

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

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Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	4
1.1.	Context of the evaluation	4
1.2.	Public policies and Roma development	5
1.3.	Objectives and methodology of the evaluation	5
II.	General panorama of Roma in Spain: twenty years of major change	6
2.1.	Demographic change.....	7
2.2.	Socioeconomic change.....	8
2.3.	The variable barriers of exclusion	10
III.	Change in light of public policies: universal and specific policies	11
3.1.	Universal policies.....	11
3.2.	Specific policies	12
3.3.	Regional Plans.....	14
IV.	Education.....	15
4.1.	General situation	15
4.2.	Policies in this field.....	16
4.3.	Data on the Education of Romani Children	17
4.4.	Innovative educational projects.....	18
V.	Employment policies and Roma	20
5.1.	A major transformation between two employment crises	20
5.2.	The current situation under new regulatory policies	22
5.3.	Employment projects: the European momentum and its limits.....	24
VI.	Health policy and Roma.....	25
6.1.	The impact of a universal policy	25
6.2.	Limits of the universal policies: differences between the health of Roma and non-Roma	26
6.3.	Innovative projects in the health system	28
VII.	Housing and Roma	30
7.1.	General situation	30

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

7.2 Housing policy	31
7.3. Indicators, data and statistics.....	33
7.4. Causes of the situation and the relationship of a chosen project or plan.....	34
VIII. Discrimination.....	35
IX. Conclusions and recommendations.....	37
X. Bibliographie.....	41
ANNEX 1: Case Studies	45
Education: case 1.....	45
Education: case 2.....	47
Employment: case 3	49
Employment: case 4	52
Health: case 5	54
Health: case 6	57
Housing: case 7	59

I. Introduction

1.1. Context of the evaluation

This document is the result of an evaluation performed by the **KAMIRA National Federation of Romani Women's Associations** (*Federación Nacional de Asociaciones de Mujeres Gitanas KAMIRA*)¹ between November 2011 and April 2012. The evaluation, which is focused on Roma development policies in Spain, was funded by the **Open Society Roma Initiative** under the call for proposals on “Advocating comprehensive Roma Integration Strategies”. The political context of the evaluation is marked by the request made by the European Commission (EC) to state members to present their national strategies for promoting and integrating Roma before the end of the year 2011.² In turn, this requirement is understood as an expression of the will of the European Union (EU) and other organisations that work to defend human rights and minorities to affect real change in the situation of Roma, the largest and most excluded minority in Europe. The objectives are to achieve full citizenship for Roma and break the cycle of inherited poverty. In the words of the European Commission: to move from good intentions to actions³.

The Open Society organisation, in this context of opportunity and, however, difficulties caused by the economic crisis throughout Europe, supports organisations that defend the interests of Roma so that they may, through evaluations, analyses or interventions, influence the design and implementation of national strategies.

With regard to Roma, Spain is both a contradictory case and an important case. The Romani minority has experienced very ambivalent processes of integration and exclusion, from the time it reached Spain during the 15th century. Starting with the 1978 Constitution,⁴ equal rights were granted to all citizens, opening a period of change for the entire country, which included the construction of a democratic and highly decentralised state, and the strengthening of structures for social welfare, hitherto weak and not universal. Together with sectoral policies in health, education, housing, employment, social services, etc., since 1985, a series of domains and programmes aimed at the development of Roma have been implemented. This specific social policy, particularly embodied by the Roma Development Programme⁵ and in the plans of several autonomous regions, is executed by a variety of actors, essentially local entities and non-profit organisations.

Between the 1989 creation of the Roma Development Programme (*Programa de Desarrollo Gitano de 1989*)⁶, and the National Roma Integration Strategy in Spain 2012-2020 (*Estrategia*

¹ The Kamira National Federation of Romani Women's Associations (*Federación Nacional de Asociaciones de Mujeres Gitanas KAMIRA*) is a non-profit organisation created in 1999 to improve the situation of Romani women in Spanish society. Since its inception, the organisation has driven the association movement among Romani women in different areas of Spain so that voices of Romani women are heard throughout the country. Today, the Federation is made up of 20 associations, with around 1,500 members.

² The Spanish strategy was presented in March 2012 under the name National Roma Integration Strategy in Spain 2012-2020, Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_spain_strategy_es.pdf.

³ Communication from the Commission to the European parliament, the Council, the European Economic and social committee and the committee of the regions: An EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies up to 2020, 5 April 2011 COM (2011).

⁴ http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/constitucion.t1.html.

⁵ The plan's objectives are available at: <http://www.msc.es/politicaSocial/inclusionSocial/poblacionGitana/programaDesarrolloGitano/home.htm>.

⁶ The plan's objectives are available at: <http://www.msc.es/politicaSocial/inclusionSocial/poblacionGitana/programaDesarrolloGitano/home.htm>.

nacional para la Inclusión Social de la Población Gitana en España 2012 -2020)⁷, there have been over twenty years of general, sectoral and specific policies, implemented at various levels of government administration, that have transformed – or have claimed to do so – the situation of Roma in Spain. These efforts, their achievements and limitations, are the subject of this evaluation.

1.2. Public policies and Roma development

Evaluating the impact of the aforementioned policies is complicated. The first decision that needs to be made in evaluating the impact of these policies is which changes, among the many that Roma in Spain have experienced, can be attributed to the effect of public policies. Clearly, social change is much too complicated to permit the identification and distinction of specific impacts of various policies. However, it is possible, and it is the objective of this report, to analyse which policies and programmes have had the most significant effects, which have been most beneficial, and under which conditions they are effective, and under which conditions are they not so useful or result in stagnation or setbacks. This effort of summary and identification also includes an evaluation, within the aforementioned limitations, of three separate levels of policies, that are however inseparable in their impact on the lives of their intended beneficiaries:

- Sectoral policies, especially in the fields of health, education, housing and social services, that have had a major impact on the situation of Roma. We will attempt to show the impact of these policies and distinguish, within their universality, whether or not they have been adapted to Roma, as well as recognise their limitations and shortcomings.
- Policies, plans or programmes implemented at the national level, or by the autonomous regions, specifically directed at the development or integration of Roma. This especially includes the 1989 Roma Development Programme and the National Roma Integration Strategy in Spain 2012-2020. The analysis will consider the objectives and results of these programmes, when they can be identified. Among the specific policies, we will look at the seven plans developed by five of the autonomous regions.
- Specific projects led by NGOs, non-profit organisations or organisations that defend rights. Among the projects aimed at improving the situation of Roma, there are interventions with major funding and national scope (such as the Fundación Secretariado Gitano's ACCEDER programme, financed by the European Social Forum) and other more modest programmes or programmes with a local scope, yet, however, of particular interest.

This complex structure was taken into consideration during the development of this evaluation's methodology, and an approach was sought that would provide insight on all three dimensions.

1.3. Objectives and methodology of the evaluation

Systematic changes in the situation of a population can only be observed from comparable statistical data, which still do not exist for Roma.⁸ Hence, the timeframe of the evaluation is flexible. Each area analysed used national studies, or data that outlines the situation in the

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_spain_strategy_es.pdf.

⁸ In Spain, there are no ethnic statistics of a general nature or from censuses. National surveys on health or employment also do not collect data on ethnicity. The statistics that we use come from studies especially directed towards this end. Moreover, government administrations, for their own purposes, collect data or records on Roma, but this data is rarely available to researchers.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

present moment as well as at an earlier time, which was not always the same. Whenever possible, this approach was applied, putting the data into its context, meaning, as compared to data on the total Spanish population. This was the only way to respond to a question with two sides:

- Has the situation of the Roma improved, in an absolute manner, with regard to health, education, housing or employment?
- Has their relative position, compared to the total Spanish population, improved or changed?

In addition to the statistical framework, which has its weaknesses yet does provide an understanding of the general framework, the evaluation drew from three essential sources:

- **Documentary analysis and review of literature.** The evaluation began with a review of the bibliography on the situation of Roma. Second, documents and plans were analysed in a critical manner, using a matrix provided in Annex 3, which provided a method for responding to the questions in a similar format.
- **Interviews and seminars with experts.**⁹ The opinions of experts in the different areas are included in this report, providing a political and critical view on the progress made. A total of 30 interviews were performed. As part of this activity, seminars were conducted on employment, education and housing.¹⁰
- **Case studies.** An evaluation with such a broad objective and timeframe requires a very general approach. This is compensated for by eight case studies¹¹, two per area of intervention: the selected projects or programmes were evaluated with more intensive fieldwork: visits by evaluators, observation, individual and group interviews, review of documents, etc.

Using these techniques, the combined analysis forms the base of this evaluation and is reflected in the chapter on conclusions and recommendations: it was not just a question of evaluating the cases and sectoral areas, but also a matter of drawing conclusions for the strategy and its implementation. There is no other reason to respond to the question “What have we learned?” than to correct the errors of the past and promote the ideas, practices, actors and interventions whose good results have been proven to be successful and create positive effects for the well-being and participation of Roma.

II. General panorama of Roma in Spain: twenty years of major change

Before evaluating the impact of the Roma development policies, one must remember the major changes that the Romani population in Spain has undergone since the late 1980s, which provide the framework for this policy. Changes that the experts emphasise are mainly demographic and socioeconomic. Cultural transformation, which has had an enormous impact, goes beyond the limits of this report, although some elements will be cited, such as the position of women and young Roma.

⁹ See Annex 2.

¹⁰ The seminars were performed in December 2011, under the framework of discussions on the 2020 national strategy. For a list of participants, see Annex 2.

¹¹ Case studies are provided in Annex 1.

2.1. Demographic change

The first change that must be noted in the situation of Roma in Spain is demographic change.¹² Delayed as compared to the non-Roma population, starting in the 1970s, Roma began a demographic transition with particular characteristics that has had huge effects on the wellbeing of Roma: reduction of infant mortality, increase in life expectancy – the result of better living, hygienic, nutrition conditions, etc. – have caused, as a primary effect, an increase in the population, with very high birth rates in the 1960s and 1970s,¹³ and later, starting in the 1980s, a decline in the birth rate that continues to this day. Within one decade, family size went from an average of five or six children to three or fewer, as contraceptive methods and family planning ideas were diffused among the majority of the Romani population.

The strategy behind the aforementioned reduction was not a later age of maternity (characteristic of the Spanish population), but a limited number of children. In other words, Roma had children early, in accordance with the culture's pro-natalist trend, but, however, soon limited the number to two or three. These combined phenomena lead to a few effects that are key to understanding the current situation and the conditions under which the public policy operates:

- In the 1980s and 1990s, the population grew more numerous and younger than previous generations. The population was also more settled, normally in medium to large cities, following the migration from rural environments to the city, and other interior migrations (from the South to the Mediterranean coast, for example), a general rural exodus in Spain in the 1970s.
- The size of families reduced, which implies major changes in the position of children, a family's productive and educational strategy, and relationships between the sexes, freeing the potential of Romani women, who did not have to dedicate so many years to maternity and whose health improved.

Although these changes certainly took place, concrete data is less certain. The current size of the Romani population is always a controversial subject:¹⁴ figures go from a minimum of 453,000 Roma¹⁵ to the calculations provided in the reports of the Applied Sociology and Social Studies Foundation (*Fundación de Fomento de Estudios Sociales y Sociología Aplicada / FOESSA*), whose figures are much higher: 970,000 in the 2009-2010 report.¹⁶ The average number of children per family is 3.18, as compared to 1.94 in the general Spanish population. This means the average Romani household has 4.7 people, as compared to 2.8 in the general population.¹⁷ The population's youth is reflected by various figures: the average age of the population is 27 years, reaching nearly 40 years in the general Spanish population; half of the population is under 25 years old¹⁸, and 33% are under 16 years old. Adults aged 65 and over comprise

¹² Gamella, J, (2000): *Matrimonio y género en la cultura gitana de Andalucía*, Government of Andalusia, Secretary of the Romani Community.

¹³ The first sociological study on Spanish Roma, performed in 1979, calculated the birth rate at 61 per thousand, as compared to 19 for thousand in the general population. Vázquez, J.M. (1980): *Estudio sociológico sobre los gitanos españoles*, Madrid: Instituto de Sociología Aplicada en Madrid.

¹⁴ In 1979, Vazquez estimated it was 200,000 more than this number (Vázquez, 1990).

¹⁵ D'ALEPH/FSG (2008). *Mapa sobre vivienda y comunidad gitana en España 2006-07*. Madrid, Fundación Secretariado Gitano.

¹⁶ The Fundación Secretariado Gitano estimates the population at 680,000 in its study *Población gitana y empleo* (2005). Higher figures are provided in the FOESSA reports: 970,000 Roma in the 6th report.

¹⁷ Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality (2011): *Diagnóstico social de la comunidad gitana en España. Un análisis contrastado de la Encuesta del CIS a Hogares de Población Gitana 2007*. Reports, studies and research.

¹⁸ FSG (2005): *Población Gitana y Empleo. Un estudio comparado*. In 1979, the year of reference for the aforementioned study by Vázquez, the number under 25 years old was 70%.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

between 4 and 5% of the total population. In the latter group of adults, it is important to note that women outnumber men, demonstrating an improvement in female life expectancy and an approximation of general mortality patterns.

Secondly, other changes have occurred in the marriage and reproductive patterns of Roma. The major element, according to the experts, is the diversity, the wider range of possibilities that the statistical data may obscure: in some environments or families, adolescent marriages increase (15 or 16 years), however, there are also couples that delay marriage, single people (previously nearly non-existent), mixed marriages, which some experts calculate at 16%,¹⁹ yet in some towns 50% of married couples are comprised of one Romani spouse. While the possibilities and strategies diversify, some distinctive features, such as the preference for marriage between relatives, remain.²⁰

2.2. Socioeconomic change

The second biggest change is socioeconomic: the position and composition of Roma as regards welfare and income. Here, too, change has been significant, and it is again difficult to provide reliable data. According to the experts, there are three processes that summarise these changes: standardisation, promotion and/or stagnation, heterogeneity.

The first is the standardisation of the social situation of Roma.²¹ As an expert on social policy observed: “Roma currently live in normal neighbourhoods, with non-Roma neighbours, they go to normal schools, visit the regular health centre, etc.” In other words, the incomplete yet intense processes of administrative standardisation, relocation and the right to social housing, the nearly universal education of primary school children, access to the national health system and its services, the possibility of receiving social allowances or benefits for unemployment, old age, illness or poverty, are also other milestones that describe this normalisation whose impact has been enormous. Access to social goods and public aid decreases segregation and “absolute” differences (such as the separation of the literate from the illiterate, or people who live in slums from others who live in the consolidated neighbourhoods), which does not mean that the differences in degree are not enormous, as we shall see.

One must also take into account the effects of the period of general growth in the Spanish economy, which allowed for a diversification of income sources for families, through, above all, peddling, construction work and, to a lesser extent, agricultural peonage, scrap collection and work in the service industry. With or without public assistance or pensions, this income has supported an improvement in the quality of life for many families.²²

However, standardisation has not prevented Roma in Spain from being the “poorest of the poor”, as the threat of exclusion remains present for a significant part of the population. The 1990s brought more possibilities for promotion to many families, however general data on poverty indicates, rather, stagnation.²³ In 2007, 77% of the Romani population was poor²⁴ as

¹⁹ Gamella, based on studies in the Granada region.

²⁰ The Gamella study in the Granada region found 40% of marriages between relatives. Gamella, J.F and Martín Carrasco-Muñoz, E. (2008): “Vente conmigo, primita. El matrimonio entre primos hermanos en los gitanos andaluces”, *Gazeta de Antropología*, Number 24/2. Article 33.

²¹ There have always been Roma in normalised situations, integrated socially and residentially, especially in Andalusia, as well as a majority of Roma in situations of poverty. Some policies supported the most integrated and informed among the Romani population, while others had direct effects on the living conditions of the most excluded Roma. This is a common factor, on the other hand, of all public policies directed at any population.

²² Isidro Rodríguez, “La inclusión social de la comunidad gitana en España 1999-2009”, *Gitanos*, nº50.

²³ Laparra, Miguel, Ed. (2007). *Informe sobre la situación social y tendencias de cambio en la población gitana*. Madrid, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

compared to 17% in the general population. And within this group, 37% suffered from severe poverty, meaning they did not reach 30% of the average income. Severe poverty affected 44% of households in 1998, therefore there has been an improvement, however this improvement is insufficient, considering that it took place during years of higher economic growth and increased possibilities for social mobility.

The last report on social exclusion (2008), before the impact of the crisis took effect, indicated that the Roma were intensely overrepresented in the area of exclusion: they represented 12% of people in situations of severe exclusion. The following table reflects the situation of the general population and the Romani population, showing how non-excluded Roma do not reach a third of the total.²⁵ The exclusion index that produced this report reaches 4.97 for Roma, nearly five times higher than the general population.

	Integration	Precarious integration	Compensated exclusion	Severe exclusion	Total
Spanish	53.3	33.9	9.3	3.5	100%
Roma	6	19.4	40.3	34.3	100%

Source: Produced from data in the 6th FOESSA Report.

Finally, one of the biggest effects of social change over the last few years must be mentioned: the heterogeneity of Roma, which has only increased over the last two decades.²⁶ The first reason is economic, as we have seen.

The second is geographic: data on employment, income, education are very different throughout the different regions of Spain and produce a map in which the indicators for material wellbeing or educational promotion do not necessarily coincide with indicators that express social openness or integration. While in the Northeast the employment, education and income indicators are better, Roma also appear more closed within their own communities. On the other hand, in the South (Andalusia and Murcia), unemployment and material deprivation are higher, but social openness is higher and modern values reach 68% (as compared to 44% in the Northeast).²⁷

The third source of diversity is gender and generation. The impact of education, demographic changes, information technologies, urban life, etc. have driven intense and ambivalent cultural changes among the younger Romani population²⁸ and women, defined in all studies as agents of change. In fact, gender is the most important factor in explaining modern values and the

²⁴ Moderate poverty is defined as being below 60% of the median income of the entire population. The 6th FOESSA Report on exclusion and social development in Spain. Madrid: Cáritas Española, 2008. The FOESSA studies distinguish poverty and exclusion (an index comprised of other indicators, in addition to level of income). For Roma, both phenomena occur together.

²⁵ 2008 FOESSA poll.

²⁶ Among the heterogeneity, which all studies reflect, we must also mention religious trends: a significant portion of the Spanish Roma are members of the evangelical faith, the Iglesia de Filadelfia, the population's own church that may have transformative elements yet also, however, consolidate "premodern" values and closed identities. This seems to be the conclusion of the aforementioned social evaluation (Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality, 2011).

²⁷ Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality, page 286. It would be interesting to analyse if the differences in these indicators is due to the extension and standardisation of economic and social policies, or if it has an anthropological and cultural base. The Northeast regions and Catalonia are also the most differential, and less universal, regions. Todd, E. (1996), *El destino de los emigrantes*, Tusquets Editores.

²⁸ There are no studies that show, for example, the impact of residential and educational "standardisation" on the relationships and social networks of Romani youth. They are known to be heavy users of new technologies, however does this increase communication with other non-Romani youth or strengthen interethnic ties beyond one's one family or neighbourhood?

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

willingness to change, more so than income and including age.²⁹ The effect of social policies on the role of women is undeniable, since women are often called upon to direct these policies, to reach the rest of the family.³⁰

However, generational changes also imply a new limit. The obstacles that Roma face have shifted and duplicated themselves: young people are literate, but their educational levels are much lower than those among the general population; their employment options have diversified while the economic crisis rages; access to housing, difficult for all of Spanish youth, becomes nearly impossible at a time when investment in social housing is reduced significantly. Poverty, more urban, more integrated into a consumption society, more fragmented, equally serious, can continue if social policy is not sustained or fails to stay abreast of new needs.

2.3. The variable barriers of exclusion

Finally, there have been important changes in the processes and various aspects of inclusion/exclusion: social rejection, discrimination, interethnic conflict, neglect or creation of ghettos, are all interrelated yet identifiable phenomena, characterised by different cycles and a high degree of plasticity. The barriers have shifted, so that some older forms of racism or persecution have disappeared, while others have newly formed, and are sometimes more difficult to combat.

The general framework of the last twenty years is the democratisation of the state, the strengthening of civil society and a series of requests for control and participation, from institutions that defend rights to organisations that represent Romani interests to others concerned with the equality of citizens.³¹ However, within these advances, we must distinguish at least three levels: social rejection and discrimination, interethnic conflict and institutional segregation.

Social rejection and discrimination against Roma remain, although their forms have changed.³² National surveys consistently demonstrate that Roma are the most rejected group in Spain, more so than any other minority: 40% of the population would be disturbed if they had a Romani neighbour, and 25% would not allow their children to attend school with Romani children.³³ In parallel, Roma are the group with the highest incidence of perceived racism and the highest rate of suffering from cases of discrimination (after the Sub-Saharan population).³⁴ The areas of discrimination are, above all, social exchange in public, commercial or recreational spaces, political treatment and access to employment or housing. This situation explains why only 13%

²⁹ Including older Romani women with lower levels of education, who are more inclined towards change than younger males with higher income (Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality, 2011).

³⁰ The FOESSA report highlights the fact that Romani households headed by women are not at greater risk of finding themselves in situations of extreme exclusion, unlike trends among other populations (and what is said about the feminisation of poverty).

³¹ Major institutional milestones include the following: in 2005 the State Council of Roma was created, an advisory body for the participation of organisations that work to defend Roma; in 2007, the Institute for Romani Culture was founded, which aims to promote Romani culture; in 2007, the Council for the Promotion of Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination of Persons due to Racial or Ethnic Origin was founded.

³² Annual reports of the Fundación Secretariado Gitano between 2004 and 2009 document 763 cases of discrimination against Roma. In 2010, the report documented 115 cases. In 70% of the cases, discrimination was experienced by Romani women. The media, at 30%, was among the leading source, as the internet appeared as a new space for discrimination and racism.

³³ Sociological Research Centre (2005): Barometer, Study 2625.

³⁴ Council for the Promotion of Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination of Persons due to Racial or Ethnic Origin (2011): Panel on discrimination of people by racial or ethnic origin (2010), the perception of potential victims. Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

of the Roma state that they feel a general openness towards the rest of society, compared to 21% who only have relationships with other Romani people.³⁵

Although globally all experts agree that the public systems have addressed the Roma in an inclusive manner, some systems – such as the political and legal system – have punished this population in particular. A 1996 study showed how Romani women were overrepresented in prison, as well as the severity of their conditions: they represent 25% of inmates with an average sentence of seven years.³⁶

Open interethnic conflict seems to have decreased in recent years, but the cycle of conflict in part determined the social policies in the period under analysis. In a study on conflict,³⁷ Gamella showed that the highest number of collective anti-Roma actions took place during 1990-1995. Conflict occurred at times when the social position of Roma changed, for example, around processes of re-housing and education. Rather than express competition for resources (for example, there were few labour disputes or disputes concerning the health system), the struggle is for the symbolic position of different social groups, and public policies play a major role in both the appearance of these conflicts (concerning urbanisation processes) as well as how they are channelled.³⁸ As we shall see, social conflict seems to have decreased today, but in reality, has only changed its face: it has become individual, fragmented (like all social action) and resulted in a process of separation and avoidance within a common environment: changing neighbourhoods or transferring schools, rejection in public spaces, collective irresponsibility, etc.

Currently, the most disturbing phenomena are the institutional ghettos: the “Roma” neighbourhoods, the results of hasty re-housing processes or spatially concentrated social housing plans; schools with a majority Romani population or remedial education, which given the lack of the necessary support of the entire academic community may become a “special path for Romani children”; the stigmatisation of the support Roma receive and the phenomenon of institutional dependency. These are all consequences of the social processes that public policies were unable to avoid, or have even produced. Analysis of these processes in the areas examined - employment, health, housing and education – will allow us to more thoroughly analyse the pluses and minuses of public policies.

III. Change in light of public policies: universal and specific policies

3.1. Universal policies

All experts agree, and the data confirms that the cornerstone of progress in improving the living conditions of Spanish Roma has been the universal and inclusive character of the system of Spanish services and welfare, especially the universalisation of the health system, public

³⁵ *Diagnóstico social de la comunidad gitana en España. Un análisis contrastado de la Encuesta del CIS a Hogares de Población Gitana 2007*. 2011 reports, studies and research. Ministry of Health, Social Affairs and Equality.

³⁶ The study counted the number of Romani women in prisons and performed a survey, but as there is no official data, we do not know if the situation has improved or worsened since then. Barañ, Romani Women and the Penal System.

³⁷ Gamella, J.F. (2002): “Exclusión social y conflicto étnico en Andalucía. Análisis de un ciclo de movilización y acción colectiva antigitana (1976-2000)”, *Gazeta de Antropología*, nº18.

³⁸ In fact, some of the problems generated by the public policies themselves – such as residential segregation of Roma at certain points in history – are related to avoidance of residential conflict. See Nogués, I. (2010): *Exclusión residencial y políticas públicas. El caso de la minoría gitana en Madrid, (1986-2006)*, Universidad de Granada, <http://digibug.ugr.es/bitstream/10481/4944/1/18684993.pdf>.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

education, social housing and other income and social policies.³⁹ Among the universal policies, some policies have particularly affected Roma, due to their poor initial conditions: policies to eradicate substandard housing, for example, or remedial education, as we will see in the sections dedicated to these fields. Finally, there are special elements of the universal policies that have a particularly positive effect on Roma (and other groups): free books and scholarships to help Romani children attend and stay in school; systematic monitoring of vaccination programmes (the healthcare programme ‘Healthy Child’⁴⁰) have achieved a widespread level of vaccination, etc.

As experts on poverty and social exclusion call to mind, and what is often missed, is that other policies, also universal, are applied without consideration of their impact on the most poor and excluded: economic and fiscal policy, employment flexibility, the liberalisation of land policy and the lack of a housing policy, etc. provoke inequalities social policies can hardly compensate for. For the Roma, this means a loss of possibilities for social mobility and a renewed threat to new generations: lack of access to rental housing or property, lack of access to stable work, lack of access to sufficient economic income or pensions. Some policies implemented by the EU (such as service directives⁴¹ or waste treatment⁴²) make conditions for entry into these sectors more difficult, with serious effects on the means of support for Roma.

3.2. Specific policies

The second basic element includes the specific policies aimed at the development of Roma. In Spain, the fundamental instrument of this policy was the Roma Development Programme (*Programa de Desarrollo Gitano*), launched in 1989.⁴³ This programme consists of applying a budget, which works through two funding streams: first, co-financing projects in the public sector, through the autonomous regions and local councils, who contribute different percentages to these projects. Between 1995 and 2009, programme spending, in the stream managed by the public administrations, reached 106,599,770 Euro until 2008, when funding began to decrease.⁴⁴

Most of the funds, over 75%, were spent on staff: 7,656 people were hired for these projects, of which about 24% were Roma. The data on the beneficiaries refers to the total population to which the programme was potentially addressed (meaning, Roma in the region or area), and not the direct beneficiaries. Considering this limitation of the data, reports show an increased scope, meaning the population targeted by these programmes, of 150,000 people in 2009. There were several areas of intervention, with emphasis on educational projects (against school absenteeism) and literacy, employment, training workshops, support for obtaining a driver’s license, etc. The second stream was a call for projects with a commission of a percentage

³⁹ Bear in mind that social spending in Spain (20.9%) is still much lower than the EU average (26.9%). *Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion_Spain_2009*. As regards inequality, the GINI index was 0.45 in 1970, decreasing gradually to 0.31 in 2000 and stabilising. Since the beginning of the crisis, inequality has increased: the GINI index was 0.339 in 2010.

⁴⁰ Programme for systematic monitoring of the vaccination schedule and other medical issues from the first week of a child’s life onwards, launched in 1984 by the Ministry of Health and Consumption and applied since then in primary care.

⁴¹ http://www.eugo.es/POVUDS_web/docs/Directiva_2006-123-CE.pdf.

⁴² [Waste Framework Directive \(2008/98/CE Directive\)](#) which the European Commission passed in December 2008.

⁴³ The plan does not have a written text (although there was a technical document for its application) and is managed by an administrative unit within the Ministry of Social Affairs. The plan’s objectives are available at: <http://www.msc.es/politicaSocial/inclusionSocial/poblacionGitana/programaDesarrolloGitano/home.htm>.

⁴⁴ Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality (2010), *2009 Evaluation Report*, Roma Development Programme.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

(0.52%) of the income tax. This was directed towards non-profit organisations, with a budget that hovered around three million a year, spread over about 30 projects per year.⁴⁵

Given that the plan is executed in a very decentralised manner, with multiple actors, it is very difficult to measure its impact. In order to evaluate it, we rely on the opinions of experts and the one existing evaluation.⁴⁶

The great success of the 1989 Roma Development Programme, according to all experts, consists of its existence. Having a specific policy expresses a message of public support, puts Roma issues on the agenda and strengthens the institutional presence of their organisations. Alongside this, the plan has had two effects:

- For local governments, it has led to, at times, interventions with the Romani population, often by recruiting social workers and implementing projects, for example to combat absenteeism or tracking relocation, however, with very little budget and a limited impact.
- For many non-profit organisations, this has led to an extension of their influence and professional capacity.

The actual impact of the 1989 Roma Development Programme and the projects has been, according to the experts, not very visible, scattered and fragmented, and incomparable to the impact of other generalist or sectoral policies. Only the budget of the Institute for Re-housing and Social Integration (*Instituto de Realojamiento y Reinserción Social, IRIS*), the entity in the region of Madrid that manages the relocation of families settled in slums, has been over 200 million Euro since 2008.⁴⁷ In addition, projects funded with European support (the European Social Fund) have received a much higher amount: 57 million Euro between 2000 and 2006 for the ACCEDER employment programme.

Although the philosophy of the 1989 Roma Development Programme is positive action, to complement the general policies, its limited financial scope, the annual nature of grants, and the lack of a clearer focus and strategy, as well as the lack of monitoring and evaluation, have hindered its vocation, turning it more into support for a series of local interventions and support for organisations. Generally, it did not have a comprehensive character, and in a similar manner projects were not integrated into broader policies; nor was the participation of the recipients made a priority.⁴⁸ It was not used as a way to design and test innovative projects, which could have been later used for sectoral policies, extending its scope.

Despite this, it has undoubtedly been useful in raising awareness among local governments, promoting development plans in regional administrations, and facilitating a few positive processes for its beneficiaries.

The rest of the plans suffer from the same problems. The National Roma Integration Strategy in Spain 2012-2020,⁴⁹ which replaces the 1989 Roma Development Programme, was designed to be more participatory, with an important role played by the National Roma Council and its

⁴⁵ Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (2009): *National Inclusion Plan 2008-2010. Report on the execution of measures included in the 2006-2008 PNA.*

⁴⁶ Alvira, F. (2005) *Estudio evaluación del programa de desarrollo gitano, 1989-2000*, Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

⁴⁷ http://www.madrid.org/cs/Satellite?c=PVIV_Generico_FA&cid=1142494644870&pagename=PortalVienda%2FPVIV_Generico_FA%2FPVIV_pintarGenerico.

⁴⁸ A defect that may be attributed to all social policies, not just those directed towards Roma. One factor is that NGOs manage resources, other than the target population actually participating in the assessment, defining services and their implementation.

⁴⁹ Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality, 2010.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

committees in different areas, however, its application was hindered by the same weaknesses: the lack of its own funding, decentralisation and a lack of consensus with the autonomous regions who have the responsibilities for implementing policies, scattered objectives and the absence of quantifiable commitments.

3.3. Regional Plans

In addition to the national plans, five autonomous regions have approved specific plans for the integration of Roma:

- The Andalusia Comprehensive Plan for Roma 1997-2000 (*Plan Integral para la Comunidad Gitana de Andalucía 1997-2000*) was the first plan developed and approved at the regional level. It shares the objectives of the 1989 Roma Development Plan.⁵⁰
- In Catalonia, two plans were approved: the Catalonia Comprehensive Plan for Roma 2002-2008 (*Plan Integral del Pueblo Gitano en Cataluña para el periodo 2002-2008*)⁵¹ and its 2009-2013 version.⁵² The first plan identifies eleven priority areas: culture and identity, family, housing, education, employment, health, participation in social life, language, media, justice and safety. The second plan widens the areas of action to also include: social action and citizenship, women and gender politics, recreation, youth, justice, participation, linguistic policy, rehabilitation of neighbourhoods and historic centres and sustainability. The second plan was recognised as a good practice by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights before it was implemented, as it is the only plan that contained specific measures for immigrant Roma.⁵³
- In the Basque Country, two plans were also approved: the Basque Plan for the Comprehensive Promotion and Social Participation of Roma 2004-2008 (*El Plan Vasco para la Promoción Integral y Participación Social del Pueblo Gitano del periodo 2004-2008*)⁵⁴ and its 2008-2011 version.⁵⁵ The second plan contains a specific section on the lessons learned from the experience of the first plan, which includes: a clearer definition of activities, more participation of Romani organisations, definition of means and adjust objectives and actions to the period, resources, actual capacity of agents, assigning concrete specific responsibilities and guaranteeing specific budgets for the first year of the plan's implementation by government departments and public administrations. It is the only plan that includes preventive actions and interventions for Romani women who are victims of violence.
- The Extramadura Plan for the Promotion and Participation of Roma 2007-2012 (*Plan Extremeño para la Promoción y la Participación del Pueblo Gitano 2007-2012*) includes a series of specific objectives in the fields of education, housing, employment,

⁵⁰http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/igualdadybienestarsocial/export/Comunidad_Gitana/HTML/pagina4.html.

⁵¹http://www.gencat.cat/governacio-ap/ACCIO_CIUADANA/DOCS-FORMULARIS/Pla_poble_gitano.pdf.

⁵²<http://www20.gencat.cat/docs/governacio/Accio%20Ciudadana/Documents/Info%20general/Arxius/PIPG%202009-2013.pdf>.

⁵³ European Agency for Fundamental Rights (November 2009), *Selected positive initiatives: The situation of Roma EU citizens moving to and settling in other EU Member States*, available at: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/ROMA-Movement-Positive-Initiatives_en.pdf.

⁵⁴http://www.euskadi.net/r33-2288/eu/contenidos/informacion/pueblo_gitano/es_7946/adjuntos/PLAN.pdf.

⁵⁵http://www.gizartelan.ejgv.euskadi.net/r45-contss/es/contenidos/informacion/pueblo_gitano/es_7946/adjuntos/plan_web.pdf.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

health, culture, social image and non-discrimination, social participation, women and youth.⁵⁶

- The Navarra Comprehensive Plan for the Care of Roma 2011-2014 (*Plan Integral de Atención a la Población Gitana de Navarra 2011-2014*) includes actions in the following areas: education, housing, employment, health, social services, youth and equality, associations, social image and culture. Although it mentions the increase of the immigrant Roma population, it does not mention specific actions for this group.⁵⁷

Generally, these plans aim to reorganise what is already being done, rather than introduce extraordinary measures. None have their own funding, as measures must be assumed by the different councils of the regional governments. This is generally performed through budgets directed towards general integration policies, which makes it difficult to determine the total funding for the plan's implementation, although the Catalan plan specifies that funding must be granted by each government agency concerned.

IV. Education

4.1. General situation

As the **Ministry of Education's Action Plan** acknowledges: *“Many international studies indicate that in developed societies, by 2020 – 2025, only 15% of employment opportunities will be for people without any qualifications. This means that, with regard to the levels of our educational system, 85% of people will need to have a level of education equivalent to professional training at a middle or high school level.* Judging from the statistical data we have available, this would mean that a very large percentage of Roma would remain in their current situation and would have serious difficulties in finding employment. Thus we begin this part of the report, with the understanding that education is a crucial issue in the strategy for the inclusion of Roma.

It cannot be denied that important advances have been made regarding the level of education among Roma over the past thirty years. Currently, 94% of Roma have been educated, although there are still serious problems of absenteeism and academic failure or dropouts. The near total education of Roma children in **early childhood and primary education** has taken place over the last two decades. Despite the progress achieved, Romani students experience excessive absenteeism and higher rates of academic failure than their generational peers.

Access to **secondary education** is also lower than among the non-Roma population, aggravated by widespread dropout rates before reaching this stage of compulsory education. Secondary education seems to be the educational roof for Roma, as less than a quarter has completed secondary level studies (22.2%, according to the CIS).

At this stage, we have the following data:

- Of Romani students who begin the 1st year of compulsory secondary education, approximately 80% drop out at this stage before the end of the last year;
- Boys have the highest dropout rates, especially in the early grades. Romani girls drop out, in particular, during the transition from primary to secondary education;

⁵⁶http://ie.juntaex.es/pdfs/Inmigracion_gitanos_plan.pdf.

⁵⁷http://www.navarra.es/home_es/Gobierno+de+Navarra/Organigrama/Los+departamentos/Asuntos+Sociales+Familia+Juventud+y+Deporte/Acciones/Planes+especificos/Servicios+Sociales/Planes+de+Actuacion/Planes+Sectoriales/Exclusi%C3%B3n+Social/Default.htm.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

- 39% of Romani students attend remedial education programs, as opposed to 14% of the non-Roma population;
- 68.4% of Romani children have curricular gaps of over two years, as compared to 25.8% of non-Romani children;
- Educated Romani girls have developed better academic practices than Romani boys;
- With regard to **higher education**, there are still few Roma who have earned college degrees. An estimated two hundred Roma have university degrees. According to the CIS study, only 1.6% of Roma over the age of 20 continue their studies, and there is no data on this group that allows us to see what they are studying.

It is important to take into consideration the educational level of **adult Roma**: the data provided by the Sociological Study on Spanish Roma (*Estudio Sociológico sobre los Gitanos Españoles*), performed in 1978, estimates that illiteracy among the Roma population over 10 years old had reached 68%, while for the rest of the population it was under 9%; one would have to go back 80 years to find similar data for the general population. Currently, the data does not indicate much progress. The number of Roma over 16 years old who have not completed primary studies is 70%. Taken together, illiterate Roma (absolutely and functionally illiterate) have a weight, among the total Romani population, 4.6 times higher than the illiterate population among the general Spanish population in the INE 2001 census. If we only consider absolute illiteracy, the proportion among the Roma rises further: 5.2 times more than within the general Spanish population.

Currently, the **2/2006 Organic Law on Education of 3 May (LOE)** regulates education for students throughout Spain, focusing its attention on diversity as a basic principle of the educational system, to meet a need that spans all educational stages and all students. Thus, the question is to adequately respond to the educational demands that the diversity of students requires, without any type of exclusion. The aforementioned law does not make any specific reference to Roma.

It is difficult to determine, with the data available, if the previous **LOGSE Educational Law** improved the level of education in compulsory secondary schooling. It is clear that the LOGSE marked the launch of an educational system based on constitutional principles, and initiated democratic school management^[1], and that it was the first law to establish a decentralized educational system in Spain and allow autonomous regions to not only manage schools, but also draft a very high percentage of the curricular content. Currently, debate concerns whether the age limit of twelve years, from primary to secondary schooling, poses a handicap for Roma.

Factors to bear in mind here, as in other fields, include the heterogeneity of educational levels and the situation of Roma, and the fact that there are many factors that seem to influence the level of education attained.

4.2. Policies in this field

4.2.1 General policies

As with all inclusive and universal public policies, and principally with free access to the educational system, the result is clear. Over the last thirty years, there has been a mass incorporation of Roma into the educational system who previously were not even halfway incorporated.

On the other hand, the specific qualities of the Spanish system, with all of the educational powers transferred to the autonomous regions, generates regional differences based on the individual funding capacity of each region (with large disparities in spending per student

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

between them) and the regulative autonomy of each based on a common framework, which produces different regional laws on education.

The different educational policies have gradually included more innovative aspects, which we will not explore: we will focus on only one element: the ceiling placed on the age for compulsory schooling, which determines the minimum level of education socially required of individuals. This minimum level has varied from 12 years (1945) to 14 years (with the 1970 Law) and finally the LOGSE raised it to 16 years. Educational groups state that the division between primary and secondary schooling at age 12, with the change of school that this often requires, is an added difficulty for Roma, who starting from this age (12 years) fail to attend school regularly.

Currently, in terms of national policy, there is the **Ministry of Education's Action Plan** (*Plan de acción del Ministerio de educación*): and the **Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration 2011-2014** (*Plan Estratégico de Ciudadanía e Integración, PECCI*). The plan's objectives include: "Guarantee access and permanence in the educational system under equal conditions, regardless of origin". This means that the incorporation of students of immigrant origin must ensure that the distribution of students in schools prevents and hinders high levels of segregation and concentration, and establishes lines of actions and measures to follow. Nothing is established for Roma, despite the fact that Roma suffer from the same, or greater, problems.

4.2.2 Specific measures

With respect to measures directed specifically towards Roma in the field of education, we can affirm that a profound development has taken place in the government's approach regarding the education of Romani children over the last 40 to 50 years. Nationally, the first specific initiative was the **bridge schools**, which were special transition schools specifically created for Romani children, with the objective to help children adapt to society and create basic sociocultural habits. These schools theoretically were to last for eight years (although in some places they were implemented for a longer time), and disappeared with the development of subsequent regulations.

Spain has passed two Roma development plans, and both propose measures related to education, however, neither refers to school segregation. Currently, and in proposals from several NGOs for the Roma Inclusion Strategy, the issue of school segregation has been identified as one of the problems to solve.

Calls for grants to private non-profit organizations, both on the state and the regional levels, have established as priorities programmes for education, monitoring and control of absenteeism, and programmes that mediate between families and schools. Some of these programmes have achieved very good results (for example: the tutoring programme for children by the Federation of Romani Associations of Andalusia), however, NGO initiatives should not replace an educational policy to combat absenteeism and academic failure. Only in Catalonia, through the "school promoters" programme we will discuss later, has the regional government implemented a policy through the Ministry of Education to combat this situation. In other autonomous regions, there were a few grants for NGOs to fight absenteeism.

4.3. Data on the Education of Romani Children

Information on the situation of Roma in the field of education is limited, however, it is clear that there is a situation of inequality that increases with higher levels of education.

If anything characterises this community, it is generally low levels of education, especially if we compare the data available with the data available for the general Spanish population. While

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

illiteracy among the general population is practically nonexistent (2%), among Roma, it increases to 13%-14% and the differences triple (up to five times more, per the FSG's study) when we speak of people who have not studied, people who often have very high levels of functional illiteracy, with percentages between 7% and 9.7%, for the general population, and 30.6% (or 58%, according to the FSG), among Roma. According to the data of the CIS, seventy-six out of every one hundred individuals within this group have a maximum of a primary school education.

According to a study performed by the NGO Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG) titled "Evaluation of Educational Standardisation for Romani Students in Primary Education" (*Evaluación de la Normalización Educativa del Alumnado Gitano en Educación Primaria*), in 2002, the incorporation of Romani children in school was widespread throughout the country, with 94% of Romani children educated at 6 years or before. However, Romani students still have a higher rate of absenteeism and academic failure than their generational peers. 84.6 percent do not finish secondary education. It is estimated that 80% of Romani students who reach secondary education drop out before graduating. Research indicates that 31.9% of Romani students pass all subjects, as compared to 58.1% of non-Roma students, and that 68.4% of Romani children have a curricular gap of over two years, as compared to 25.8% of non-Roma children. At the university level, there is no reliable data on Roma who have completed university studies. However, it can be confirmed that the Roma are underrepresented in university education. Of the 1,462,771 university students in the 2004 – 2005 school year, no more than 1,000 were Roma, when, in a numerically comparable situation with the majority population, this number should be 28,648.

This situation has a strong gender component. Among children who go on to secondary studies, 60.7% are males while 39.3% are female, which indicates a high dropout rate among Romani girls in the transition from primary to secondary school. However, according to the report issued by the FSG, Romani girls and youth who reach secondary studies finish it in a greater number than their masculine counterparts.

Racism and stereotypes are also part of the educational reality for Romani students. A study indicated that 25.3% of the majority Spanish population would be upset if their children shared the classroom with Romani children, while 9% of the same population would feel the same way if their children shared the classroom with children from immigrant families.

4.4. Innovative educational projects

We have already noted that clear progress has been achieved in access to education among Roma over the last thirty years; however, despite this, the "feeling" of most people interviewed and educational experts is that over the last few years there has been stagnation, if not a decline, in the education of Roma.

We understand that the **causes** of gaps in education among the Roma are many and varied. We cannot disregard the fact that access to the educational system among Roma in general has been delayed, and that the situation of exclusion and discrimination of Roma has had a crucial influence on the current levels of education; in general, we can say that there is a lack of specific training to serve Romani students in schools. If to the above we add the cultural specificity of Roma, the lack of references, and references to Romani culture in textbooks, the result will be the current educational system.

There are other factors to consider, which also influence the level of education: such as the region and neighbourhood in which someone lives, level of family income, religion, parents' level of education...With regard to the latter, we can say that this information begins to be noticeable in the range of 25 to 44 years, which is when children begin to have parents with any

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

level of education. From this group, it is easier to see that the higher the educational level of the father, the higher the level children will reach and the greater importance given to education. However, all persons interviewed agree that this hasn't resulted in this educational leap, which corresponds to about 20 years of more or less widespread access to the educational system.

Moreover, we cannot disregard the influence of other policies, such as the housing policy – with the construction of segregated neighbourhoods, or neighbourhoods removed from the rest of the population – on educational issues or the existence of “ghetto schools” with a majority or exclusively Romani population, as a result of an unintended, yet uncorrected, process implemented by the public administration.

In our opinion, this is the **lack of a specific policy and educational strategy**, aimed at overcoming this gap in the education of Roma. Actions have been taken by the majority of NGOs to improve the level of education, but this is a question of educational policy, and as such, requires a clear involvement of the educational administration, based on the experience and projects whose concrete effects can be tested, extrapolated to other situations and regions and that, ultimately, can or could contribute to improving educational inequality.

There to, we analysed the following projects:

-The project **Siklavipen Savorenza**, Education for everyone (*Educación para todos*), which entailed the participation of the Department of Education of the Parliament of Catalonia, states that in order to guarantee access and ensure the continued presence of Roma in the educational system, educational authorities must become more involved and work in collaboration with students, their families, teachers and non-governmental organization. This project works on three levels to achieve academic success:

- With students, through providing academic support in program locations, with tutoring that takes place in community centres;
- With teachers, with whom the programme is in constant coordination, the curriculum is examined. The same methodology is used in tutoring programmes as is used in the classroom.
- With families, the programme works with families to raise awareness on the importance of education for their children.

The project is unique in Spain, as it involves a government office other than the governmental entity that deals with social issues. Generally speaking, the active participation of all stakeholders is a characteristic that can and must be transferred to the vast majority of Spanish and other initiatives. Many different approaches work together in this effort: there is also a scholarship programme funded by a bank and a team of professional Romani experts, who act as role models.

Similar projects have already been implemented previously, such as the FARA programme to support early-childhood education among Roma in Andalusia, whose results are very visible.

- **Learning Communities**. This is a project to transform schools aimed at overcoming academic failure and eliminating conflicts. It is distinguished by its position to support dialogue-based learning through interactive groups. Henceforth, school learning is not exclusively dependent on teachers alone; rather, the achievement of high quality education depends on the joint participation of families, neighbourhood associations, volunteers...A learning community is a project for the social and cultural transformation of a school and its surroundings, to achieve an information society based on learning through dialogue, through participative education of the community. To achieve this transformation, all resources possible are mobilised, as well as the educational administration, universities, governmental agencies, nongovernmental and private

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

organizations, making it possible for social agents to participate in the classroom, such as professionals and volunteers, with the faculty's support.

Through interactive groups (groups of 4 or more students and one adult), rather than moving students with lower levels of academic achievement outside of the class, work is performed in groups in to acquire knowledge. This ultimately transforms difficulties into possibilities (Freire, 1997:63). The 2010-2011 Spanish Report by the Spanish Ministry of Education on successful educational actions refers to the Learning Communities of the Basque Country as a preventive measure for reducing the risk of exclusion among students.

Of the two projects analysed, we highlight the positive aspect of coordinated work between the government and NGOs. We understand that inequality in the field of education is not easily overcome unless work is performed in coordination between people who have the responsibility to provide education and people who can help achieve optimal results with regard to this task. In both projects, forces and expertise are united to transform the educational reality, working from three basic pillars: students, families and schools.

V. Employment policies and Roma

5.1. A major transformation between two employment crises

In contemporary society, employment has become the principal axis of social integration for individuals, and the structure of the labour market has become the most powerful space for the distribution of income and status.⁵⁸ Hence the situation of Roma related to employment is proof of the population's position, between inclusion and exclusion, in Spanish society. As in the other fields studied, comparable data has recently begun to appear over the last decade, yet it is difficult to compare the current situation with previous situations. Unlike other areas, although there has been much progress made, this progress is not definitive: the current economic crisis is having a huge impact on an already precarious situation.

The 1980 baseline study identified that 26% of the Romani population was active (the rest being youth, elderly, the ill, homemakers, retired, unemployed or not stating an occupation).⁵⁹ At the same time, nearly 80% of Romani families had two or more active members. In terms of labour, three or four occupations prevailed among the group: 26% of respondents stated they were workers (labourers, masons, etc.); 20% worked as street vendors, 20% were seasonal agricultural labourers and 14% scrap collectors. Among women, who had a lower activity rate, 35% worked in sales and 22% in domestic service. The study concluded that 95% of Roma worked in manual labour, requiring low skill level, with a minority working as employees or members of professions, which reflects a very low level of income. Of the respondents who stated they received aid (34% of the total), only half had some type of financial assistance or disability, senior citizen or widower's pension, with the remainder provided as in-kind support.

⁵⁸ This was not always the case: homemakers were perfectly integrated under the Fordist system and did not work. The labour market is one of the three main systems in the generation of wealth and its distribution: unpaid work (domestic and volunteer) and the public system of services and income transfer are equally basic. In a country with about five million unemployed persons, the position of employment as a basis for wellbeing and social identity must necessarily change.

⁵⁹ Vázquez, J.M. (1980): *Estudio sociológico sobre los gitanos españoles*, Madrid: Instituto de Sociología Aplicada en Madrid.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

This and other studies⁶⁰ reflect a moment of change between traditional crafts Roma have practiced in a rural, agricultural-based economy and the industrial, urban society in which they are seeking insertion.⁶¹ Between this first transition, which occurred in the 1970s, and today's post-industrial society, a deep transformation has taken place in the labour market, with serious effects on the employment of Roma. This group, despite its ability to adapt to circumstances, faces major difficulties based on two fundamental facts:⁶²

- The first is the level of education, despite all of the efforts of the system and the Roma themselves: in 2005, 7 of every 10 Roma adults over the age of 15 were absolutely or functionally illiterate.⁶³ A third of Roma between 25 and 35 did not have any education. These figures improved in 2011: people without education had reduced eight points, to six per ten without education among adults over the age of 15. Nevertheless, the overall level of qualification remains low: the majority of the population has a primary education, which leads to less stable and low-paid jobs, which are the first to be destroyed by economic crises.
- Barriers to employment and discrimination in the labour market. Even Roma with comparable levels to the rest of the population face special difficulties to being hired, by processes of social isolation or discrimination, and prejudice that is both widespread and difficult to combat.⁶⁴

In addition to this, the labour market does not absorb all labour available and is characterised by a very high level of temporary contracts. There are two main sources for observing the current situation:

- A 2005 employment study by the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, which was also repeated in 2011, thus incorporating the effects of the crisis.⁶⁵
- The CIS Household Survey, interpreted as a social analysis of the Romani population, coordinated by Miguel Laparra.⁶⁶ This source's data is from 2007.

The table below summarises the data from the two studies, the FSG/EDIS (2005 and 2011) and the social assessment (CIS 2007), for the two periods:

% population >16 years	Spanish population 2005	FSG Roma 2005	CIS Roma 2007	Spanish population 2011	FSG Roma 2011
Activity rate	56.1	69.3	63.4	60	68.9

⁶⁰ GIEMS Team, *Gitanos al encuentro de la ciudad: del chalaneo al peonaje*, Edicusa, Madrid, 1976, pages. 79-83.

⁶¹ For a description of these former trades that "crumbled in the 1960s-1970s", see Gamella, "Oficios gitanos tradicionales en Andalucía (1837-1959)", *Gitano*, Número 32-33, December 2005-Jan. 2006.

⁶² "Informe sobre población gitana y empleo. Conclusiones, recomendaciones y propuestas". *Gitanos* n° 32-33, December-2005-January 2005.

⁶³ FSG; EDIS (2005): *Población Gitana y Empleo. Un estudio comparado*. Madrid. Fundación Secretariado Gitano.

⁶⁴ 45% of respondents stated that they feel they have been discriminated against at some point. FSG/EDIS (2005). Interestingly, this figure decreased by 30% in the 2011 study, as if discrimination was much more noticeable when employment opportunities existed and the labour market was active.

⁶⁵ Interim results of the 2nd study, *Población Gitana y Empleo. Un estudio comparado*. Madrid. Fundación Secretariado Gitano. Performed in 2011, it will be published in 2012.

⁶⁶ Laparra, M. (coord.) (2011): *Diagnóstico social de la comunidad gitana en España. Un análisis contrastado de la Encuesta del CIS a Hogares de población gitana 2007*. Madrid, Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality, http://www.mspsi.gob.es/politicaSocial/inclusionSocial/poblacionGitana/docs/Diagnostico_Social.pdf

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

Unemployment rate	10.4	13.8	42.4	20.9	36.4
Employment rate	50.3	59.7	36.5	47.6	43.8
Rate of wage-earners	81.6	51.5		83.6	38.4
Self-employed	18.3	48.5	30	16	51
Rate of temporary work	30.9	70.9	76.4	25.5	53.4
Part-time daily rate	8.5	42	21.9	14.1	42.3

Source: Table data derived from the sources cited.

The disparity of the data is explained by the different methodologies applied by the two studies. Both sources show a higher activity rate among Roma, the result of earlier entry into the labour market.⁶⁷ The big differences lie in what is considered employment and unemployment. The FSG/EDIS survey, modelled after the Active Population Survey, considered a person to be employed if they declared any work activity, even a few hours per week. By contrast, the social assessment asked for perceived unemployment: this figure then rises to 42%.

However, beyond how to measure a complex reality, both studies reflect that underemployment, family support and precariousness are the basic conditions of labour and employment among Roma. Over half of the population have unskilled jobs (14% among the general population), and over 50% are employed in family activities or self-employment. Only 15% of Roma are permanent employees (58% among the general Spanish population), which can be considered the integrated part of the Romani population in relation to the labour market.

Both studies also agree on the high proportion of Roma who are not protected by the law and benefits associated with employment. The CIS survey measures 40% have not paid contributions to social security. In addition, Romani women have higher rates of temporary and part-time employment, more family support and other figures that indicate an especially vulnerable feminine integration, without protection for the future.

What cannot be contradicted is the impact of the three years of the employment crisis in Spain: with the same methodology of the EDIS/FSG study, unemployment has risen from 13% to 36%, employees have dropped thirteen points, thus losing labour rights and the associated protections. Self-employed workers have remained steady, among whom half declare to be “partners in family activity” (a category which, among the general Spanish population, is less than 1%).

In terms of occupations, according to the 2007 social evaluation, 35% are in commerce (42% according to the 2005 EDIS-FSG study), 17.7% in construction and almost 14% in agriculture: two of every three Romani workers are involved in these activities, showing some continuity from the 1980s, although the conditions of these activities have certainly changed quite a bit.

5.2. The current situation under new regulatory policies

In the field of employment, it does not seem as if public efforts have substantially changed the situation of Roma. Progress has been significant, in educational levels, and certainly employment during the years of economic growth, but the structural weakness of the position of Roma continues and displays itself in all of its harshness during a time of crisis. With only 15%

⁶⁷ Which is associated with fewer years of formal education, although probably also with an earlier entry into the adult world and in particular parenthood.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

of the population working as steady wage earners and 40% unemployed, people survive through several more or less formal activities.

Every time that the Romani population advances and transforms, the boundary of stable employment seems to recede, increasing the competition among people with low qualifications in a market that is now contracting. Three examples demonstrate the impact of regulatory policies in times of high labour competition: peddling, scrap collection and the impact that professional certification can have.

The data confirms that the fundamental activity of the Romani population is still peddling. Flexibility and complementarity are still the strengths for a majority of Roma today: proceeds from sales complement other compatible activities, collection, scrap collection, cleaning, receiving social benefits (17% of families).

Rodríguez Cabrera's study on peddling provides several interesting conclusions:⁶⁸ first, consider that peddling has been a positive element in improving the economic conditions of Roma between 1980 and 2000. In this case, public policies have made a favourable contribution: the 1985 peddling regulation, access to social security through cooperatives or freelance regimes, have allowed the expansion and stability of this sector. By the turn of the century, the situation grew more complicated due to greater competition with supermarkets, cheap imported textiles, the presence of other groups and collectives of vendors, etc. In addition, regulation of commercial activities and services that does not take into account the special situation of some social groups, generates new legal barriers to entry.⁶⁹

Peddling has provided a refuge for the less educated population, for whom it is difficult to find employment in other fields. Thus the aforementioned study, like many other analyses, recommends a double strategy: support the departure from this field for those under 35 years, who can train and work in other sectors; and the modernisation and professionalization of the sector for the rest, as peddling has a future, however not for all Roma, nor under the current conditions.

The same is true for other urban activities: scrap collecting, another sector of refuge for the poorest Roma, is at a critical moment. The new regulation on waste⁷⁰ increases the requirements for the manipulation and transport of waste, excluding traditional scrap collecting, since it requires a professional license and a self-employed category, among other conditions.

In general, the **barriers to employment are higher**: more regulations are added to the required qualifications and training which, if not adapted to, are overtaking the population with a lower level of education. For example, the national certification system for professional families and professional training itself are more demanding for the performance of formal activities and require a higher level of basic training in order to access professional training.⁷¹ Among all of these areas, the same trend is observed: a society that ensures a central nucleus of employment, mobile and competitive, but does not consider the fact that those furthest removed from this

⁶⁸ Rodríguez Cabrero, G, (2009): *La situación y perspectivas del trabajo autónomo, especialmente la venta ambulante, de la población gitana*. Ministry of Health and Social Policy.

⁶⁹ The 2006/123/CE Directive of the European Parliament and Council, 12 December 2006, on services in the interior market. http://www.eugo.es/POVUDS_web/docs/Directiva_2006-123-CE.pdf.

⁷⁰ Law 22/2011 on waste and contaminated soil, based on the 2008/98/CE Directive of the European Parliament and Council of 19 November 2008. <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2011/07/29/pdfs/BOE-A-2011-13046.pdf>.

⁷¹ Royal Decree 34/2008 of 18 January, which regulates professional certification: http://www.sepe.es/contenido/empleo_formacion/formacion/formacion_para_el_empleo/formacion_profesional_para_el_empleo/pdf/certificados_de_profesionalidad.pdf.

modernisation lack the means to bridge this gap. Social cohesion requires the modulation and adaptation of these rules, opening doors and creating bridges for those who do not meet the initial requirements, Roma and non-Roma.

5.3. Employment projects: the European momentum and its limits

Data shows stagnation in employment. However, efforts to improve the conditions of training and employment among Roma have been significant. In this field, the EU's investment and momentum, through structural funds and above all the ESF, have played a major role, increasing the balance between active and passive policies in the labour market.

All of the specific policies mentioned in the first chapter have dedicated efforts to the employment, or rather the employability, of Roma:

- The Roma Development Programme dedicated a significant part of its aid to training and pre-training workshops. Once again, the dispersion of activity and lack of data inhibit the evaluation of this effort.
- The European programmes have had a clearer impact and have been more visible. In particular, the ESF's Operating Programme to Combat Discrimination, over its two periods (2000 – 2006 and 2007 – 2013), have prompted a national programme, stable over time with sufficient resources, ACCEDER, managed by the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, whose development confirms the strengths and limits of interventions to promote employment.

To get a closer look at these efforts, the evaluation analysed two cases, of very different sizes and methodologies: the ACCEDER programme and the programmes of the Cordoba-based organisation *Encuentro en la calle* ('Meeting in the Street')⁷².

ACCEDER is one of the most referenced employment programmes in Europe: it runs from a network of centres distributed across the country, dedicated to serving Roma and non-Roma (more or less a third), which provides itineraries for employment, based on guidance, training and intermediation. These itineraries are based on labour market prospecting and rely on efforts to raise awareness among employers, intermediation with companies, which includes collaboration agreements, and social work that goes beyond guidance as it involves combating prejudice and the big task of motivating Roma themselves.

The programme is justified by the special situation of Roma: neither their knowledge and access to public employment services, nor their initial training, nor their social networks nor the attitudes of employers permit them, in many cases, to take advantage of "conventional" job search strategies. Thus it is necessary that an expert service that is dedicated, not exclusively, but rather specialised in working with Roma.

The results of this programme are known, as in this case data and evaluations exist: the programme served 35,000 people during the first period (until 2007), of which approximately one third found employment, an employment rate that must be evaluated in consideration of the special difficulties of a group with very low qualifications. Furthermore, this is often temporary employment (as with all low-skilled jobs in Spain).

SURGE, the employment programme of the association *Encuentro en la calle*, has another, more local, dimension, as it works in the specific neighbourhoods of the city of Cordoba, with a poor population, mostly but not exclusively Roma. It is a grassroots initiative based on

⁷² See Case Studies in Annex 1.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

knowledge of the terrain and offers, like most employment programmes, comprehensive itineraries, which include guidance and training. Three features highlight its originality:

- First, it is based in the neighbourhood and performs comprehensive work with families, for whom employment is an additional factor, and not separated from the rest. It uses street educators and family educators, people with a deep understanding of the multiple problems in these three areas. This creates synergy between work in education, health, housing or employment. Its support for women is very marked.
- Secondly, it is integrated into other networks and public services. It is part of the employment service ‘Andalucía Orienta’; thus, it served 6,247 people between 1999 and 2010. It has its own training centre where courses are provided.⁷³ It also offers a learning centre for new technologies, which is part of a public network.⁷⁴
- Third, the association has generated its own resources, in particular a placement company, SUPLA S.L., dedicated since 2000 to cleaning services, cleaning urban spaces and local services. Since its creation, it has hired 729 people, over half at risk of exclusion.

These three pillars - work in the neighbourhood, insertion into local networks of public resources and generation of its own initiatives and companies - feed and complement each other, creating, in this case, a very interesting example of social work.

In order to evaluate these and other programmes, it is necessary to understand that the current policies do not generate employment: they serve to bring the labour market closer to a population far removed from it, to diffuse information, mediate between agents and reduce prejudice and discrimination; improve the employability of people, above all the youngest and best educated, who can use more specific training or who need guidance and support in finding employment. Employment programmes are often a substitute for “natural” social networks that other citizens enjoy, and are in this aspect essential to disadvantaged groups, but these efforts cannot change the labour market nor the starting conditions of the population, basically conditions that depend on the level of education.

Hence the most important results – according to the experts – have been produced in raising social awareness, changing the attitudes of many Romani families regarding employment (among young women, in particular) and in the diffusion of different experiences and innovative projects.

VI. Health policy and Roma

6.1. The impact of a universal policy

An evaluation of the field of health can test the benevolence and limits of public policies with regard to Roma. Perhaps no other area of intervention is as sensitive to social inequality and, at the same time, responds so clearly to a universal, inclusive policy that is sustained over time.

Without a doubt the **health of Roma has improved** since the 1980s. The 1980 Vazquez study⁷⁵ does not provide accurate data on illness, except for a question on the subjective perception of

⁷³ Professional courses on cleaning buildings and caregivers for people with physical and psychological disabilities (45 students, all women, in 2010).

⁷⁴ A member of the Guadalinfo network, a program of the Andalusian government focused on reducing the digital divide and promoting the information society.

⁷⁵ Vázquez, J.M. (1980): *Estudio sociológico sobre los gitanos españoles*, Madrid: Instituto de Sociología Aplicada en Madrid.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

illness, which was distorted by the number of youth in the sample. Among adults over 65 years, health was perceived as weak or poor among 78% of respondents. But the most important data was that over half of the respondents (54%) did not receive social security and therefore lacked health coverage. Other studies prior to 2006 were very local, often dedicated to the registration of congenital diseases, yet some did focus on inequalities in health: in these cases, they were concerned with differences in sexual health and reproductive health, increased infantile mortality or morbidity, lower life expectancy of the group and the prevalence of chronic diseases.⁷⁶

The universalisation of health as a right of citizens and the articulation of the National Health System⁷⁷ is, according to the experts, a landmark that explains the health integration of the Roma and the significant improvement of their health. In addition, all of the improvements mentioned in the first chapter are determinants of health,⁷⁸ starting with a lower number of children, changes of residence and environment, increased education, economic diversification: all have positive effects on the health and life expectancy of Roma.

There is some consensus in the international literature and in the European Union that proof of the most useful policies for reducing health inequalities consists of the following:⁷⁹

- First, the greatest impact is due to macroeconomic policies (health, infrastructure, education, employment and income, etc.).
- Second, the weight of improved working and housing conditions for the entire population.
- Third, the political line refers to reducing the unequal distribution of risk factors, evaluating the impact of general policies on vulnerable groups.
- Finally, the influence of interventions from the health system, the first condition being that the system is truly free, universal and accessible.

From this comprehensive perspective, the spread of healthcare and improvements in the environment or income are key elements of progress. The experts also point out that the social contract has a major effect on health: rejected groups or excluded minorities have worse health than other people in the same social class. Racism affects health, and improvements in public discourse and institutional treatment produces beneficial effects for minorities.

At the same time, again according to the literature and persons interviewed, the policies in Spain have failed to place more sustained attention on the differences in initial conditions and a more intense compensatory character. This explains why, despite the progress, the health of Roma is systematically worse than that of the population at the same social or economic level.

6.2 Limits of the universal policies: differences between the health of Roma and non-Roma

The 2005⁸⁰ and 2007⁸¹ studies by the Ministry of Health confirm that Roma are in a situation of health inequality which is expressed through higher infant mortality and lower life expectancy, less follow-up with childhood immunizations, inadequate nutrition and diet and a higher

⁷⁶ Ferrer, F. (2003): "El estado de salud del pueblo gitano en España. Una revisión bibliográfica", *Gaceta Sanitaria*, 2003; 17 (Supl 3); 2-8.

⁷⁷ General Law on Health, 14/1986: <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/1986/04/29/pdfs/A15207-15224.pdf>.

⁷⁸ WHO (2009): *Social determinants of health*. Geneva. http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/.

⁷⁹ Díez, E. y Peiró, R. (2004): "Intervenciones para disminuir las desigualdades en salud", *Gaceta Sanitaria* 2004, 18 (Supl 1), 158-167.

⁸⁰ 'Health and Roma' (MSC/FSG, 2005).

⁸¹ 'Informe sobre la situación social y tendencias de cambio en la población gitana' (MTAS, 2007), cited in 'Diagnostico social...' PÁG: 118.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

incidence of problems associated with these factors: obesity, poor oral health, diabetes; a higher incidence of cardiovascular diseases and bone and joint disorders in adults; a high prevalence of chronic disease; higher accident rates (domestic accidents, traffic accidents...) and, among women, problems resulting from high fertility and early and late pregnancies; less preventive gynaecology habits, problems resulting from work overload.

Although this data is based on previous studies, health experts warn that the real life expectancy of Roma is not known, nor can affirmations be made without complete demographic studies. The principal source of information on differences in health is the survey performed in 2006 among Romani households, using the questionnaire of the National Health Surveys⁸² which provided, for the first time, a national, complete and comparable panorama of the health status of Roma in Spain.

The most significant differences occur in perception of health: up to 35 years, this state is similar to that of the general population, however the differences multiply after this age. Only 10% of people older than 55 years state that they are in good or very good health, as compared to 38% in the general population and 32% in the poorest social group. Among men, this figure is 33%, as compared to 52%. With regard to chronic illness, there is a higher percentage of diagnoses of asthma, ulcers, allergies, migraines and high cholesterol. There is a 17% prevalence rate of depression among Romani women, as compared to 7% overall.

With regard to access to healthcare, the study discusses normality, meaning, provide care to more of the Roma in poor health. However, when this concerns treatments that are not covered, or prevention services, the Romani population has less access: oral health, preventive practices for women, access to hearing aids or correcting vision problems.

Factors explaining this inequality include:⁸³

- The most important are factors linked to poverty and social inclusion: difficulties related to housing, education, employment, social image, discrimination and/or lack of access to social resources and goods.
- Factors related to culture:⁸⁴ the perception of the Romani population on health, disease and death can have a negative effect on preventive practices and behaviours, as well as following treatments. With regard to women, their position in the family, overload of work and energy spent caring for others negatively affect their health. The literature points out two things that tend to be overlooked: that healthcare, as understood by the social majority, is related to a process of individualisation and planning for the future in which Roma are also a part; and that all cultures have forms of care and prevention that can strategically be used to improve the health of the group.
- The third factor relates to the difficulties of the health system itself in adapting to social or cultural diversity, which can be considered another element that can adversely affect health equality.

⁸² La Parra Casado, D. (2009): *Hacia la equidad en salud. Estudio comparativo de las Encuestas nacionales de Salud a población gitana y población general de España, 2006*. Ministry of Health and Social Policy, Fundación Secretariado Gitano, Madrid. One of the strengths of this study is that it compares Roma with the general population, stratified by social class.

⁸³ *Diagnóstico social de la comunidad gitana en España. Un análisis contrastado de la Encuesta del CIS a Hogares de Población Gitana 2007*. 2011 Reports, studies and research. Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality, pages 118-119.

⁸⁴ Ayala Rubio, A. (2008): *Actitudes y pautas de comportamiento de la población gitana de la Comunidad de Madrid en relación a su salud*, Public Health Institute of the Community of Madrid and Complutense University of Madrid.

6.3 Innovative projects in the health system

Given the inter-sectoral nature of health, when analysing the reasons behind the improvement of health among Roma (and the continued inequality), credit is usually given to the universal scope of the policies together with other structural changes, residential changes or transfer of income. Efforts to adapt the system or concrete programs have also taken place, although rarely have they been evaluated from the perspective of care for disadvantaged groups.

Therefore, if inequality persists, it is because the two pillars of health equality have not been sufficiently developed.

- On the one hand, greater equality in other structural areas, cited in other chapters, which creates the determinants for the health of a social group.
- On the other hand, a health system closer to the disadvantaged Romani population (and other at-risk populations).⁸⁵

That is, **positive action** has failed on two levels: regionally, reinforcing the primary healthcare and public health system where it is most needed, in neighbourhoods with more problems or an accumulation of risks; and participatory, giving more power to the people and communities in situations of exclusion, to improve their own health and the health of their social environment.⁸⁶

Therefore, there is a need for projects that create concrete effects that can be confirmed, and that could be used to diffuse improvements and bridge the gap in health. Using the cases analysed, we can describe what kind of health projects have the potential to reduce the existing social divide.

- **The 18,000 Plan in Vallecas**⁸⁷. In 2000, in light of persistent social inequalities in Vallecas⁸⁸ and the comparative deficiencies in infrastructure and investment, neighbourhood associations signed an agreement with the Community of Madrid to launch a special investment plan called the 18,000 Plan. 10% of this plan – approximately 1,800,000 Euro – was dedicated to public health. The interesting aspect of the Comprehensive Plan to Improve Public Health in Vallecas was its participatory character: health specialists, together with other professionals in public resources, met with neighbours to make decisions on the studies, needs, expenses and projects to undertake. This plan produced concrete projects, above all research on the state of housing or access to the healthcare system in slum neighbourhoods; interventions for youth and the elderly; environmental analysis; however, the most important was the dynamic for project generation based on research and local participation. The Plan was completed in 2006 and the eight public health specialists were reduced to two, investments dropped, although some of the results (better understanding and trust between the population and healthcare professionals) persist.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ This proximity corresponds to the “Common Basic Principles for Roma Inclusion”, particularly the principal of an “explicit but not exclusive target”. http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Documents/2011_10_Common_Basic_Principles_Roma_Inclusion.pdf.

⁸⁶ The importance of empowerment and promotion of health was recognised by all international organisations, particularly the WHO. See the 1986 Ottawa Charter: http://www.who.int/hpr/NPH/docs/ottawa_charter_hp.pdf.

⁸⁷ See case study in Annex 1.

⁸⁸ Vallecas is a neighbourhood in a working class area of Madrid with a strong identity and a large network of associations, comprised of two districts and about 300,00 residents. Many Madrilenos Roma live in Vallecas.

⁸⁹ For example, working with a Romani organisation to diffuse information on a vaccination programme for young adults, faced with an outbreak of measles in the local area.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

- **Project RIU** in Valencia⁹⁰. In 2006, the public health centres in Valencia and Alzira launched a project to promote healthcare agents in a series of vulnerable neighbourhoods in the Valencian community. The idea was to improve the health of residents – many Roma – but, above all, demonstrate that innovation in healthcare is possible and can take place in areas with the greatest social difficulties. The project proceeds in cycles using a “bottom-up” methodology: above all, natural leaders from the neighbourhood are selected and trained to be healthcare agents, leading awareness raising, reflection and training activities in their environments. But it also has other, equally important effects: a rapprochement of healthcare professionals to people who are no longer seen as demanding users but as agents responsible for their lives; a method of working as a network, seeing neighbourhoods not as sources of problems, so much as spaces with their own resources and assets. The project gives power and agency to women and men of diverse backgrounds, and the structure generated holds great potential for action and practice, using health as a transversal theme: for example, it was used to launch the Violet RIU, dedicated to reflection and action against gender-based violence.
- Although not analysed in this evaluation, the Navarra Plan, **a programme to promote health among ethnic minorities**, is another example of an intervention directed towards bringing the health system closer to a specific group.⁹¹ In this case, with the participation of associations that defend the rights of Roma, healthcare agents, known as mediators, are selected and trained. Results included the extension, to the entire population, of health records and follow-up, vaccination of all children, assistance to women for family planning services, healthcare education projects, etc.

Local projects, much like those mentioned above, offer several lessons for this evaluation:

- Once a quality, universally accessible healthcare system is implemented, the basic element for improving health is the rapprochement of the system to the people and their participation through health promotion. This entails empowering residents in vulnerable neighbourhoods to understand and use their own resources and those of the system.
- To this end, projects must be grassroots, understand the territory and provide information and training to local actors, individuals and associations. From these “bottom-up” methods, different methods can be defined: networks of health agents are also, at the same time, an information system, a structure for learning and support for working on different themes, always while respecting their philosophy and transformative power. With regard to Roma, this can be a fundamental element of cohesion and diffusion of good practices, as well as empowerment. As some women are caregivers, recognising their role and providing them with training, prestige and an environment for reflection can be an important step for their health and the health of their environment.⁹²
- The professional mentality in the healthcare system and the forms of management, sectoral and full of bureaucratic barriers, can change. Systems must learn to work in a cross-sectoral manner, relying more on the abilities of users and building upon existing resources and assets, not just upon problems and risks.⁹³

⁹⁰ See Annex 1.

⁹¹ The Navarra plan is directed to Roma and Transmontana Roma (from northern Portugal), about 7,000 people. Mediators are paid and normally have contracts for 20 hours per week.

⁹² Debate exists on whether or not to give them a financial incentive. In principle, local leaders are volunteers, not professional mediators, but this means that they cannot be paid for the workshops they teach, for example.

⁹³ Kretzmann J, McKnight J, Dobrowolski S, Puntenney D. (2005): *Discovering Community Power: A guide to mobilizing local assets and your organization's capacity. A Community-Building Workbook*. Evanston: Asset-Based Community Development Institute.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

- The two programmes studied were not specifically targeted towards Roma, although many Roma were among their recipients. This inclusive and empowering character, at the base of its design, are essential for promoting change, not to mention an improvement in neighbourly relations.⁹⁴

Currently, there are numerous studies, guides and documents on the most effective forms for working towards health equality.⁹⁵ As with other issues, this evaluation shows that the most important factor, once a public system is consolidated and made accessible and inclusive for all citizens, is to strengthen it with a truly democratic vision of healthcare, which considers Roma, as well as the rest of the population, as agents in their own health, able to participate in the definition of their well-being.

VII. Housing and Roma

7.1 General situation

The right to decent and adequate housing is guaranteed by the Constitution⁹⁶ for all Spanish citizens, including Roma, although not all enjoy this right in practice. There are two clear obstacles to making this right a reality for Roma. On the one hand, there is the general housing situation, characterised by rising prices in the housing market and the lack of social housing and, on the other hand, the relocation policies prior to the 1990s that, in some cases, resulted in higher levels of segregation.⁹⁷ However, over the last two decades, there have been considerable improvements due to the more appropriate and inclusive approach of new projects, programmes and policies.

In accordance with the Action Plan for Roma Development 2010-2012, problems in the field of housing are the following: the persistence of slums and substandard housing, the concentration of the Romani population, and discrimination in access to rental housing. In addition, the plan recognises the following factors of exclusion in this area: insufficient resources for accessing housing, difficulty in financing real situations based on official requirements, the persistence of poor housing conditions, location in segregated and degraded urban areas, without facilities and services and social prejudice in the open housing market.⁹⁸

Existing policies have focused on how to solve the problem of slums and shanty towns, thus actions are concentrated in this area, and this is the subject for which we have the most information.

Due to the shortage of data segregated by ethnicity, it is very difficult to compare the situation of Roma with that of the majority population in terms of housing, although the data that is available indicates that the situation of Roma is significantly worse. The lack of access to adequate housing perpetuates the cycle of exclusion, making it very difficult for families in this situation to gain access to employment and achieve the same level of health and education as the

⁹⁴ In the field visit to the RIU programme, evaluators attended a workshop in which health agents were preparing to provide a workshop on healthy cooking. Eight women of different backgrounds and three men attended (one Romani man, a Moroccan man and an Ecuadorian man).

⁹⁵ UNFPA and Who (2011): *Roma Health Resource Workshop, Report of Proceedings*. Istanbul.

⁹⁶ Article 47 of the Spanish Constitution: http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/constitucion.t1.html.

⁹⁷ European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (2009), *Case study Improving Roma housing and eliminating slums, Spain*, http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/Roma-Housing-Case-Study-Spain_en.pdf.

⁹⁸ <http://www.msps.es/politicaSocial/inclusionSocial/docs/planDefinitivoAccion.pdf>.

majority population. These processes of exclusion are more pronounced among immigrant Roma, who face a double barrier of prejudice as both Roma and immigrants, although currently there is no specific information analysing the situation of this group in the field of housing.

7.2 Housing policy

Along the general lines of the social inclusion policy for Roma in Spain, housing policy for Roma must be considered within the context of general housing policies on both the national and regional levels, which are developed from the general legislative framework, and measures for supportive funding through the state housing plans.

To understand the context of the situation, the analysis must start from a study of the general housing policies, and from this point of view, the integration policies for Roma:

7.2.1 General policies

The government's housing policy has done well in the hands of the private market. During the 1980s and 1990s, there was huge growth in the number of houses built and, paradoxically, this was accompanied by a clear decrease in the amount of social housing built, an increase in prices and a lack of social housing rentals.⁹⁹ This situation left low-income residents to face many difficulties in accessing housing.

Spain has adopted three state housing plans, but this assessment will concentrate on the 2009-2012 State Plan for Housing and Rehabilitation (*Plan Estatal de Vivienda y Rehabilitación / PEVR*)¹⁰⁰, as it is the most relevant to Roma living in situations of exclusion.¹⁰¹ This is due to the fact that it includes among its main objectives: "to contribute, with other administrations, to the eradication of substandard housing and slums," for which it establishes a series of aid programmes for the eradication of precarious and irregular settlements for populations in a situation or at risk of social exclusion, with serious deficiencies in sanitation, overcrowding of residents and safety and housing conditions that are much lower than the minimum acceptable requirements. Although it does not specifically mention Roma as a preferred beneficiary, it does make special mention of "groups in situations of or at risk of exclusion", among which slum populations are included. As Roma are not specifically named in this plan, it is not possible to obtain concrete data on the number of beneficiaries of Romani ethnicity.¹⁰² As the responsibility for housing policy has been transferred to the autonomous regions, three levels should be taken into account: national, regional and municipal. The PEVR has a budget of 10,188 million Euro and is distributed among the various autonomous regions.

7.2.2 Specific policies for Roma

From the 1990s until today, there has been a change in the approach of housing initiatives. Concrete evidence of this development is the Institute for Re-housing and Social Integration (*Instituto de Realojamiento y Reinserción Social / IRIS*).¹⁰³ This institute was preceded by the

⁹⁹ In 1970, 9.05 residences were built for every 1000 residents, and 60.2% was social housing. In 2000, the number of residences built for every 1000 residents increased to 10.41, however, the percentage of social housing dropped to 12.7%. Raquel Rodríguez Alonso (2002) *La política de vivienda en España desde la perspectiva de otros modelos europeos*: <http://habitat.aq.upm.es/boletin/n29/arro2.html>.

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2008/12/24/pdfs/A51909-51937.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ Previous plans are: State Land and Housing Plan 1999-2001 and the State Land and Housing Plan 1999-2001.

¹⁰² Article 1: <http://www.fomento.gob.es/NR/rdonlyres/BA3D88A3-BB88-4CDB-9321-81AD36A47FC9/95770/RD20662008.pdf>.

¹⁰³ http://www.madrid.org/cs/Satellite?c=PVIV_Generico_FA&cid=1142494644870&pagename=PortalVienda%2FPVIV_Generico_FA%2FPVIV_pintarGenerico.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

Consortium for Re-housing of the Marginalised Population (*Consortio de Realojamiento de la Población Marginada*), 1986 – 1998. Initially, the policy entailed the relocation of the slum population (a large majority of which were Roma) to segregated areas of the city (Special Relocation Units or Special Neighbourhood Types), without taking into account the socioeconomic status or preferences of families. Consequently, many of these neighbourhoods rapidly deteriorated, giving rise to new ghettos. In 1998, the IRIS was established to relocate Romani families, both from the special neighbourhood types as well as the slum neighbourhoods, to integrated areas and with an intervention plan to provide support during the process of adaption and socio-laboral integration.¹⁰⁴ However, due to economic constraints, most families were relocated to areas where housing was more affordable, which avoids segregation, but also contributes to the concentration of Roma to certain areas, where conditions are generally worse. The case studies analysed in this report are examples of the second approach.

Within the policies of inclusion, housing for Roma has been considered one of the foundation areas:

The 1989 Roma Development Programme does not specify thematic areas of interest, however, according to the 2010 Programme Evaluation Report, activities have developed within its framework related to housing and environment throughout all of Spain's autonomous regions, however, it also indicates that there is no information on users in many of them.¹⁰⁵ This indicates that effort is placed on developing activities but not evaluating the impact of such activities.

In the Action Plan for Roma Development 2010 – 2012, housing is one of the specific action areas. The objectives in this field are: 1) Promote access to standard quality housing for Roma; 2) Propose measures for the eradication of slums; 3) Lead a housing integration policy for Roma and 4) Maintain an information system on Romani housing and community.¹⁰⁶ It does not mention the problem of evictions for families in irregular housing and although the plan recognises the existence of discrimination against Roma when they ask to rent property, it does not provide any specific action against this type of discrimination. The State Council of Roma, which participated in the development of this plan, has a working group on housing.

The National Roma Integration Strategy in Spain 2012-2020 reduces its objectives in the field of housing to eradicating slums and substandard housing, and improving the quality of housing for Roma.¹⁰⁷ The positive aspect of this strategy is that it has set specific goals to meet by 2020.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ See Nogués, I. (2010): *Exclusión residencial y políticas públicas. El caso de la minoría gitana en Madrid, (1986-2006)*, Universidad de Granada. <http://digibug.ugr.es/bitstream/10481/4944/1/18684993.pdf>. Another well-documented example of this initiative is the Aviles slum eradication programme. See: Agullo, E. (2004): *Erradicación del chabolismo e integración social de los gitanos en Avilés*, Universidad de Oviedo.

¹⁰⁵ Ministry of Health and Social Policy: http://www.msc.es/politicaSocial/inclusionSocial/docs/2010_memoria_gitanos_08.pdf.

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.msps.es/politicaSocial/inclusionSocial/docs/planDefinitivoAccion.pdf>.

¹⁰⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_spain_strategy_es.pdf.

¹⁰⁸ Goals for 2020 include: reduce the percentage of Romani households living in slums from 3.9% to 0.5%; reduce the percentage of Romani households living in substandard housing from 7.8% to 3%; reduce the percentage of Romani households with lack of basic facilities from 8.5% to 2.1%; reduce the percentage of Romani households with humidity problems from 47.5% to 35%; reduce the percentage of Romani households with lack of urban facilities from 19.5% to 10%; reduce the percentage of Romani households with overcrowding problems from 29.4% to 20%.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

Additionally, on a regional level, housing has been included in the action areas of seven plans adopted by the five autonomous regions that have specific plans for the integration of Roma.

It can be said that major emphasis has been placed on improving the quality of housing for Spanish Roma. However, there is very little focus on discrimination and the immigrant population.

7.3. Indicators, data and statistics

Housing is one of the fields with the most quantitative data, thanks to two studies performed by the Fundación Secretariado Gitano in 1991 and 2007. This research indicates that, over the last two decades, the situation has improved significantly, with a reduction in the percentage of Roma living in precarious housing from 31% to 11.7%.¹⁰⁹ This percentage includes people living in very deteriorated conditions (6.8%), shacks and caves (3.9%), prefabricated or transitional housing (0.5%), mobile homes or caravans (0.3%) and buildings that were not intended to serve as residences.¹¹⁰ In addition, 5% live in segregated environments.¹¹¹ Comparing the results of both studies, we can see that the Romani population in slums has dropped from 10% in 1991 to 3.9% in 2007. This data allows us to see that a considerable improvement has taken place with regard to the situation of housing for Roma in recent years, however, there is little information available to help us compare the situation to that of the majority population, although data indicates that this is not a level playing field. An estimated 12% of people who live in informal settlements (slums) are Roma.¹¹² In addition, while less than 1%¹¹³ of the majority population lives in housing lacking basic services (such as running water, pipes or electricity), this percentage rises to 8.5% for Spanish citizens of Romani ethnicity.¹¹⁴ 17.3%¹¹⁵ of the majority population has humidity problems, however among Roma, this percentage rises to 45.7%.¹¹⁶ While 29.4% of residences occupied by Roma are overcrowded, this occurs among only 0.6% of the majority population.¹¹⁷

Except for a few cases reported in reports or the press, there is no information on the extent of eviction problems (which affect immigrant Roma as well as non-immigrant Roma) and discrimination in access to housing. The only information on this subject is from the FSG's annual report, which documents 36 cases of discrimination in the area of housing, for 10% of cases of discrimination documented in the period between 2009 and 2011.¹¹⁸ Most cases

¹⁰⁹Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2007), *Mapa Sobre Vivienda y Comunidad Gitana en España*, <http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/mapavivienda>.

¹¹⁰ Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2007) *Mapa Sobre Vivienda y Comunidad Gitana en España*, <http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/mapavivienda>.

¹¹¹ Fundación Secretariado Gitano, (2007) *Mapa Sobre Vivienda y Comunidad Gitana en España*, <http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/mapavivienda>.

¹¹² Recall that Roma constitute less than 2% of the total population in Spain. Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2007) *Mapa Sobre Vivienda y Comunidad Gitana en España*, <http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/mapavivienda>.

¹¹³ 2012 Spanish Strategy for Roma.

¹¹⁴Laparra, M. (coord.) (2011): *Diagnóstico social de la comunidad gitana en España; Un análisis contrastado de la Encuesta del CIS a Hogares de Población Gitana 2007*. Madrid, Ministerio de Sanidad, Política Social e Igualdad.

¹¹⁵ Living Conditions Survey referenced in the 2012 Spanish Strategy for Roma.

¹¹⁶Laparra, M. (coord.) (2011): *Diagnóstico social de la comunidad gitana en España; Un análisis contrastado de la Encuesta del CIS a Hogares de Población Gitana 2007*. Madrid, Ministerio de Sanidad, Política Social e Igualdad.

¹¹⁷Laparra, M. (coord.) (2011): *Diagnóstico social de la comunidad gitana en España; Un análisis contrastado de la Encuesta del CIS a Hogares de Población Gitana 2007*. Madrid, Ministerio de Sanidad, Política Social e Igualdad.

¹¹⁸Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2009, 2010 and 2011), *Informe sobre discriminación y comunidad gitana*, <http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/discriminacion09/>,

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

concerned discrimination in access to rental housing, followed by threats or complaints from neighbours to prevent Romani families from moving to a certain area, or asking them to leave.

There is little information on the situation of immigrant Roma from Eastern Europe, however the RAVEN report from the Agency for Fundamental Rights recognises that this population experiences the worst conditions of housing exclusion in Spain.¹¹⁹ This exclusion occurs among people who live in rented flats as well as those who live in camps where overcrowding, poor housing conditions and the lack of basic services are commonplace.

7.4. Causes of the situation and the relationship of a chosen project or plan

Housing policy in Spain has been characterised by positive but limited support for social integration; although, in practice, it has promoted social housing, this promotion has not been enough. In addition, a large part of the construction of housing has been left to a market that is strongly susceptible to speculation. This has resulted in a number of barriers for families in situations of social exclusion, which includes unaffordable housing, insufficient social housing and lack of social housing rentals.

Attempts to overcome these barriers have been made through access to social benefits, including the Minimum Social Insertion Income (*Rental Mínima de Inserción Social / RIM*) and the initiatives of municipal or regional governments, frequently with the support of NGOs, to improve the situation. These initiatives generally aim or even improve the environment through the rehabilitation of deteriorated areas, or relocate the slum population or those living in substandard housing. This study analysed an example of each: the Comprehensive Plan of the South Polygon in Seville (*Plan Integral del Polígono Sur en Sevilla*) and the Alquiler Housing Programme for Social Integration (*Programa de Vivienda de Alquiler de Integración Social / VAIS*) in Navarra.¹²⁰

VAIS is a good programme as it offers highly subsidized housing to families in situations of exclusion (many of them Roma) and, combined with the RMI, has contributed to the material improvement of beneficiary families. This has allowed them access to any residential area that they desire (if they have a lease offer) and high quality properties, promoting quick residential integration. The problem with this type of project is that only in rare cases is integration achieved beyond full access to services and social aid, generating a situation of dependency. In the case of VAIS, examples of beneficiaries who achieved access to employment on their own or self-employment are very limited and, although we must acknowledge that this programme is very young, this problem has already been documented in other initiatives, such as the IRIS, which has been running for many years.¹²¹ The economic crisis and associated cuts in social spending¹²² provide a test, seeing how far integration policies have gone in reaching their objectives, especially in consideration of the fact that these cuts come at a time of high unemployment, which makes access to the labour market even more difficult.

A percentage of the Romani population can access the housing market on their own, without financial support, however, many of them face the barrier of discrimination. The FSG reports

<http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/discriminacion10/> and
http://www.gitanos.org/upload/90/06/Discriminacion_FSG_2011.pdf.

¹¹⁹ http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/RAXEN-Roma%20Housing-Spain_en.pdf.

¹²⁰ See Annex 1.

¹²¹ See Nogués, I. (2010): *Exclusión residencial y políticas públicas. El caso de la minoría gitana en Madrid, (1986-2006)*, Universidad de Granada, <http://digibug.ugr.es/bitstream/10481/4944/1/18684993.pdf>.

¹²² In the state budget the Ministry of Development has experienced the second largest reduction (34.6%) of all ministries. EFE Agency, *Montoro presenta sus recetas para combatir el 'alto endeudamiento'*, *El Mundo*, <http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2012/04/03/espana/1333412237.html>.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

detail cases in which people of Romani ethnicity were unable to rent apartments or were harassed by neighbours and authorities to not move to certain areas. However, the initiatives to combat this type of discrimination in Spain (despite the fact that the legal and institutional instruments are adequate) are practically nonexistent.

VIII. Discrimination

When the 1978 Spanish Constitution entered into force, Roma stood, in the eyes of the law, equal to every other citizen. Recall that in previous times, even recent times, there were laws – such as the social danger law of 1970 – that considered Roma subjects to be monitored.

However, despite the provisions of specific articles of the Spanish Constitution (articles 1.1, 9.2, 14) and the principle of non-discrimination recognised in several international and European laws, which are part of the Spanish legal system, and despite the transposition of Directive 2000/43 (relative to the application of the principle of equal treatment of persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin), with law 62/2003 of 30 December, fiscal measures, administrative measures and social measures, as documented in this report, Roma are the group most discriminated against in Spain.

In various interviews conducted with Roma, with regard to other fields of inquiry, we asked the respondents if they felt discriminated against, for being Roma, in their places of work or study, or during the job search, as some surveys have also sought to study. The responses received leave no doubt. Discriminatory attitudes towards Roma seem to still be alive in broad sectors of the population. 45.4% of people interviewed by the **Roma Employment and Population Study** (*Estudio Población Gitana y Empleo*)¹²³, performed by the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, said they felt discriminated against at some point in the employment process. This ratio means that about 215,000 Roma have directly suffered from discrimination during the job search or even in the workplace. A third of employed Roma spontaneously expressed the fact that being Roma was a reason why they were unemployed.

According to all opinion surveys,¹²⁴ Roma are one of the least valued social groups, as proven by the CIS barometer from November 2005,¹²⁵ which found that one in every four Spanish citizens would not want their children to share the classroom with Romani students, or that over 40% of Spanish citizens would feel very or somewhat disturbed if they had Romani neighbours.

On the other hand, the FSG's Discrimination and the Romani Community (*Discriminación y Comunidad Gitana*) reports collect complaints of discrimination in the fields of employment, housing, health, healthcare services, goods and general services, justice, police, and the media.

More than profuse is data on discrimination detailing the proportion of Roma who have felt marginalised in different areas and at different times: 5% (about 24,000) have felt discriminated against both where they worked or studied, as well as when they sought work and in the workplace, when they found work.

The groups who feel the effects of discrimination in particular are:

- Young men seeking working or where they work (60%);
- 19% of youth between ages 16 and 19, where they study or studied;
- The unemployed, when they worked or while seeking work (83%);

¹²³ <http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/estudioempleo/estudioempleo/index.html>.

¹²⁴ See special Eurobarometros on discrimination in Spain.

¹²⁵ <http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/discriminacion06/igualdad.pdf>.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

- 63% of unskilled workers, where they work or while seeking work;
- 78% of those who have sought work in the past four weeks, either during the job search or in their former occupation.

Certain stereotypes and prejudice against Roma, which do not correspond to the daily reality for the majority of Roma, still persist in Spanish society. However, the problem is exacerbated as, during a time of crisis, rejection and discrimination worsen.

Despite all of this data, until recently, Spain has denied the existence of discrimination in Spain. Only in recent years has work begun on this issue, with the creation of the defunct Ministry of Equality, whose responsibilities have been assumed by the **Secretary of the State for Equality**¹²⁶ (*Secretaria de estado de igualdad*) which oversees the **General Directorate for Equality in Employment and Against Discrimination** (*Dirección General para la igualdad en el empleo y contra la discriminación*).

Recently, the **Council for the Promotion of Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination of Persons for Racial or Ethnic Origin**¹²⁷ (*Consejo para la promoción de la igualdad de trato y no discriminación de las personas por el origen racial o étnico*) was created. This council is the equality organ provided in Directive 2000/43, a creation we applaud, even if it is not an independent organ, nor can it provide legal assistance to victims, nor does it have a sufficient budget. Nevertheless, its creation is an advance that we consider to be very positive, as well as the network of assistance centres for victims of discrimination (which currently does not have a budget, which is unfortunate), as well as the creation of the **Spanish Observatory of Racism and Xenophobia** (*Observatorio español de Racismo y la xenofobia*),¹²⁸ which studies and analyses the situation, with the capacity to make proposals for action.

To date, there is no comprehensive or specific strategy for equality and non-discrimination, although we wish to point out the **Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration** (*Plan estratégico de Ciudadanía e Integración*).¹²⁹ The creation of two **specialised district attorney offices** (hate crimes and discrimination, created in October 2009) is also a positive advance.

Nevertheless, we believe that in terms of discrimination in Spain, we are just beginning, and need to work on the following issues:

- Collect statistical data: there is no data on acts of racism or discrimination, nor the application of legal provisions in any areas to combat discrimination;
- Train security and police officers, as well as all legal actors (judges, prosecutors, attorneys...) and NGO staff, who ultimately are the closest to the people who are discriminated against;
- Develop mechanisms to provide legal assistance to victims of discrimination, as currently this assistance is not provided;
- Promote projects such as the victim assistance network, which represents the beginning of work against discrimination in Spain;
- Revise the legislation on grounds for discrimination, especially the Penal Code, as articles such as Article 510 are unclear and are difficult to apply in practice;
- Awareness-raising campaigns to combat discrimination;
- Promote research that brings situations of discrimination to light, in order to combat discrimination.

¹²⁶ <http://www.seigualdad.gob.es/secretaria/portada/home.htm>.

¹²⁷ Created by the 1262/2007 Royal Decree of 21 September, under the provisions of Law 62/2003.

¹²⁸ www.oberaxe.es.

¹²⁹ http://extranjeros.empleo.gob.es/es/IntegracionRetorno/Plan_estrategico2011/.

IX. Conclusions and recommendations

We can now respond to the question this report began with: what have we learned from the policies of Roma development over the last twenty years? And to this end, it is necessary to begin with two other questions that guided the evaluation: Has the situation of Roma improved in the areas of intervention? And, secondly, has the gap with the rest of the Spanish population narrowed? Finally, can this progress be attributed to public policies, or is it the result of social change and general improvement in living standards? Our initial conclusions are the following:

Roma have **experienced major progress since the 1980s**. The processes of change have led to a “normalisation in poverty” for a large majority of the population, although there are Roma in sectors of the population that are more promoted and others – who constitute a third and perhaps more – below the limits of social exclusion. In general, change has been the result of social processes, such as intense demographic change; from the strength of the community itself in adapting to industrial and urban life, for example, with the expansion of peddling. However, this has also undeniably been produced through policies on health, housing, education, income transfer or employment. The nation’s welfare policies, created in Spain with a universal and sufficient character starting in the 1980s, have supported and helped boost the population in general and Roma in particular.

In absolute terms, these advances entail enormous changes: they span the distance that separates an illiterate person from someone who can read and write; a person who lives in a slum and another who lives in an apartment in the consolidated city; a person under social or political surveillance and another whose rights are protected.

However, with acknowledgment of this reality, **the differences in degree are still very serious, and what is worse, have appeared to stabilise over time**. In the social structure, Roma remain the poorest group, in surveys on racism they remain the most rejected group, in statistics on health, employment or education, they suffer from the least advantageous situations. We are overrepresented in all spaces of exclusion and precariousness (from the indicators on social exclusion to prison, from family or informal work to the most deteriorated neighbourhoods) and underrepresented in areas of social wealth or prestige (with the exception of the Flamenco arts).

There are fields, such as health, in which the free and universal policies have provided progress that has narrowed the gap as measured by infant mortality, lower life expectancy, illness among women, etc. There are other fields, such as housing, in which a large part of the progress was due to the policies to eradicate slums and supply social housing, however access to housing on the open rental or purchase market remains impossible for many new families. Social housing and basic incomes helped many households rise out of poverty, but these mechanisms have not inspired the changes needed to ensure that the following generation does not inherit this situation. In this manner, many Roma continue to be dependent on social policies.

Finally, there are policies that have clearly been insufficient: the educational situation is the most serious. Recall that for many parents who have never attended school, the fact that their children finish primary school is a major achievement. However, collectively, the gap that separates Roma from the rest of society has been maintained or even widened. Under the current social and economic conditions, a level of at least secondary education is the minimum for accessing employment opportunities, within the lowest and most precarious sector.

In the field of employment, all of the contradictions come to light: with low educational levels, a labour market with a high rate of temporary employment, strong discrimination against Roma and an economic crisis that destroys employment opportunities, possibilities for an independent life are limited, and this especially affects youth. Without employment, it is impossible to access

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

housing, which perpetuates dependency and forecasts serious processes of poverty and exclusion in the future.

The evaluation takes into account that there has not been a defined employment policy, able to consider the three sources of work common among this population: “protected” employment for those furthest from the labour market (social companies, public employment, self-employment or cooperatives with aid, etc.); flexible regulation of their own labour opportunities (basically peddling and scrap collection); support for the training and job placement for youth. Although there are projects, such as ACCEDER, which are designed precisely to provide this support, it is not enough, as the effort has to be inter-sectoral and start with education and professional training.

Following this summary, we can make recommendations. We will begin with general recommendations and then move on to the type of interventions and projects that the evaluation considers to be the most appropriate. The concrete recommendations by field are provided in Annex 3.

General recommendations

Once again, we denounce the **social inequality of Roma**. Without political will, it will not be possible to achieve more sustained progress. The 2020 National Strategy has clear and relevant objectives, however it is at risk of falling victim to what has happened in the plans analysed: without adequate funding and without the capacity to influence the government – the different ministries and autonomous regions – it will sustain the visibility of a Romani policy and undoubtedly perform some interesting projects, but will not bring about the anticipated changes.¹³⁰

To improve the situation of Roma, a **fundamental or comprehensive policy covering all sectoral areas** – planning and housing, employment, health, education, social intervention – is needed, with a sufficient and sustained budget, and confirmation of results. There is no need to recall the objectives of these policies, since they are basically in the national strategy and can be summarized as narrowing the gap with the rest of the population. Significant progress has been made with the general inclusion policies, which take into consideration initial inequalities (based on gender, generation, ethnicity or nationality, income), as these policies are redistributive and compensatory. This means that beyond ensuring truly public access to education, healthcare or housing, something else must be done.

Bring goods or services to those who are furthest removed. This means working in a different manner from the government, with local and participative projects that create bridges with the poorest neighbourhoods and people. The cases analysed provide good examples (Annex 1), however, in employment, education and housing seminars, many proposals were made (Annex 3). An inclusive employment policy, for example, must consider actions to facilitate the occupation or professional training of Roma, making conditions of access more flexible, reserving time, etc.

Given the youth of this population and the importance of education in social cohesion and mobility, we believe that **the cornerstone is education**. It is essential to provide a large amount of support for education: offer free early childhood education to all, starting with vulnerable neighbourhoods; change the educational model for primary and secondary schooling to support the learning processes of all students;¹³¹ improve educational levels through literacy programs for adults; professional training for young adults (with bridges: many have not completed

¹³⁰ There is now talk of severe cuts in items that, as noted, are already insufficient.

¹³¹ This refers to fundamental changes throughout the Spanish school system, faced with serious problems of school failure and early dropouts.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

secondary school; provide ongoing support for children. We cannot afford to leave another generation waiting.

Finally, we believe that **there must be a general Roma strategy or development policy**, with strong participation from Romani organisations, an adequate budget and influence. However, its content must be modified, correcting the problems related to development in the past. While keeping the IRPF grant for projects led by non-profit organisations, which are close to the population and local area, **the government budget must increase its impact**.

It is fundamental that each ministry and council performs its duties to achieve the plan or strategy objectives. It would be very helpful if the projects that have been proven to be successful were adopted by the relevant authorities, of whatever level of government, and transformed into part of the general policies. The cases that we analysed in this evaluation – learning communities, or projects to train health agents – can provide examples for this type of action. To this end, it is fundamental to use EU funding, helping organisations with the difficult tasks of accounting and management that EU funding requires.

Therefore, **political will, interventions from all public policies, a clearly defined development policy, budget and focus on education** are the general recommendations.

Conditions for successful interventions: new social management methods.

The evaluation also showed that it is necessary to work in a different manner, or at least change the methods that have not worked in the past. The most relevant recommendations are listed below:

- Policies **must be structural**, change living or employment conditions, and not be individualised or focused on providing assistance. This does not mean that they should not provide assistance or public aid, but rather that the focus should be placed on the structural situation, not on problems of the individual or family. This is the only way to decrease dependency and avoid stigmatising the population. For example, it is much cheaper to allow peddling under flexible and adapted conditions, than to maintain hundreds of families on basic income. Another example: provide a general social housing policy that eradicates new forms of slums or overcrowding.
- **Time needed for each positive action.** Some change must be considered from a generational perspective and may take 15 years, such as a radical change in a community's educational situation. However, eradicating slum settlements does not require 20 years, as shown in Madrid, nor does it take that long to generate structures that perpetuate themselves. Above all, the generational theme should be taken into consideration as regards the necessity to economically sustain a family with no source of income, while ensuring that the family's children and grandchildren do not end up in the same situation.
- **Modulate solutions:** the problem of many policies that are intended "for Roma" is that they treat everyone the same. Children who are in very different situations are provided the same resources in remedial education classrooms; families in very different situations receive the same housing offers, while some are looking to purchase property and others need rental assistance, etc. Such an evolving population requires a wider and more mixed range of solutions.
- **Work for the entire population:** some policies are of a general nature and affect Roma because they are the poorest; in other cases, there are no specific policies, for the promotion of culture, the struggle against prejudice or special situations, such as the

case of “ghetto” schools; however, always, the best projects are open and do not “minimise” problems. In fact, good projects must be socially desirable, admirable and non-stigmatising. Using social action to create prestige is fundamental; only this can prevent the disaffection of the middle class (from public education or health).

- **The government must be involved in these projects.** It is not the responsibility of NGOs to achieve health or employment equality, although having them in the social fabric is essential for reaching these objectives. The most interesting projects reviewed start with participation in the relevant areas and seek inter-sectoral agreement, over different geographic divisions. Although these are pioneering and non-mainstream methods of working, nothing in their nature requires them to remain so: the RIU working method should provide the general structure for health work in neighbourhoods; learning communities should be used as the general model for public education, etc.
- It is fundamental that projects **are sustainable over time, with stable teams.** Many of the results of ACCEDER are due to the FSE’s funding, over six-year periods that are renewable and are able to provide stability to people who work, learn and correct errors. Social action today is subject to annual projects, a lack of long-term vision, and the precarious status of staff, which makes learning within organisations very difficult.
- **Participation of the people in question.** To this end, the projects reviewed with the most potential are “bottom-up” projects, which do not define the areas of intervention by their problems or risks, but by their resources and assets. These projects all empower people to improve their lives, whether in processes of urbanism or through training health agents. In particular, use the potential of Romani women, without exploiting them, instead providing them with prestige, time, help with childcare, or money, depending on the type of action requested. This working method, based on co-responsibility, is also a guarantee for controlling a growing demand: citizens assume their share of the work and generate their own resources, which do not create any new costs for the state.
- **Work locally.** As much as these issues may be treated by subject area, life takes place in real social spaces, and poverty and exclusion are phenomena that are clearly expressed in a local area. Towns, neighbourhoods and districts provide spaces for working in a coordinated and cross-sectional manner, without placing barriers between problems and solutions that are linked. The best projects have a comprehensive and participative dimension, and are based locally. Urbanism is, in this sense, a very powerful tool – a way of breaking the city or weaving it together, using equipment and investments, environmental quality or the care of public spaces – are highly integrative elements that usually are not considered when discussing “social” policies.
- **Generate resources.** The best employment projects are those that generate employment, clearly, through social enterprises, seeking new market niches, supporting entrepreneurs, etc. However, health prevention is also based on the human resources found within neighbourhoods, natural leaders who transmit and diffuse health education. Any urban or housing policy relies on residents, their capacity to improve their neighbourhood if treated well and given a sense of pride, which is achieved by allowing them to participate in the design and maintenance of their environments.

Ultimately, it is necessary to use interventions with Roma and their non-Romani neighbours to change the philosophy and management of targeted areas, seeking more democratic methods to treat citizens as responsible agents who can be entrusted with public action.

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ANNEX 1: Case Studies

Education: case 1

TITLE: Siklavipen savoreza, “Education for all” (*Educación con todos*).

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION: Peret Closas Foundation, President Domingo:
Montaño.cultura@fundaciopereclosa.org.

Contact: Miguel Angel Falconetti

PROGRAMME DURATION: The programme has been in place since 1998. It is located in several areas of Catalonia: Hospitalet; San Adrià - La Mina; Badalona-Sur. The target group is school students in the first and second grades.

FINANCING AND BUDGET: The budget is approximately one million Euro, with various contributions.

RESOURCES: Peret Closas Foundation staff and 14 school promoters throughout Catalonia.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES: School-age Romani students.

THEMATIC AREA: Education.

ACTORS INVOLVED: Activities are performed through this programme in collaboration with the Department of Education of the Catalan Parliament, and in coordination with schools and community centres. It is expected that all institutions with proximity to students coordinate together. Other NGOs, such as the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, also collaborate.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE AND SITUATION: This project works on three levels to achieve academic success:

- With students, through local academic support, providing tutoring in community centres;
- With teachers, who continually coordinate with the programme, the curriculum is reviewed. The same methodology is used in the tutoring programme as in the classroom;
- With families. The programme works with families to raise awareness on the importance of education for their children. Work begins during the first school year.

One educator or mediator accomplishes these tasks. Since this programme began, students have already gone on to training programmes and university education.

Furthermore, the programme includes a team of experts (Roma) who act as references. For example, a Romani engineer in mathematics classes in the Mina neighbourhood.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: Academic success.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

ACTIVITIES: Those described above:

- academic support;
- extracurricular activities;
- awareness raising among parents;
- coordination and work with teachers...

RESULTS: Students stay in school longer and access university education.

IMPACT: The most significant and gratifying impact of this programme is that Romani students have already been able to access training courses and university education.

DIFFICULTIES: There are difficulties on all levels. As the programme works with families, children and schools, resistance is encountered on all levels.

Romani promoters are essential for working with families and children, as the promoters help break barriers and, with regard to schools, the commitment of the educational institution has allowed schools to take on this task.

EVALUATION: The educational administration's participation is very important, as it is responsible for education. The programme is easily transmissible if the institutions that must, necessarily, be involved for the development of the project, agree to a collaboration: schools, the Department of Education, community centres.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The government's involvement is fundamental to overcoming the educational inequalities faced by Romani children. From our analysis of this project, since the school promoters are integrated into the educational system, they integrate into the school and have access to the local inspectors and, in sum, are much more effective.

Education: case 2

TITLE: Learning Communities (*Comunidades de aprendizaje*).

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION: CREA; The Research Centre for Theories and Practices to Overcome Inequalities (*Centro de Investigación en Teorías y Prácticas Superadoras de Desigualdades*); Albolafia public school.

PROGRAMME DURATION: The first Learning Community was created in 1978 with the La Verneda Sant Martí adult education centre. Over the years, the CREA studied how to develop this perspective for educational success for all students in early childhood, primary and secondary education, and offered its findings disinterestedly to anyone interested in implementing this perspective. In 1995, transformation of primary and secondary schools began, then schools of all stages were added. The school visited began the Learning Community programme during the 2010-2011 school year.

FINANCING AND BUDGET: Cost: 0. The school's resources and resources from the local community are used.

RESOURCES: Those already available in each local community.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES: Students, family members, volunteers, members of the community (organisations and associations from the local community) in the 106 Learning Communities currently in operation.

THEMATIC AREA: Education

ACTORS INVOLVED: Students, teachers, family members, volunteers, members of organisations and associations from the local community.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE AND SITUATION: Schools transformed into Learning Communities are improving their academic results, reducing absenteeism and dropout rates and improving social harmony. These communities (students, families, volunteers, community members) work together to apply the practices for educational success, which have provided proof of improvement wherever they have applied, backed up by the international scientific community. Thus, schools as Learning Communities transform the learning context by implementing actions that scientific research has shown lead to the best results, using the same resources. Teacher training Learning Communities is based on the theories and practices that have proven to be successful, backed up by the international scientific community.

There are 106 schools operating as Learning Communities.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: Improve academic results for all students, and achieve educational success for everyone. Improve social relations and promote social cohesion.

ACTIVITIES: Implementation of actions for educational success based on evidence backed up by the international scientific community, which include:

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

- Interactive groups;
- Dialogue-based reading groups;
- Training of family members;
- Tutoring library;
- Dialogue-based reading.

RESULTS: Results can be seen through the INCLUDE-ED Project¹³²: Absenteeism has decreased considerably, the instrumental skills of students have improved, student enrolment has increased instead of decreasing... families are more involved in education.

IMPACT: As shown by the data provided by INCLUDE-ED and the data provided by schools, Learning Communities reduce dropout rates, so that students are more likely to continue their education and increase their learning (high expectations, inclusion in all groups, extension of time for learning, etc.); as well as increase the academic level of all children.

Several resolutions have been passed by the European Commission and the Council of Europe, which recommend schools use learning communities to lower dropout rates in Europe and thus achieve the objectives set in the 2020 European Strategy:

- Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the social dimension of education and training (2010/C 135/02);
- Communication from the EC (January 2011): Tackling early school leaving: A key contribution to the Europe 2020 Agenda;
- Council of the European Union: Council recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving (7 June 2011) (10544/11) (EDUC 100 / SOC 424);

DIFFICULTIES: Resistance from teachers who are not accustomed to this type of instruction.

EVALUATION: Evidence provided by scientific research backed up by the international scientific community confirm the success of Learning Communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Base teacher training on the theories and practices that have proven to be successful by the international scientific community.

¹³² *INCLUD-ED, Strategies for inclusion and social cohesion in Europe from education (2006-2011)* is the only Integrated Project for Framework Programmes of the European Commission on school education. This research on school education has received the most resources and has the widest scientific range of all educational research ever funded in Europe.

Employment: case 3

TITLE: ACCEDER, Multi-regional Operational Programme for Combating Discrimination (*Programa Operativo Plurirregional de Lucha contra la Discriminación*): initiatives directed towards the Romani population.

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION:

Name: Fundación Secretariado Gitano

Contact person: José Sánchez Serrano

Type of organisation: Non-profit organisation

C/ Ahijones, s/n

28018 Madrid Tel: 91 422 09 60 Fax: 91 422 09 61

Email: acceder@gitanos.org

www.gitanos.org

PROGRAMME DURATION: 2000 – 2006 and 2007-2013. Data refers to the first period, for which a complete evaluation exists.

COUNTRY: Spain

FINANCING AND BUDGET: For the first period, 2000-2007, €57,420,490 from the ESF and public authorities from the local, regional and state levels, as well as support from the private sector. FEDER funds, €7,312,308, supplemented the funding of the Operational Programme.

RESOURCES: 48 locations in 13 autonomous regions and 260 employees.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES: The Roma and the non-Romani population, with preference to Roma.

THEMATIC AREA: Social inclusion and employment.

ACTORS INVOLVED: Central government, governments of the autonomous regions, local government, businesses, the FSG.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE AND SITUATION: A significant proportion of the Romani population experiences major difficulties in accessing employment and professional training opportunities, a problem which is a major cause of social exclusion and inequality. Working with Roma is complex, due to the multitude of problems this group faces. The program aims to progressively make a significant improvement in the living conditions of Roma, placing employment insertion as a priority in order to promote social integration, through providing support for employability and eliminating barriers in accessing training and paid employment opportunities. Over the years, a new intervention model has been implemented which provides a comprehensive approach to users, materialising support through actions

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

directed at access to employment opportunities, access to training opportunities and promotion of social relations. Coordination with public and private institutions is key to a successful intervention.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

- Provide access to Roma in the ordinary labour market;
- Adapt professional qualification and training processes to market demands;
- Bring training and employment services closer to unemployed Roma;
- Raise awareness about prejudice and discrimination faced by this group;
- Diffuse more pro-active policies directed towards Roma.

ACTIVITIES: The programme uses an innovative method to promote the professional inclusion of Roma, based on specificity and flexibility, given that many Roma need more time and additional support, as for some, employment in the short or medium term is unattainable. The programme shows that providing personalised support and taking into account different needs can provide successful results in the process of employment and social insertion. Major actions include: the creation of individual employment guidance itineraries, counselling, training and monitoring, supplemented with market prospecting, job placement and promotion of pro-active policies directed towards this group.

RESULTS:

- Number of persons served by the programme: 35,304. 70% of Romani ethnicity and similar proportions of men and women;
- Number of jobs obtained: 26,014, 70% Roma;
- Number of people hired: 12,145. 70% Roma. Ratio of hiring: 37% men and 33% women. Most people employed were youth (57% total);
- Number of persons trained: 13,902 (81% Roma and 57% women). 7,204 trained by the Foundation;
- Number of people who found their first job: 3,227 and 26% of all contracts. For 30% of the Roma employed, the programme helped them access their first job. 55% of this group are women;
- Collective agreements signed with administrations: 183;
- Collective agreements signed with businesses: 350.

IMPACT: The programme's positive impacts include a change in mentality regarding access to employment for Roma, both among Roma as well as public administrations, the business community and society in general; an increase in professional qualification and training; successful individual job placement itineraries, shown through employment rates and improvement of basic social skills, which impact a better standard of living and better employment opportunities, as well as more active participation in society.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

DIFFICULTIES: Roma continue to access the most precarious, low-skilled and temporary jobs. The programme's major weakness comes from its own negative indicators (labour shortage, precarious employment, low educational and training level) which changes and keeps Roma as an at-risk group, the first to feel the effects of the economic crisis.

EVALUATION: Until this programme was developed, there were no specific actions performed with the Romani population, with the exception of welfare and other resources and support, thus the specific attention given to this group in active employment policies was essential in order to mitigate and/or overcome the barriers which Roma face in accessing resources and services under equal conditions. Thus it also supports the incorporation of "Romani" policies into general policies. In this initiative, a key role was played by the professional teams, Roma and non-Roma, responsible for the programme's implementation, whose approach required a deep understanding of the needs and problems faced by the Romani community. The emphasis placed on education and training to improve professional skills and access to paid employment opportunities shows how people with gaps in training and education can come to value the importance of training and its relationship to accessing employment opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Sustained backing and economic support to meet the needs of extended intervention processes that must support stable professional teams and continuing projects, not in one-off actions. Investigate new lines of intervention to promote access to quality employment and help alleviate the difficulties that Roma still suffer from in normal employment insertion.

Employment: case 4

TITLE: SURGE and SUPLA, S.L.

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION: *Encuentro en la calle* ('Meeting in the street').

PROGRAMME DURATION: From 1990 to present.

FINANCING AND BUDGET:

RESOURCES: 48 sites in 13 autonomous regions and 260 employees.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES: The general population – Roma and non-Roma – of three vulnerable neighbourhoods in Cordoba: Torremolinos, Guadalquivir and Palmeras.

THEMATIC AREA: Social inclusion and employment.

ACTORS INVOLVED: The regional government of Andalusia, EQUAL projects, European Social Fund.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE AND SITUATION: The aforementioned neighbourhoods are areas in need of social transformation, integrated into the urban network of Cordoba, with, however, serious deficiencies, social, urban and housing problems: high school dropout rates, unemployment, overcrowding and poverty. *Encuentro en la calle*, starting with a philosophy of social transformation and criticism, has spent twenty years working on different projects, using a grassroots approach within the neighbourhood and in response to multiple needs: educational, lifestyle, training and employment.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: Combat the causes of social exclusion within the local area:

- Use prevention criteria and support social values among children and youth;
- Strengthen the role of women, as an element of cohesion and progress;
- Guide the population to the social, employment, educational, healthcare and housing resources to enable the inclusion process;
- Generate social, educational and employment resources to complement other resources;
- Promote and care for the elderly, the disabled or people in a situation of dependency;
- Serve and support people who experience discrimination.

ACTIVITIES: The programme is based on social-family actions through street educators and family educators. It works to promote healthy habits, recreational workshops for children and youth, the education of children and their continuance to secondary school, psychological support for women, etc. In the field of employment, it offers various and integrated services: a guidance and employment centre that is part of the Andalusia Orienta network, a centre that provides public access to internet and training in new technologies, professional training courses, etc. In terms of guidance, it offers training, internal as well as externally, and insertion,

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

through itineraries, support, professional experience, etc. In addition to guiding users to regular companies, it has formed its own insertion company, SUPLA S.L., which generates jobs and offers internships.

RESULTS: Recall that the organisation works in multiple dimensions, not just in the field of employment. The data is from 1999 to 2010.

- Social – family actions have been performed with 2,563 families;
- Workshops have been attended by 274 women and 52 men;
- 5,093 people have attended career counselling, which has led to 2,027 hires;
- 305 people have participated in training courses;
- The SUPLA company has, since its creation, hired 729 people.

IMPACT: The organisation's work is based on its knowledge of the neighbourhood and personal relationships that have been established between educators and residents. Secondly, the organisation bases its work on the creation of complementary programmes. In this way, the programme has led to contracts and job placements, however, above all, it is a resource available to the neighbourhood, especially the women of the neighbourhood, who can express their needs, participate, for example in the education of their children, and attend different courses and workshops. It has generated its own resource which is also changing. The SUPLA company began when there was a market for cleaning services, but is increasingly moving towards nursery schools, offering childcare assistant profiles which may open doors to the youth of the neighbourhood.

DIFFICULTIES: The complexity of the processes of exclusion, the labour market itself, but, above all, the insufficient support of the government, which has made cuts in social policies.

EVALUATION: The most interesting aspect of this experience is its democratic, local and comprehensive nature. This is a programme based on a thorough understanding of a neighbourhood and its problems, modelled as a response to concrete needs, with a vocation for social transformation and personal relations; it does not just offer technically predefined service or resources. Hence, its ability for learning and change. Virtues of this programme include the fact that it does not consider employment as an isolated issue, and its vocation to empower people, especially women, offering resources without judgment or pressure from above.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Sustained backing and economic support to meet the needs of extended intervention processes that must support stable professional teams and continuing projects, not in one-off actions. Investigate new lines of intervention to promote the comprehensive nature of the actions: healthcare, employment, housing and education, as dimensions of the same problem of social exclusion.

Health: case 5

TITLE: RIU Project.

INSTITUTION: Public Health Centres of Alzira and Valencia; Public Health Research Centre (*Centro Superior de investigación en salud pública / CSISP*).

PROGRAMME DURATION: From 2006 to present.

ANNUAL BUDGET: 33,360 Euro.

FUNDING: NHS Quality Agency and the Women's Health Observatory of the Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality; Alzira Public Health Centre; City of Algemesi; CSISP; *Ribera Salut* and the Commonwealth of Ribera Alta.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES: The general population in the selected neighbourhoods of Algemesi (Raval) and Alzira (L'Alquerieta). In these neighbourhoods, a significant part of the population is Roma.

THEMATIC AREA: Health.

ACTORS INVOLVED: Public Health of Valencia and Alzira, Cities of Algemesí and Alzira, CSISP, Universities of Valencia and Alicante, etc.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE AND SITUATION: This project was initiated by the public health centres of Valencia and Alzira, in cooperation with other agencies, to improve healthcare and relations with the health system for the population that lives in vulnerable neighbourhoods of the region. It is based on an assessment: the poor state of health and wellbeing among populations that live in areas with problems of poverty, housing, urban deterioration and gaps in public services and facilities, as well as residential or social segregation or exclusion. It is supported by the capacity of these people to enact changes in their situations, through training and participation in defining their living and health conditions.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: Promote better health in vulnerable neighbourhoods through increased accessibility and better use of health services, bringing together the population and health professionals. The programme uses the method of working as a network, and training people from different cultures to be health agents.

Demonstrate that it is possible to convert vulnerable urban spaces into areas of innovation for the general health system.

ACTIVITIES: The RIU model is a bottom-up project that follows a nine-month cycle. It begins with the political and technical agreement of key players around the chosen neighbourhood: then, residents are chosen – a majority of women, but also men – based on a community leadership profile: these people are trained and qualified as health agents, through guided tours to health services and 70-hour courses, as well as participatory group techniques; once trained, agents act in the community through meaningful conversations and workshops to diffuse information, create networks, appear in local media, etc. In addition to raising awareness,

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

meetings are held weekly to plan activities and reflect upon the tasks performed. Health agents decide which actions will be performed in their neighbourhood. Finally, the results and impact are evaluated before beginning a new cycle, introducing changes as necessary.

RESULTS: The evaluation identified changes among the people who participated and their social network, empowerment, better access and proper use of health services and closer relationships between the professionals and the population. In addition, the structure created allows for the creation of mixed groups of research action on relevant themes: the national sexual and reproductive health strategy and the promotion of equality between men and women, as well as the prevention of gender-based violence.

IMPACT: Through the process of training and action, a spiral was created that amplifies results and reaches new actors. It provides power and pride to participants, often women with natural leadership abilities but neither previous training nor recognised social power.

It generates networks and cooperation between a variety of actors who beforehand had not worked together: men and women, people of various nationalities, Roma and non-Roma, health professionals and users. It demonstrates that the health system can learn from and innovate in vulnerable neighbourhoods, and that technical and professional work can improve in collaboration with citizens, learning new forms of inter-sectorial management.

The project uses health as a cross-sectional theme to improve other dimensions: relationships between men and women and gender-based violence, the urban environment and access to citizenship, relationships between residents, the needs for facilities in the neighbourhood, etc.

In this way, the process remains open to new initiatives based on the mobilisation and dynamisation of assets, directed towards themes of local development, employment, housing and education.

EVALUATION: The essence of the project is the practice itself, action and experimentation, demonstrating that an innovative project can be applied in a complex environment. This is a bottom-up model that places the people at its centre, and aims to impact their social network and local environment. It discovers the potential of residents and promotes and channels this potential, working to transform people from passive users to active agents, who challenge the health system. People who were previously invisible become leaders and promote change in their environments. In turn, the same technical system and professionals learn to work in collaboration with the population, move closer to their reality and begin processes of learning in a network with other local resources. The network thus created can then be used for other interventions and changes: for example, the *RIU Violeta* is a project for reflection and action on gender-based violence, based on the group of agents and with the research-action method already tested on other issues.

DIFFICULTIES: This is a project that needs time, committed and dedicated staff, and flexibility in order to correct and test ideas. It works in a different than usual method, with a bottom-up, non-bureaucratic method, and to this end requires political and academic support, many conversations and training with residents, health professionals and other actors. The biggest difficulties were not found within the population served so much as the structure of the health services, the mentalities and methods of management: the healthcare system usually works on an individual basis, not as a community, in which professionals often feel pressured by demand,

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

and tend to narrow the areas of responsibility instead of coordinating with other resources. There is no confidence in the capacity of people to help solve their problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The essential recommendation is to provide support and resources so that the programme can realise its potential and spread to other populations or neighbourhoods while, at the same time, respecting its methodological rigour and bottom-up philosophy.

Health: case 6

TITLE: Comprehensive Plan to Improve Public Health in Vallecas (*Plan Integral de Mejora de Salud Pública en Vallecas*).

INSTITUTION: Public Health Institution of Area 1; Ministry of Health and Consumption of the Community of Madrid.

PROGRAMME DURATION: 2001-2005.

ANNUAL BUDGET: 1,800,000 Euro.

FUNDING: Community of Madrid.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES: The total population of Health Area 1, which includes the districts of Vallecas and the 20 rural municipalities in the region. There is a large Romani population living in the neighbourhood, in both the consolidated city as well as slum settlements.

THEMATIC AREA: Health.

ACTORS INVOLVED: Public Health of Madrid; primary care centres of Vallecas; mental health services; municipal social services; the education council; schools, neighbourhood associations coordinator of Vallecas; the Red Cross; immigrant organisations and others.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE AND SITUATION: In 2000, the government of the Community of Madrid and the resident associations agreed upon an 108 million Euro investment plan for the 2001-2005 period, to be invested in various fields (education, youth, healthcare, etc.) in the municipal districts of Puente and the City of Vallecas. This was intended to offset the inequalities in a neighbourhood with a large population – over 300,000 residents – and affected by inequality in different areas: a low socioeconomic level, lack of facilities, 15% of foreign-born population, slum settlements with 4,500 residents.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: Reduce health inequalities between residents of Vallecas with respect to other areas of Madrid. Specific objectives include:

- Improve knowledge of the population's health, risks and needs;
- Strengthen and implement health promotion and prevention activities;
- Study and control health and environmental risk factors;
- Improve living conditions for particularly vulnerable groups and populations at risk of exclusion.

ACTIVITIES: The plan began with a study on health status and determinants for health, comparing indicators with indicators from the Madrid population to detect health inequalities. There was a higher rate of elderly dependency, lower per-capita income, more illiteracy, lower life expectancy, higher general and premature mortality, higher tobacco consumption, obesity, etc. Strategic lines were identified through the analysis and directed towards youth, elderly and

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

the population experiencing difficulties, in the areas of environment, nutrition, healthy habits, etc. Throughout the studies, communication actions, programmes (“healthy breakfast”, volunteering “helps the elderly”, etc.). All actions were defined with the participation of local associations and other neighbourhood resources.

RESULTS: Improved knowledge of the situation based on demographic and epidemiological indicators, as well as the needs and risks perceived by the population.

Identification of and intervention concerning environmental and nutritional risks.

Analysis and development of specific actions to promote health directed at youth, in terms of nutrition, sexuality, drugs, etc.

Strengthening volunteer activity, mutual assistance and other activities directed towards vulnerable elderly residents. There is the example of women who were frequent users of the health centre, where a group for information and mutual assistance was formed that later became an association.

Activities to diffuse the plan.

IMPACT: The impact on health is difficult to measure, as it takes place over the long-term. However there is an immediate impact on the understanding of health and working: working as a network, intra- and inter-institutional coordination, active and real citizen participation. In addition there was also an increase in knowledge of health status and illness among the population and in particular regarding access to the health system for the slum population, mostly Roma.

EVALUATION: The comprehensive plan provides a model for how to work on health in the local area: in a coordinated fashion with all of the resources, placing emphasis on understanding the local reality, with investments to compensate for inequalities and with social participation. At the same time, the plan also shows the limitations of one-off investments: without a real desire to change management and working methods, the improvements will not last over time. When the plan ended, the eight professionals were reduced to two, who continue working with few resources and little visibility.

DIFFICULTIES: In areas with large populations, changes in health are not visible nor can they be measured, they must be evaluated qualitatively with ad-hoc indicators. At the same time, the major challenge is how to manage and understand health, the relationship between technical knowledge and people, how to empower users and transform them into agents.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The essential recommendation is to change the way the health system works, correcting a system of managing an ever-growing demand, giving more power, participation and responsibility to the citizens and relying on the most marginalised neighbourhoods to innovate management methods.

Housing: case 7

TITLE: Rental Housing for Social Integration Programme (*Programa de Vivienda de Alquiler de Integración Social / VAIS*).

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION:

Name: Department of Housing and Regional Planning and the Department of Social Policy, Family, Youth and Sports.

Contact person: Tomas Gogorcena (Specialist in the Social Inclusion Department).

Type of organisation: Regional government of the autonomous region of Navarra.

Email: tgogorca@navarra.es

PROGRAMME DURATION: In operation since 2009.

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE: Autonomous region of Navarra.

FINANCING AND BUDGET: €35,2116,74 from the Department of Social Policy to support users through five collaborative associations for the 2009-2011 period.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES: Housing for people in a situation of exclusion, without prioritising any specific group.

THEMATIC AREA: Housing for social inclusion.

ACTORS INVOLVED: Department of Housing and Regional Planning and the Department of Social Policy, Family, Youth and Sports; Navarra Housing Limited Company (*Viviendas de Navarra Sociedad Anónima / VINSA*): a public organisation dependent on the Department of Housing; collaboration of ANAFE, Cáritas, La Majarí (the only Romani organisation), Santa Lucía Foundation, and Fundación Secretariado Gitano (pro-Roma organisation).

DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE AND SITUATION: When the Plan to Combat Social Exclusion in Navarra was implemented in 1998, one of the areas that was considered a priority was housing.¹³³ Also in 1998, a Social Inclusion and Housing Programme (*Programa de Vivienda e Integración Social / VIS*) was implemented to help families living in substandard housing to purchase homes. Until 2009, 40% of the beneficiaries of the VIS were Roma. The economic crisis made it very difficult to continue this programme, due to the lack of access to bank credit, which is an essential component of the VAIS. To respond to this new reality, in 2009, the VAIS was implemented. This programme was created to help those who cannot access the VIS, due to their income being too low to access bank credit.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: The objective of the VAIS is to support families with limited resources and difficulties in social integration acquire rental housing, supporting the

133

http://www.navarra.es/home_es/Gobierno+de+Navarra/Organigrama/Los+departamentos/Asuntos+Sociales+Familia+Juventud+y+Deporte/Publicaciones/Publicaciones+propias/Asuntos+Sociales/Eclusion+Social.htm#header1.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

aforementioned families in their access to the same. In addition, this programme supports residential integration.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Select beneficiary families with the support of collaborating associations, which already know the families. These associations can perform a pre-evaluation of the family's situation and help them collect the documentation needed to enter the programme. This pre-evaluation works so that few applications are rejected.
2. The Department of Social Policy checks that all of the legal requirements are met: three years of registration in Navarra, that they do not own other property and that income is less than one of the Multiple Effect on Index of Revenue (IPREM, *Indicador Público de Renta de Efectos Múltiples*).¹³⁴
3. An adequate house or flat that meets the VINSAs rental grant is sought and a five-year contract is signed. There is no need for a guarantee, but a deposit is requested. The collaborating organisations provide support for the 5 years of the contract duration (although after the first year the intensity of the support is reduced). The rental subsidy is 90 – 75% the first year, 50% the second year and 25% in subsequent years.

RESULTS: In 2009, 14 residences were negotiated, of which five were for Roma (35.7%); in 2010, 42, of which 22 were for Roma (52.3%); and 48 in 2011, 19 of which were for Roma (39.6%) Therefore during three years, 42.5% of housing was intended for Roma. Of the 23 beneficiaries managed by the FSG, 11 are single parent families headed by women, 2 are families of Romani origin.

IMPACT: As grantees are heavily subsidised during the first two years, families were able to access areas of Navarra where, generally, populations in situations of social exclusion do not live. This resulted in a very high degree of residential integration. To date there have not been any significant cases of social rejection of Romani families by neighbours (although there have been uncomfortable situations: for example, when neighbours call the owner of a property to tell them that the tenants are Roma, or statements made to social workers regarding whether there were any other places where the families could move).

Employees of the FSG affirm that improving housing conditions strengthens the work they perform against school absenteeism.

The vast majority of beneficiaries depend on the social inclusion allowance.¹³⁵ Despite the programme's good results, so far it has not resulted in beneficiaries improving their employment situation, creating a situation of dependency on aid and grants from the state.

EVALUATION: This programme, which extends from the VIS, enables improvements in a family's material situation as well as residential integration, in a radical way for families that cannot access the housing market. In this way, one can say that the VAIS is the result of proper rethinking of the housing policy for social integration, in consideration of the country's economic situation. However, the VIS contributes to creating a situation of dependency on

¹³⁴ €532.51 in 2012, see: <http://www.iprem.com.es/>.

¹³⁵ http://www.navarra.es/home_es/Servicios/ficha/2468/Renta-basica.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?

social aid. This is a major concern, as the economic crisis has led to cuts in social spending. As a result, there seems to be an increase in rejections of applications for the social integration allowance. Some of these families have spent many years living on this income and now are facing major difficulties in finding employment, due to low levels of education, the lack of employment experience and the very high unemployment rate. These families will face a series of difficulties in making rent payments.

There is a preference, within the Department of Social Policy, to not accept families headed by individuals under 25 years old, which represents a clear obstacle for new Romani couples, who tend to get married at a much earlier age.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Bureaucratic delays must be avoided, as they may delay payment of the minimum income as this makes it difficult for families to make payments on time.

The programme must be redesigned in such a way that it contributes to the economic independence of the beneficiaries, perhaps with more emphasis on providing employment integration.

Analysis and Assessment of the integration policies for the Romani people in Spain: What did we learn?