



50 YEARS OF CUADERNOS DE INVESTIGACIÓN GEOGRÁFICA

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In 2024, *Cuadernos de Investigación Geográfica* celebrated its 50th anniversary. The journal began as a multidisciplinary publication, featuring both geographical and historically oriented articles. In fact, during its initial issues (numbers 1 to 5), the title was *Cuadernos de Investigación (Geografía e Historia)*. This editorial initiative emerged from the academic ambitions of a small group of young university professors who were teaching at the Colegio Universitario de La Rioja, an institution that was also in its early stages of development at the time. The journal was initially conceived as a platform to disseminate the research activities carried out in this institution. Additionally, it welcomed contributions from scholars affiliated with nearby universities, particularly the University of Zaragoza. *Cuadernos de Investigación (Geografía e Historia)* also disseminated the findings of undergraduate dissertations and doctoral theses that were stating to be supervised at the Colegio Universitario de La Rioja. As such, the journal could be characterized as departmental in nature, driven by local and regional scholarly output. This profile was consistent with that of many Geography and History journals published by Spanish universities during that period: departmental publications created by and for departmental scholars.

In 1980, with issue number 6, *Cuadernos de Investigación (Geografía e Historia)* gave way to the current *Cuadernos de Investigación Geográfica*, reflecting the need to provide to geographical research its own distinct space. At that time, the journal's editorial line focused on publications dedicated to physical geography and environmental sciences, while also accepting contributions from human geography and social sciences, where human–environment interactions give rise to dynamic and evolving landscapes and spaces. Topics such as spatial planning and the application of advanced geographic methods and techniques also found a place within the journal's scope.

The early issues of *Cuadernos de Investigación Geográfica* were not significantly different from those of its predecessor. They included contributions from the professors of Geography at the Colegio Universitario de La Rioja, researchers from the Instituto Pirenaico de Ecología (CSIC), and scholars from the University of Zaragoza and the University of the Basque Country. The journal also facilitated the publication of initial research by a group of young geographers who were at the time developing their doctoral theses and beginning their careers in geographic science. The journal soon attracted attention among Spanish geographers, leading to the publication of articles by authors from a wide range of academic institutions.

In 1992, the University of La Rioja was created, and from that point onward, it assumed the responsibility for the funding and publication of *Cuadernos de Investigación Geográfica*. The editorial team began to consider the idea that the journal needed to make a qualitative leap in order to broaden its reach beyond national boundaries and attract international contributors. This objective is illustrated in Figure 1, which shows that while over 90% of first authors were affiliated with Spanish institutions between 1975 and 1984, international participation rose to nearly 50% during the period 2015–2024. The journal’s internationalization strategy was further supported by the addition of the English-language title *Geographical Research Letters* in 2018, as well as by the publication of articles in English. These initiatives aimed to expand readership and enhance the journal’s global impact. This trend is illustrated in Figure 2. Whereas 100% of the articles were originally published in Spanish at the journal’s inception, this figure has declined to barely 20%, with the majority of articles now being published in English.

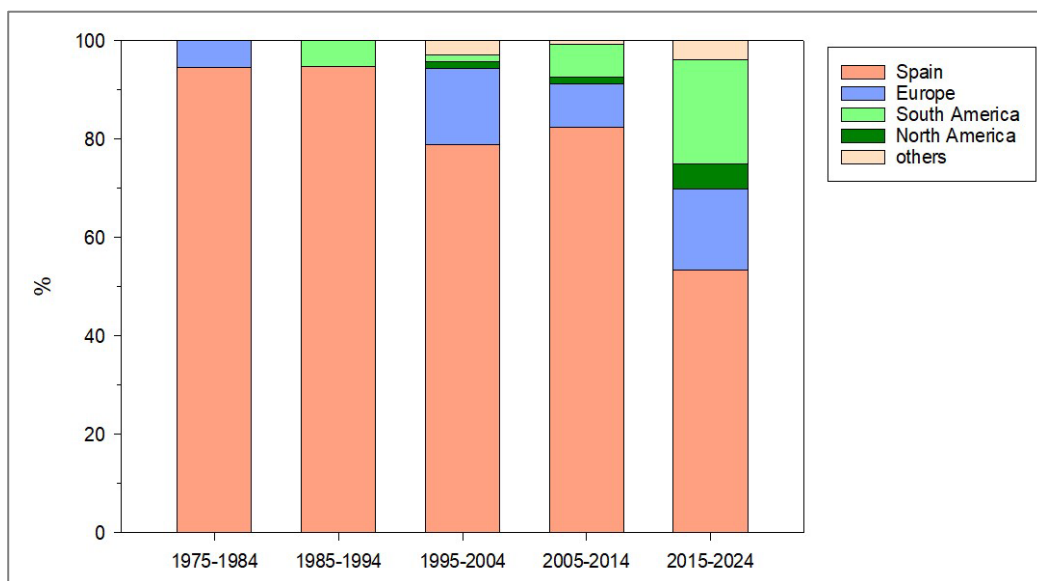


Figure 1. Geographical origin of the first author.

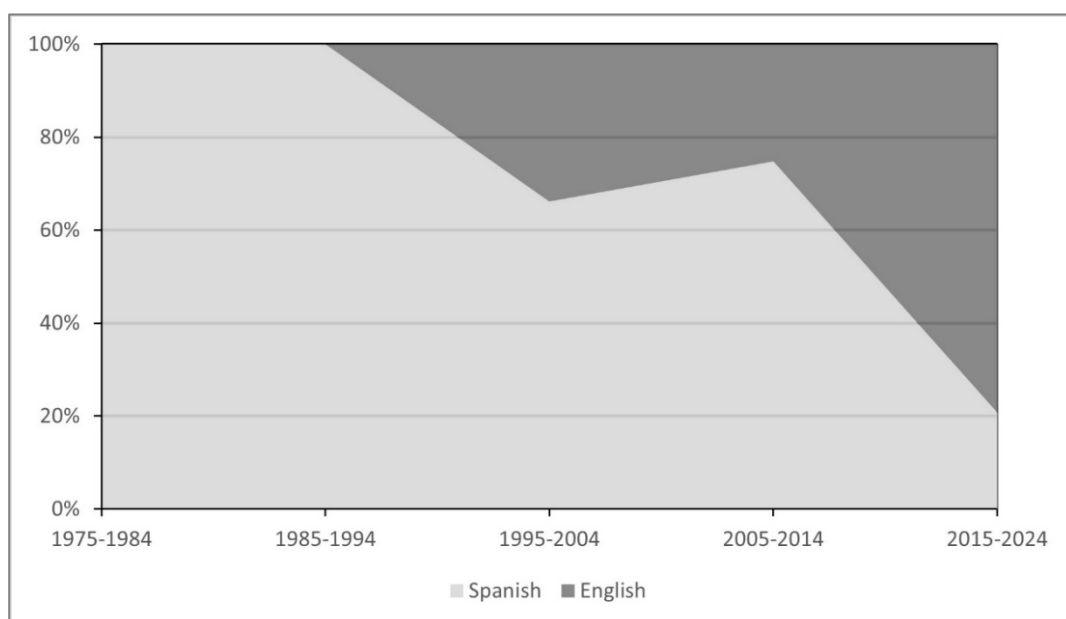


Figure 2. Contribution of articles written in English.

A further development in the journal's history was the increase in the number of annual issues. Until 2009, only one issue was published per year. From that year onward, the annual volume was divided into two issues, thereby enabling the publication of special thematic issues on topics of particular relevance.

As previously noted, since the journal's beginning, the journal's successive editorial teams have consistently shown a strong commitment to ensuring the widest possible dissemination of the work published in its pages. This requires undertaking the challenge of establishing the conditions for the journal to be included in the leading scientific databases —a goal that has been achieved progressively, though with steady determination. *Cuadernos de Investigación Geográfica* was indexed in the Scimago Journal & Country Rank (SJR) (<https://www.scimagojr.com>) in 2009, reaching the first-quartile in the categories of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Environmental Science, and Geography, Planning and Development in 2017 and 2018, and consistently maintaining a second-quartile position across most of the database's annual series. Another significant milestone in the journal's trajectory was the awarding of the Sello de Calidad de Revistas Científicas Españolas in 2016, a distinction granted by FECYT (Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology), which certifies those Spanish journals that meet the highest editorial and scientific quality standards. In *Cuadernos de Investigación Geográfica* was additionally indexed in Scopus (Elsevier) (www.scopus.com), achieving first-quartile rankings in the category of Geography, Planning and Development between 2016 and 2022, and in Environmental Science between 2017 and 2021. Since 2020, the journal has also been indexed in the Web of Science (Clarivate Analytics) (www.webofscience.com), where it is evaluated within the Physical Geography category of the Journal Citation Reports (JCR).

An analysis of the more than 500 articles published throughout the journal's history reveals that 48% are devoted to topics related to geomorphology, with particular emphasis on glacial processes and soil erosion. Climatology and climate change account for 11%, while studies on climate-related hazards—especially floods and wildfires—represent 10%. Less frequent topics include biogeography (4.5%) and hydrology (4.5%). Contributions within the field of Human Geography constitute 5.8% of the total, with rural spaces being the most commonly addressed.

Over the past 50 years, *Cuadernos de Investigación Geográfica* has both reflected and contributed to the evolution of Geography, particularly within the Spanish context. Certain topics have been progressively abandoned, as researchers have shifted their focus toward more multidisciplinary subjects or those more closely aligned with prevailing social and scientific concerns: environmental impacts, natural hazards, and climate change (Figure 3). On the other hand, no editor overlooks that the present and future of scientific journals in the field of Geography necessarily depend on maximizing their international presence, reinforced by strategic positioning in key databases and an increase in the number of citations of their articles. Undoubtedly, in the short term, these requirements will be highly selective concerning Spanish Geography journals, and the authors of this Editorial Note hope and wish that *Cuadernos de Investigación Geográfica* continues to be among the most highly considered in the field.

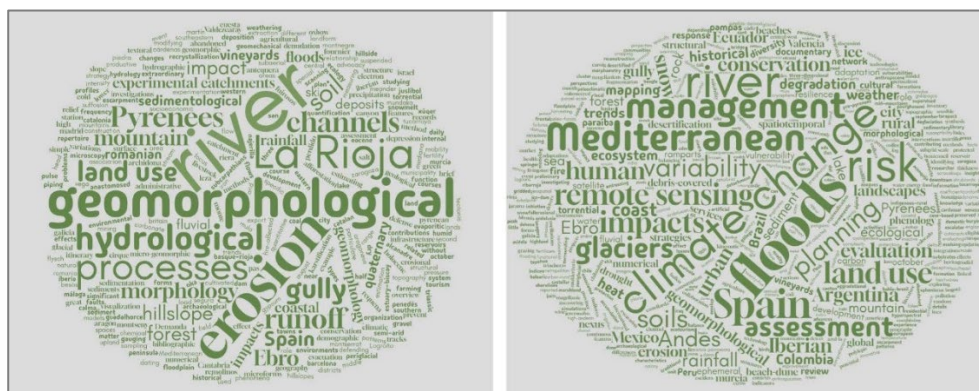


Figure 3. Word cloud of article titles between 1980 and 1984 (left), and 2020 and 2024 (right).

We cannot conclude this text without expressing our sincere acknowledgement to all those who have contributed—and continue to contribute—to the progress of the journal. This gratitude extends to the authors who have placed their trust in our editorial product, to the reviewers who ensure the journal's quality by providing expert guidance, and to the various editorial teams, including both the editors and the members of the editorial board. Without their dedication, this project would not have reached its 50th anniversary.