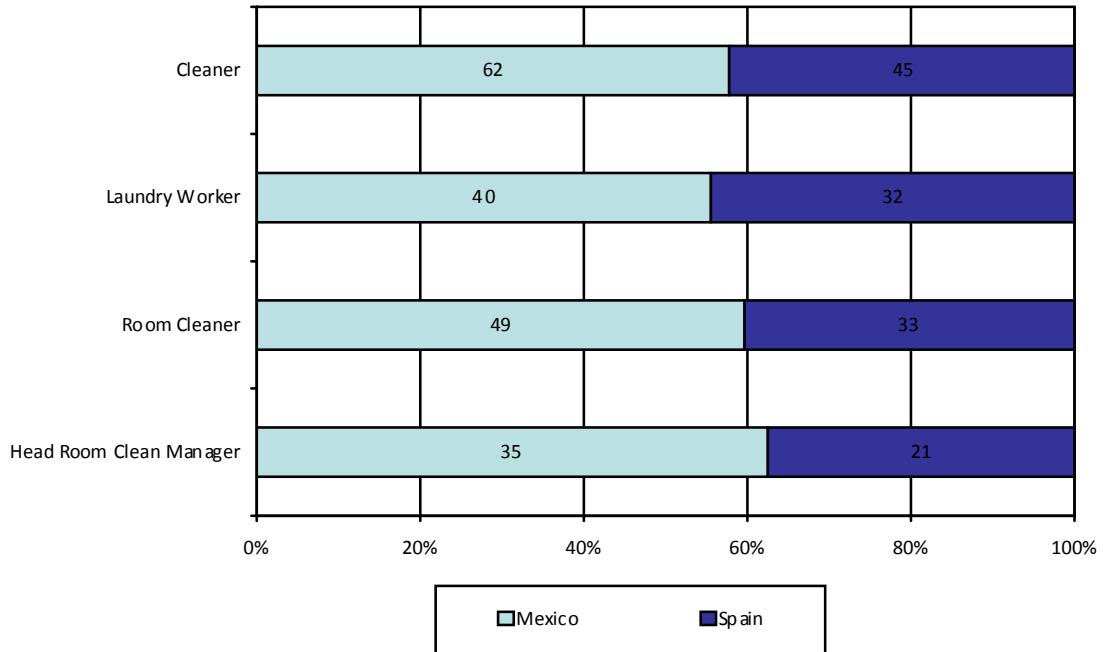
b) Mentions per country as a fraction of 100 per cent of country.



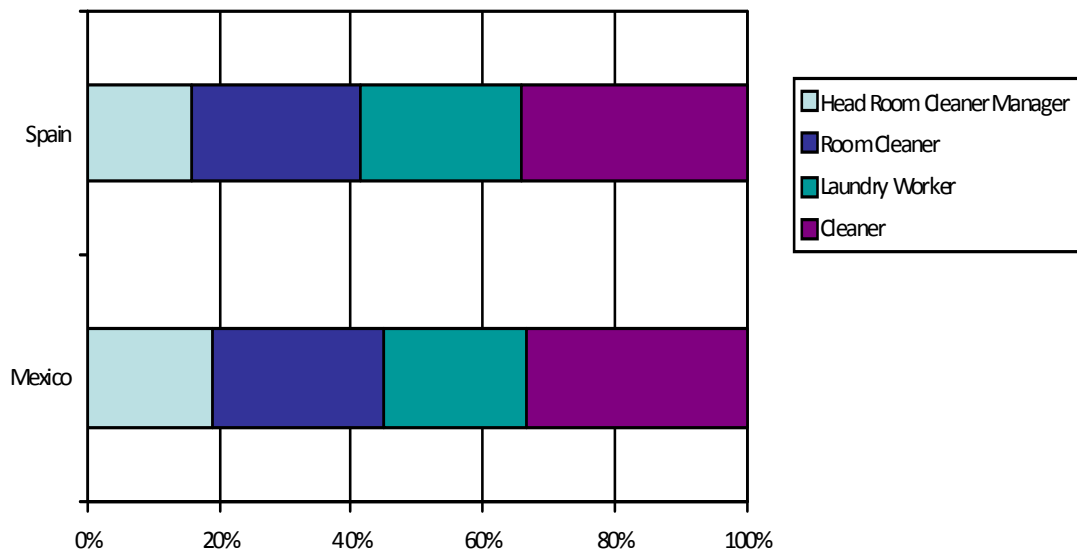
Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

Graphic 5.14: Rooms: NO disposition to take on the position/job.

a) Mentions as a fraction of 100 per cent.



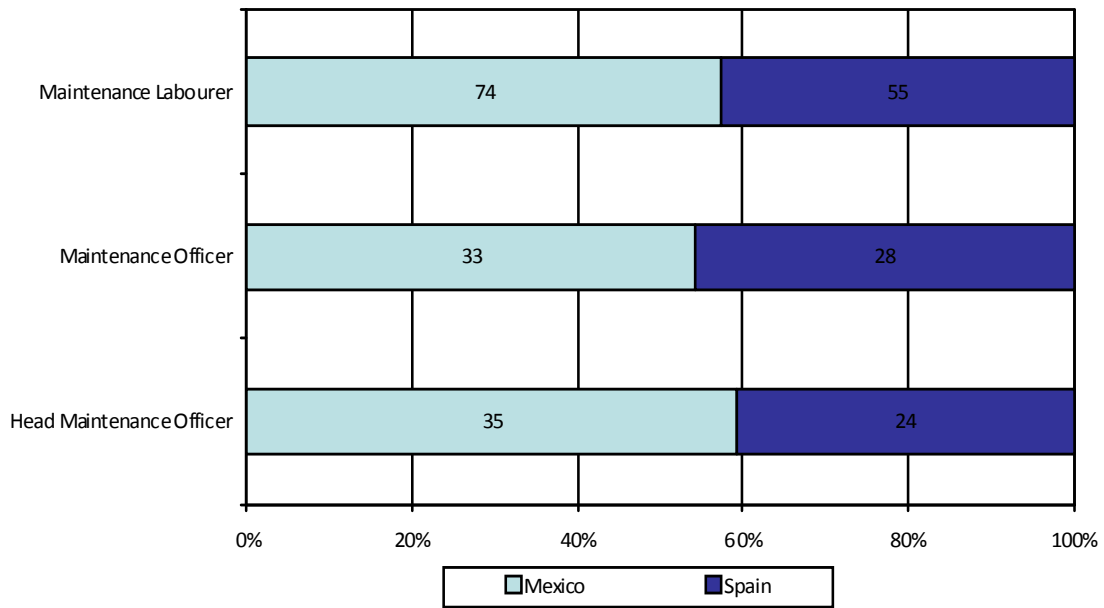
b) Mentions per country as a fractions of 100 per cent of country.



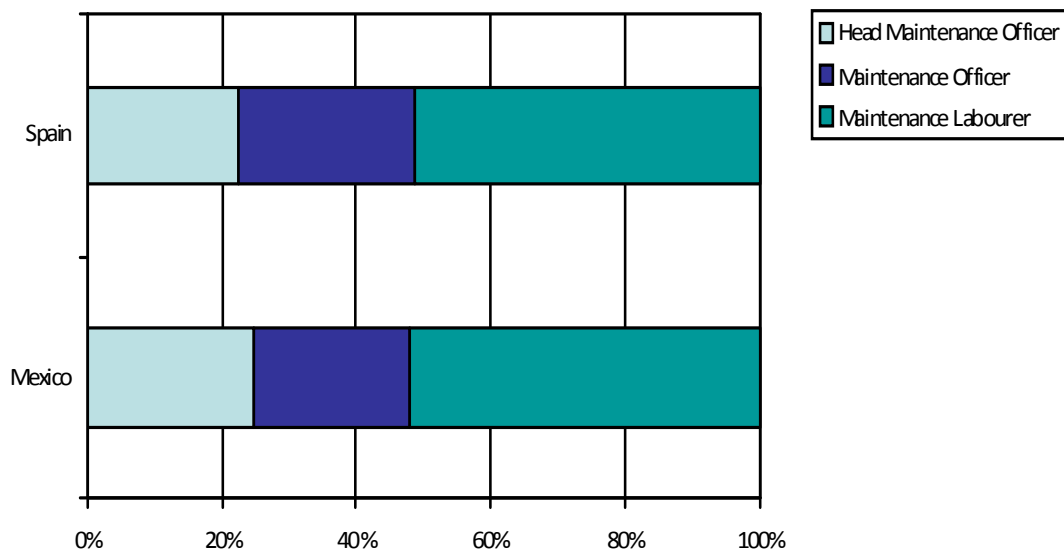
Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

Graphic 5.15: Maintenance and Support: NO disposition to take on the position/job.

a) Mentions as a fraction of 100 per cent.



b) Mentions per country as a fractions of 100 per cent of country.



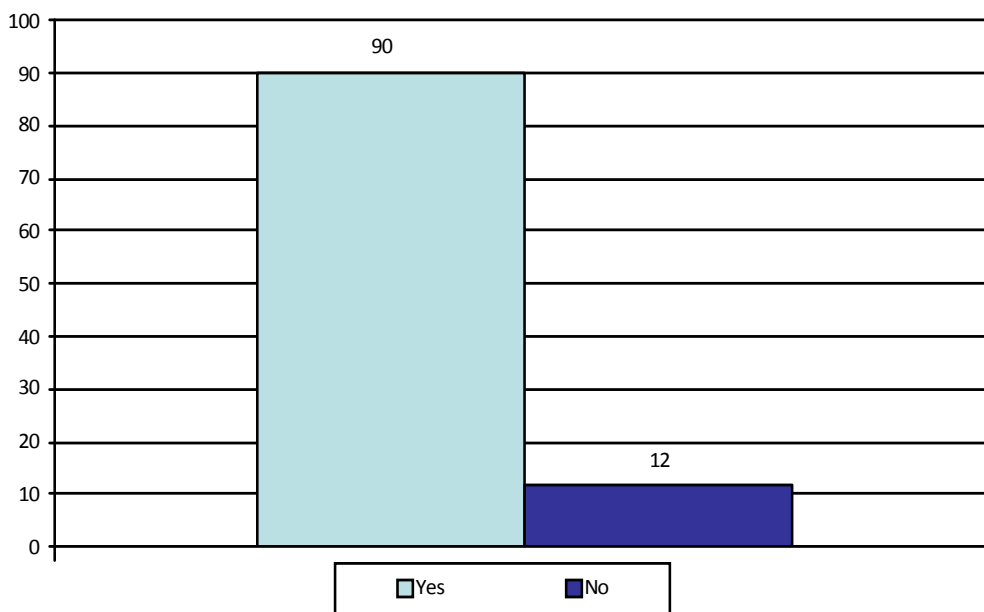
Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

### 5.2.3.4 Objective 3

- § Determine the level of disposition of Mexican students to immigrate in general and get an idea of the attractiveness of Spain as country of destination in particular.
- § Identify the disposition to immigrate to Spain according to the different categories of migration established in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of this paper.
- § Ascertain the principal push- and pull factors for Mexican students and detect barriers and obstacles that students consider most when thinking about the possibility to work in Spain.

The polled students in general show a very high disposition to work abroad. More than 90 students indicated that they would like to work abroad. Only 10% of the students indicated that they would not be willing to work in a country different to their home country.

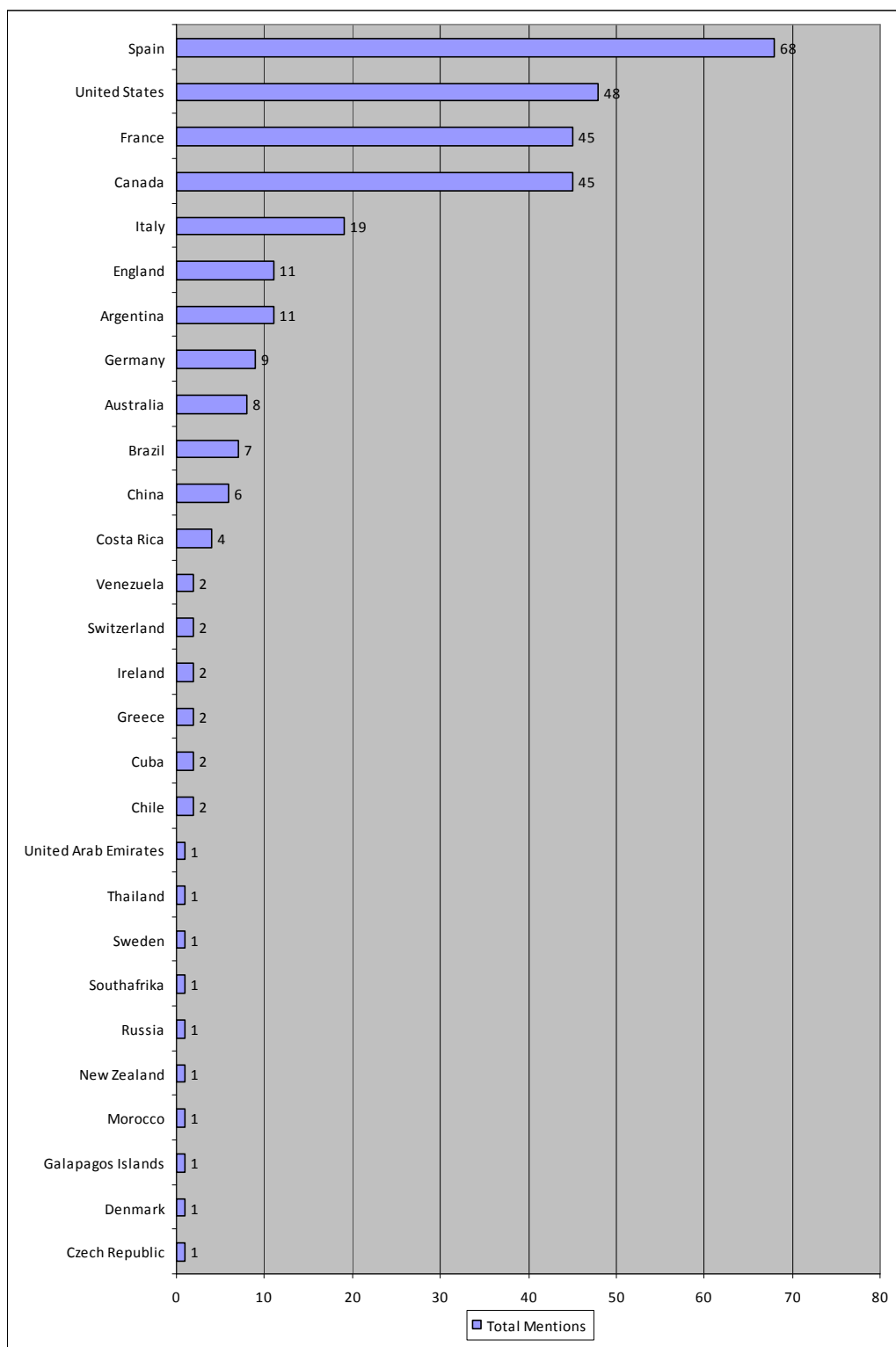
Graphic 5.16: Area Preference. Mexico/Spain.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

The most attractive countries for Mexican students to work at are with a clear lead Spain (68 mentions), the United States of America (48 mentions), France (45 mentions), Canada (45 mentions) and Italy (19 mentions). England and Argentina obtained each 11 mentions. Other countries such as Germany, Australia, Brazil and China and Costa Rica scored with between 4 and 9 mentions. The rest of the countries recorded either 1 or 2 mentions.

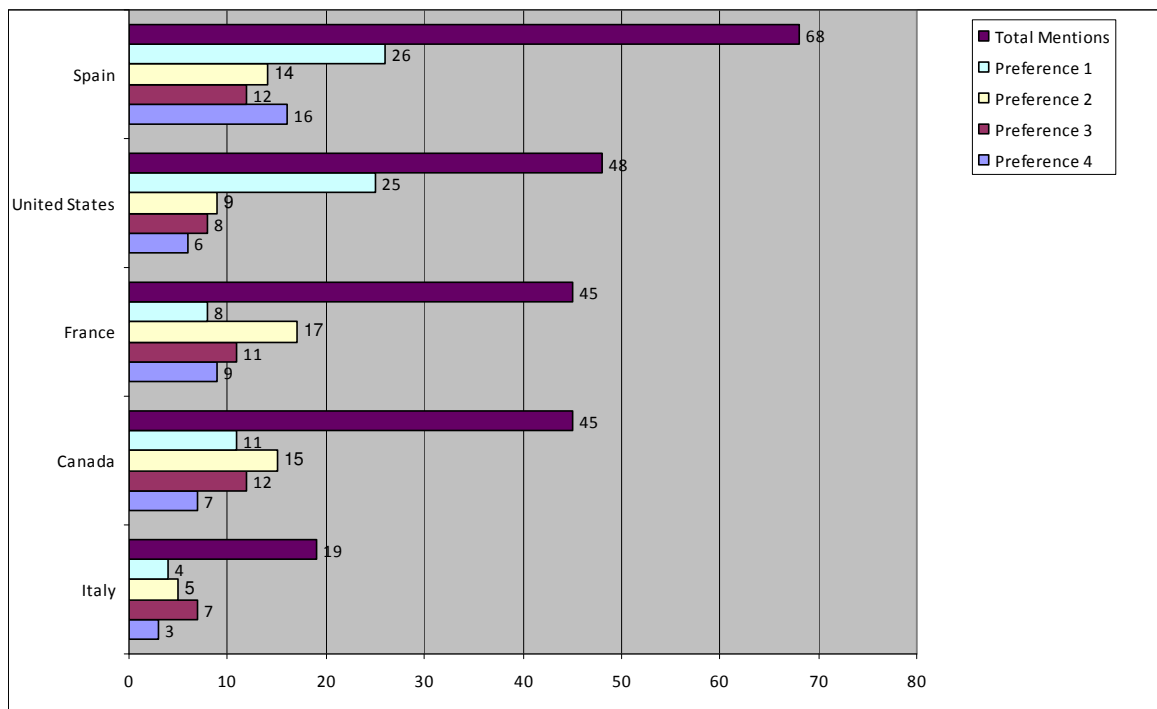
Graphic 5.17: Work abroad. Preference indication.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

As the students could indicate 4 countries in order of their preference, the following graph shows the distribution of mentions as first, second, third and fourth preference for the five countries with the most mentions. If we consider only the first preference, the order would change accordingly as for the first preference there were more mentions for Canada than for France. The countries Spain, United States of America and Italy maintain the same position. Considering the second preference the countries that obtained the most mentions are (in descending order): France, Canada, Spain and the United States.

Graphic 5.18: Work abroad. Staggered preference indication for Top 5 countries.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

To sum up, Spain is definitely a very attractive country for Mexican hotel and tourism students. If we consider that 90% of the students indicated that they would generally like to work abroad and that more than half of the students mentioned the country within their top 4 preferences, we can assume that more than 40% of the students would be willing to work in Spain for a certain period.

Graph shows 5.19 displays the disposition for the different types of migration that have been defined and explained in the second chapter of this thesis. There is high disposition for all the types of migration even though one third of the students indicate “no disposition” for permanent migration. Those students can not imagine working in Spain for an undetermined period with no intention of coming back to Mexico. 29% of the polled



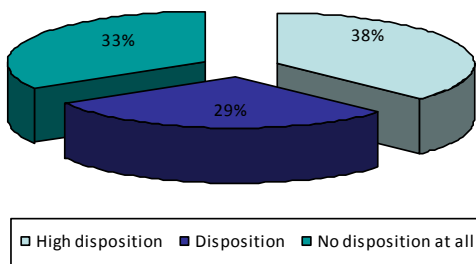
students indicate that they are disposed to immigrate permanently to Spain and 38% of the students even indicated “high disposition” for this form of migration.

Guest work is clearly the most attractive type of migration. Only 1% of the students indicated that they would not be willing to work “a defined period in Spain with the intention of coming back to Mexico”, two thirds of the students indicate “high disposition”.

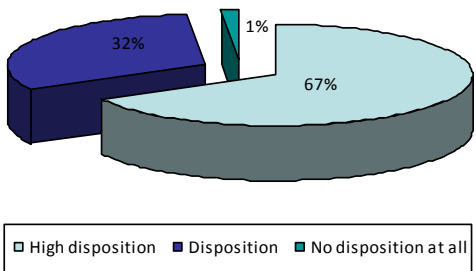
The disposition for migration for the purpose of seasonal work is slightly lower even though with 47% of the mentions for “high disposition” and 36% for “disposition” still high. Only 19% of the students pointed out that they would not be willing to immigrate to Spain for a “short period”.

Graphic 5.19: Work abroad. Disposition according to type of migration.

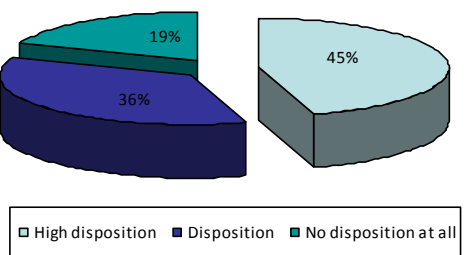
a) Permanent migration: “I would stay in Spain for a longer time with the possibility of not coming back.”



b) Guest work: “I would stay in Spain for a defined period with the intention of coming back to Mexico.”



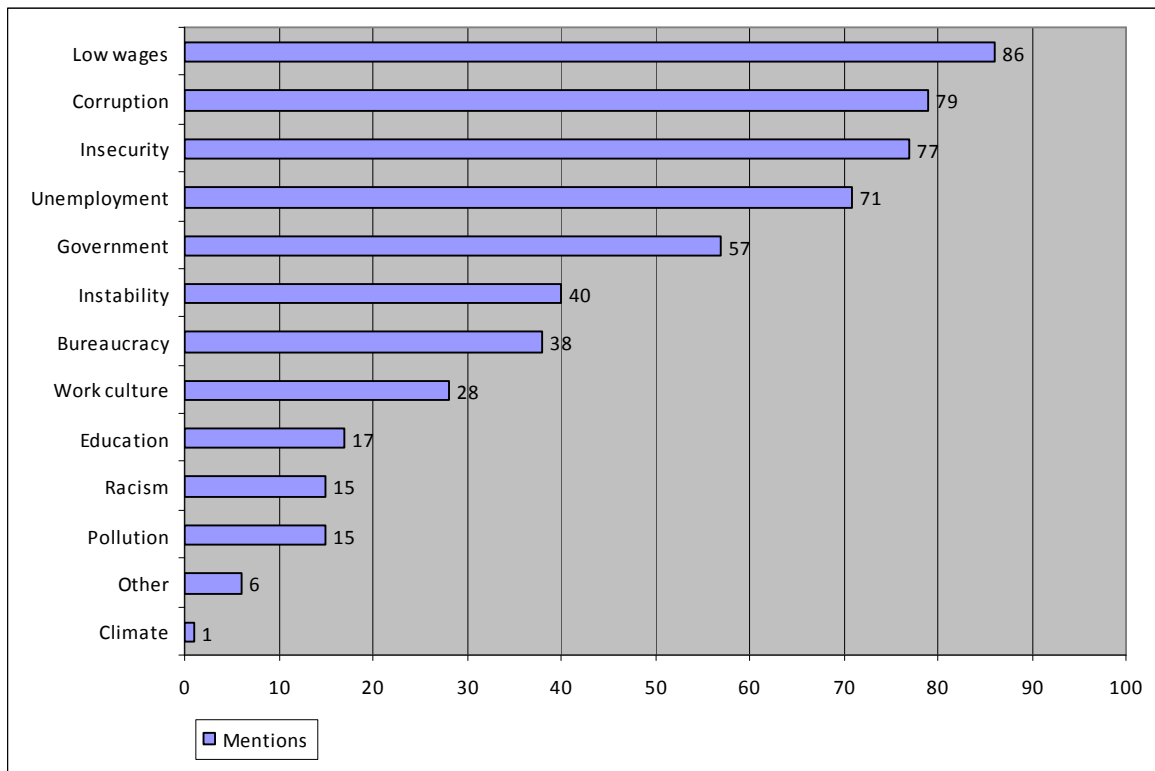
c) Seasonal work: “I would stay in Spain for a short period.”



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

In order to ascertain the push- and pull-factors for the migration process between Mexico and Spain the students were asked to (1) indicate what they didn't like in Mexico and what would incentive a decision to emigrate and to (2) indicate what factors they found attractive for Spain that would incentive a decision to immigrate to Spain. Several options were given in order to enable the listing of the factors according to their importance. Also, there was the option given to indicate different factors and comments.

Graphic 5.20: Push-Factors.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

“Low wages” (86 mentions), “Corruption” (79 mentions), “Insecurity” (77 mentions) and “Unemployment” (71 mentions) are the four main reasons for which Mexican students would consider emigration as an option. Other important push-factors with between 28 and 57 mentions are (in descending order): “Government”, “Instability”, “Bureaucracy” and a lack of “Work culture”.

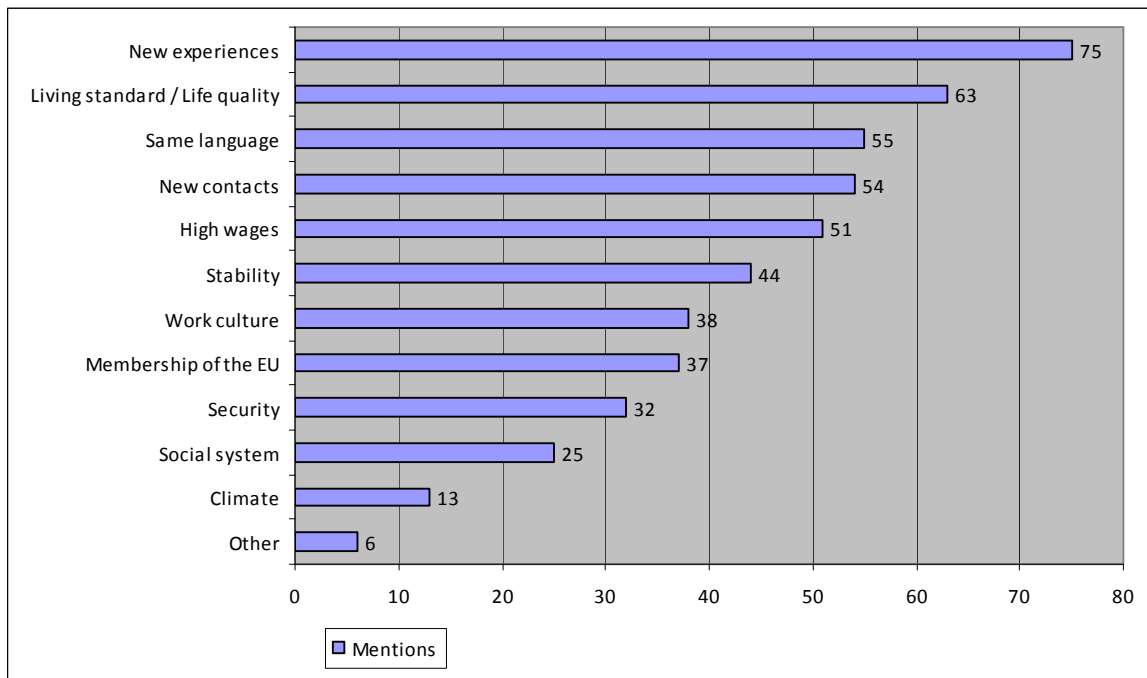
*"Most tourism service providers don't give any importance to the development of skills and knowledge of their employees. Often, they prefer unskilled workers with experience in the sector. In addition, there are very few rules that regulate the sector which results in incompetent services and a bad image of the country's resources. There is no work culture at all."*

*"In my opinion the instability is generated by the little support of the tourism and hospitality industry even though the incomes from these activities are great."*

*"There are a lot of more possibilities to develop skills and ascend (also in an economic way) in other countries."*

The cluster with the pull-factors is comparably clear. Number one with 75 mentions is "New experiences". Wages is not as it would have been expectable under the four highest ranked pull-factors but only takes on ranking-position number five even though it ranked as most important factor for the push-factors. The students mentioned the aspects "Living standard / Life quality" (63 mentions), "Same language" (55 mentions) and "New contacts" (54 mentions) with more frequency than "High wages" (51 mentions). They consider that working in Spain would enrich their experiences and result in new relationships. Other high-ranked factors were (in descending order): "Stability" (44 mentions), "Work culture" (38 mentions), "Membership of EU" (37 mentions), "Security" (32 mentions) and "Social system" (25 mentions).

Graphic 5.21: Pull-Factors.



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

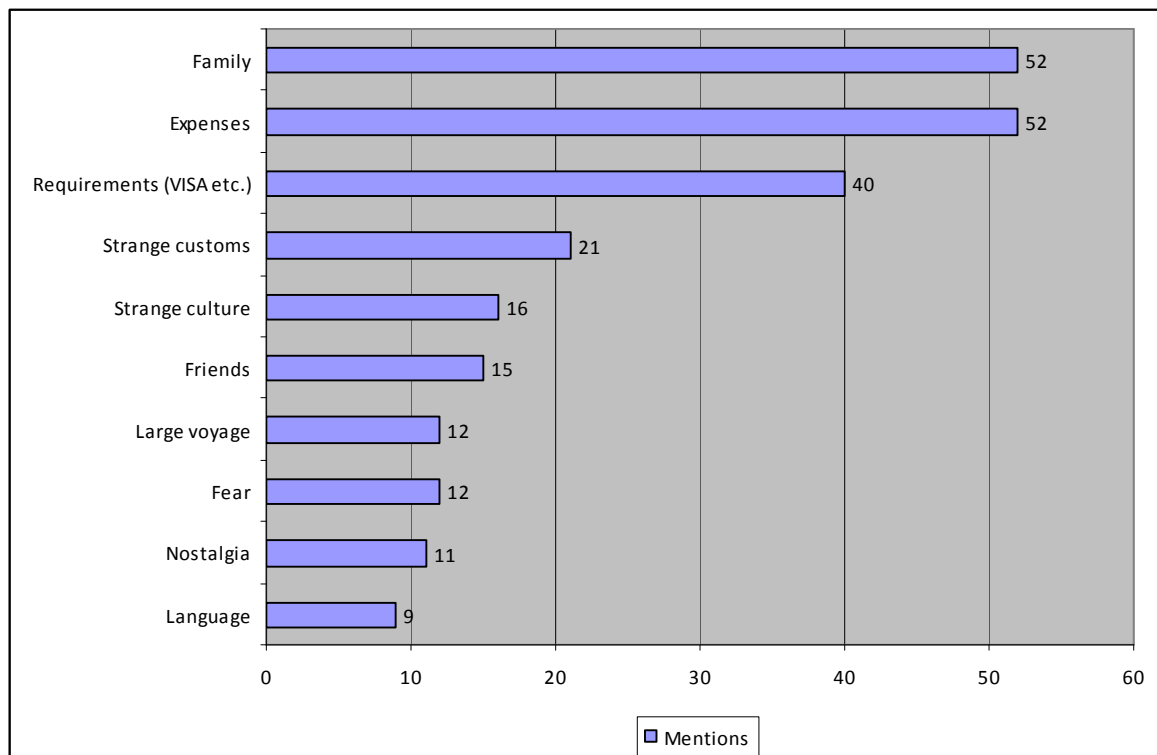
The students find mostly the working and development perspective in Spain better than in Mexico. In their opinion the industry has a better image and gains more support than in Mexico. Furthermore the students think that Spain is particularly attractive because of the high living standard.

*“The importance that is given to tourism in terms of studies, investigation, social analysis, support and promotion of tourism activities. Learn from the culture in all aspects. Get to know and develop skills that are used in Spain. Perspectives of personal and professional growth. “*

*Most important is the living standard and the higher quality of life.*

The barriers that most impede a migration decision of the Mexican students are - both aspects obtained 52 mentions - “Family” and “Expenses”. Another important point that obtained 40 mentions was “Requirements”. The students get discouraged by the great amount of formalities and the paperwork that must be managed to attain a permit to immigrate legally to Spain and to get a work permit there. Other points that ranked in the middle scale of the ranking were (in descending order): “Strange customs” (21 mentions), “Strange culture” (16 mentions) and “Friends” (15 mentions).

Graphic 5.22: Perceived migration barriers.



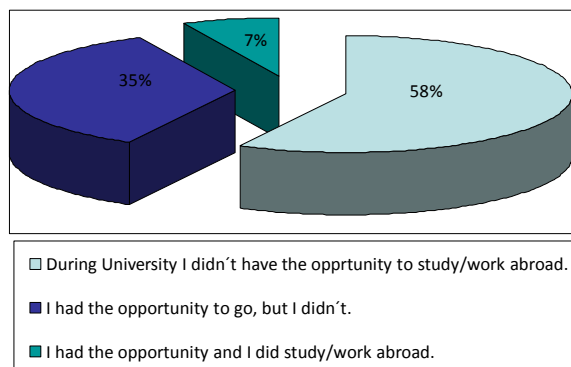
Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

### 5.2.3.5 Objective 4

§ Gather information about realized experiences of students that have been working or studying abroad.

If we take into account the statements of the responsible for educational institutions, the fact that more than half of the students indicated that they did not have the opportunity to study or work abroad during their studies seems quite interesting. We should have expected a significantly lower percentage taking into consideration that almost every polled institution at least stated that there was a possibility to participate in an exchange programme with a foreign country. 58% of the students answered that they didn't have the opportunity to study/work abroad, 35% of the students replied that they had the opportunity but that they didn't study or work abroad. Only 7% of the students studied and/or worked in a country other than Mexico during their time at university. There could be two possible explanations for the high percentage of students that indicated that they did not have the opportunity to study abroad: (1) some students might have had the possibility on the part of their university but not the financial means or the average qualification required to realize a stay abroad or (2) the corresponding programmes have not been promoted sufficiently to draw the interest of the students.

Graphic 5.23: Experiences abroad - Opportunities and making use of those.

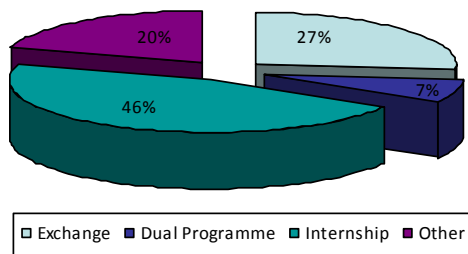


Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

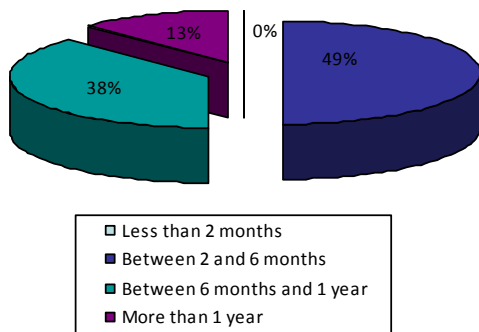
Almost half of the students that have made experiences abroad, made an internship and therefore also count with work experience abroad of between two and six months. The majority of the students (49%) stayed between two and six months in the foreign country, none of the students stayed less than two months abroad.

Graphic 5.24: Experiences abroad – Specification.

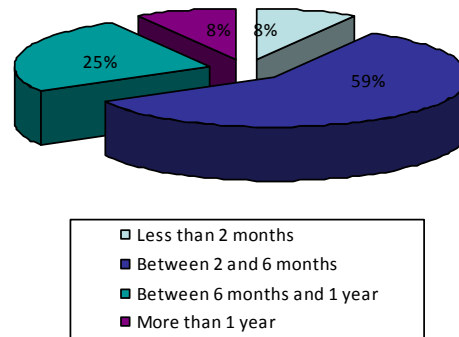
a) Type of programme:



b) Length of stay



c) Working experience:



Source: Own elaboration based on conducted survey, 2009

## 5.2.4 Preliminary Conclusions

The Mexican hospitality industry is one of the most important sectors for the country's economy. Subsequently, there is a rich offer of educational programs related to the hotel and tourism industry. In line with the demand for educational programs in this sector the most offered careers are Tourism, Gastronomy and Hotel and Restaurant Administration. These programs focus on the formation of young professionals aiming to capacitate them to perform a position at medium or high hierarchical level. Still, the responsible for the careers expect that the majority of the students will take on operative jobs after graduation and that they will be in direct contact with the customer. Under the most assumed positions of recently graduated students are as well some on high hierarchical levels such as Office Manager, Executive Chef and Food and Beverage Manager but also positions at medium hierarchical levels such as Reservation- and Receptionist, Chef, Waiter and Head Room Cleaner Manager. When we compare expectations of Mexican future professionals related to labour markets in Mexico and Spain we can not confirm the assumption that expectations differ significantly between the two countries. Actually, in terms of hierarchical level, functions and responsibilities as well as with reference to applicability of knowledge obtained during studies, preferred working area and willingness to take on certain positions the expectations don't show

either any variations at all or only slight deviations. Together with the detail that the answer rate for the questions on the expectations related with the Spanish labour market was significantly lower than the one obtained for the same questions in the case of Mexico, we must suppose that the students have not yet thought about working in Spain and that therefore they don't have clear expectations for most of the aspects considered and asked for in the questionnaire.

The assessment of the degree of difficulty to find a job presented somewhat different expectations for the Spanish and the Mexican labour market: the students considered that it would be easier to find a job in Spain than in Mexico. Major divergence could be observed related to the evaluation of the overall working conditions in the two countries. The assessment of the overall working conditions in Spain was far better than the evaluation for the Mexican industry.

The disposition of Mexican future professionals to work abroad is generally very high and Spain is definitely a very attractive country to work at for the polled students. In addition, the disposition of students was high for all types of migration mentioned in this paper (permanent migration, guest work and seasonal work) while one third indicated "no disposition" for permanent migration. The most attractive form of migration was clearly guest work. The most important push-factors for Mexican students were low wages, corruption, insecurity and unemployment. Other factors that would incentive a decision to emigrate were government, instability, bureaucracy and a lack of work culture. Under the most important pull-factors with the greatest number of mentions were aspects like new experiences, living standard / life quality, same language and new contacts. Surprisingly, higher wages played a secondary role in the assessment. We can suppose that in some way new experiences and contacts outweigh the importance of higher wages. The factors that the students considered the most impeding ones for a migration decision were by far the points "family" and expenses". The aspect "requirements" also obtained a high number of mentions.

There is an apparent discrepancy when we take a look at the student's replies to the question if they had the opportunity to work or study abroad during their studies. While only one of the polled institutions indicated that they neither offered a dual nor an exchange program, 58% of the students indicated that they did not have the possibility to study/work abroad. Merely 7% of the students interviewed actually studied or worked abroad. This finding is an important issue to take into account when it actually comes to recruiting Mexican professionals. Labour supply from Mexico is actually there, the critical issue would be to effectively activate and recruit staff from overseas and to reduce the impeding factors when possible (mainly requirements and expenses).