

7.- IMMIGRANT MOTHER

Hi! My name is Ivonne. I come from Quito, Ecuador, and I've lived in Zaragoza for a bit more than eight years, about eight years now.

I have three children. They came here in 2000. My main worry then was how they would adapt to the school system when they got here, because they had previously studied in Quito only. So, I started to look around at the nearby secondary schools that they would be likely to go to and where the best place for them to study would be.

At first, I was worried about whether they would be welcome here, and also about which year group they would be placed in. My eldest daughter got here and was placed in the second year of ESO; my son was placed in the first year of ESO, and the youngest girl was put in the third year at primary school.

My children have had a good relationship with their classmates: they were welcomed from the beginning, and they made friends with their classmates, with whom they also attended activities outside school hours. They took part in the extracurricular activities: my eldest daughter liked theatre very much, and she became part of the school theatre group for a number of years. My other two children joined the basketball team. In their free time, when they were not at school, they also met up with their group of friends and went out to play.

Now it is clear to me that my children have good future prospects: my eldest daughter is studying psychology at the UNED, and she is also working. She is, therefore, sure that she'll develop her career here. My son is in vocational training, and the youngest one doesn't know what she wants to become yet. However, all three know for sure that their careers will be developed in good conditions.

Well, leaving your home country and coming to a new country with a different culture, I don't know – in our case, we had the advantage that the culture was somewhat similar to ours, and we also an advantage with the language. But I also know that there are foreign families who have greater difficulties because of the language, and because the culture is so very different.

There are many times when you feel nostalgia for your family, your culture... but this is something to keep within as there are ways to live together here very well.