



Evaluation of the results and impact of the Acceder Programme

2000-2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





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ACRONYMS

CIS	Spanish Centre for Sociological Research
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESI Funds	European Structural and Investment Funds
FSG	Fundación Secretariado Gitano
POEJ	Operational Programme for Youth Employment
POISES	Operational Programme for Social Inclusion and the Social Economy
POLCD	Multi-Regional Operational Programme 'Fight against Discrimination'
SEPE	Spanish State Public Employment Service
WISE	Work Integration Social Enterprise

1. Foreword	8
2. Introduction	10
2.1 Fundación Secretariado Gitano	10
3. Methodology	12
3.1 Technical design of the evaluation	12
3.1.1 Objectives and scope of the evaluation	12
3.1.2 Approaches taken in the evaluation	13
3.2 Methods and techniques	14
4. Object of evaluation: the Acceder Programme	16
4.1 Brief introduction to the Acceder Programme	16
4.2 The Acceder Programme in numbers	20
4.3 Development of the Acceder Programme over 20 years	22
5. Results of the evaluation	25
5.1 Coverage of the Acceder Programme	25
5.2 Labour market inclusion through the Acceder Programme	26
5.2.1 Data on labour market inclusion by Acceder pathways	29
5.2.2 Data on labour market inclusion by type of training	31
5.2.3 Intermediation with companies	35
5.2.4 Other key actions aimed at labour market inclusion	37
5.2.5 Determining factors in labour market inclusion	39
5.2.6 Achievement of the objectives set out by the European Social Fund	41
5.3 Efficiency of the intervention and sustainability	43
5.3.1 Efficiency of the Acceder Programme over its 20 years of operation	44
5.3.2 Sustainability of the Acceder Programme	49
5.4 Qualitative impacts of the Acceder Programme	51
5.4.1 Effects on the Roma population	51
5.4.2 Effects on society as a whole	57
5.4.3 Effects on public authorities	61
5.4.4 Effects on the organisation	62
5.5 Keys to the Acceder Program	66
6. Conclusions	70
6.1 Results in access to employment which demonstrate the success of the Acceder Programme	70
6.2 Impact of the Acceder Programme on different agents	74
6.3 Factors explaining the success of the intervention	78
6.4 The Acceder Programme has some weaknesses	82
7. Learning, proposals and recommendations of the Fundación Secretariado Gitano	85
7.1 Future challenges for the Acceder Programme	85
7.2. Proposals for public policy on employment and social welfare	89
7.3 The key role of European Funds as financial instruments for innovative social inclusion policies	90

1. Foreword

Sara Giménez

President of the
Fundación
Secretariado
Gitano

The **Acceder** Programme forms the backbone of the activity of the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, and has allowed us to develop the personalised, integrated, advancement-oriented model of intervention we believe in.

Those of us who have experienced the development of the Programme from the inside believe it is vital to highlight what it has meant to Roma families to be able to access the labour market as employees (I myself began my professional journey in FSG as an employment guidance counsellor in the year 2000). We know how the programme has helped to change the lives of Roma people through improved employability and labour market inclusion, and also how it has contributed to their social advancement. Moreover, it has not only impacted directly on those who have taken part in training and employment pathways; we have also observed an impact on their families and on the environments they live in.

Each year we present to our funders an account of the Programme's results in terms of training and labour market inclusion, and of our management of the available resources. After 20 years of good results, we wanted to go one step further and verify what we see and hear daily in the course of the Programme's operation: the value and impact of the **Acceder** Programme as a force for change in the lives of my people (the Roma people).

To this end, we commissioned an external evaluation of the **Acceder** Programme. This evaluation, which was carried out by the consultancy **Red2Red**, is presented in the following pages. The evaluation shows the broad coverage of the Roma population achieved by the Programme thanks to the scale and extent of our activities, and this coverage allows us to speak of the Programme's impact on the Roma community as a whole. It also demonstrates the effectiveness of our model of intervention for the inclusion in the labour market of people in a situation of extreme social vulnerability and low employability. This model of intervention is based on responses which are tailored to the profile of each participant and to the needs of the labour market, delivered in close alliance with companies.

The evaluation also speaks to us of the qualitative impact of the Programme and of how it has helped to improve the quality of life of Roma people and their autonomy; how it has helped to give new value to the role of education and training; how it has acted as a catalyst for fundamental changes which boost the advancement of Roma women, putting emphasis on equipping Roma women to access the labour market, with all the implications this has for the reorganisation of the family and of family responsibilities; and finally, how the Programme has served as an antidote to discrimination and antigypsyism, helping to break down prejudices and negative stereotypes, promote greater knowledge of the Roma community and create awareness of Roma people's entitlement to exercise their rights as citizens like any other.

The [Acceder](#) Programme's contribution to society owes much to the involvement of many administrative bodies, institutions and companies. However, it would not have been possible without the support of the European Social Fund (ESF) and its model of social investment: a model of high-quality investment, sustained over time, aimed at social transformation and cognizant of the specific nature of each group so as to be able to offer tailored responses.

I feel proud of the way in which the [Acceder](#) Programme is contributing to the social advancement of Roma men and women. And I am convinced that the results and the lessons learned from this evaluation can serve to guide the design of public policies on employment and social welfare aimed at those groups which face the greatest social vulnerability.

2. Introduction

This document is the executive summary of the evaluation of the results of the **Acceder** Programme run by Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG), covering the first 20 years of its implementation, from the year 2000 to 2019 inclusive.

The **Acceder** Programme which is evaluated here **promotes the access of the Roma population to the labour market as a gateway to their social inclusion**, thus fostering equality of opportunities. To this end, an integrated working methodology has been developed which boosts opportunities for the Roma population in the labour market, particularly by means of salaried employment, although self-employment is another possible model.

The evaluation of the **Acceder** Programme has been carried out in all the regions and localities where the Programme has been implemented at some point over the last 20 years. These amount to a total of 14 regions and 61 currently active localities, along with other localities where the Programme is not operative at present.

The aim of this external evaluation, carried out by an independent team at Red2Red, was to analyse and assess the Programme's results and impact, and thus to offer a general assessment of the utility and the successes of the **Acceder** Programme. This evaluation will allow lessons to be learned about how to improve the Programme and will contribute to FSG's processes of accountability

We have used databases generated during the evaluation itself (by means of surveys) as well as other databases belonging to **Acceder**. For more detail on the methods and techniques used, please consult the full report (only available in Spanish).

Before moving on to the evaluation of the **Acceder** Programme, it may be interesting to start with a brief introduction to FSG, its history, its development and its activities relating to the **Acceder** Programme which is evaluated here.

2.1 Fundación Secretariado Gitano

Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG) was created 35 years ago, and is a non-profit intercultural social organisation. Its objective is to secure **advancement and equal opportunities for the Roma population**, both in Spain and across Europe.

Its mission is the **integral advancement of the Roma community in order to ensure the access of Roma people to rights, services, goods and social resources in conditions of equality with all other citizens**. 'Integral advancement' refers to a multidimensional process by which a per-

son or group is able to overcome a combination of factors which lead to a situation of social exclusion or disadvantage. 'Cultural diversity' is understood as an opportunity for different cultures to co-exist and interact.

FSG's vision is to **become a driving force for change, promoting the full citizenship of Roma people** reducing the inequalities they face, guaranteeing their social advancement, defending their rights and promoting their participation in society.

In this context, FSG proposed the evaluation of results of one of its key programmes, the **Acceder** Programme, which has been in operation for more than **20 years** and in which more than **80,000 people** have participated.

However, the multidimensional nature of the process of inclusion for the Roma population, along with the holistic approach taken to its work by FSG, mean that although this evaluation is focused on the **Acceder** Programme, it will be necessary to refer to other activities and interventions carried out by the organisation throughout this document.

For this reason, among the great variety of programmes run by Fundación Secretariado Gitano, we will now briefly introduce the programmes referred to in this report which are linked in some way to the **Acceder** Programme.



Promociona Programme

The objective of this Programme is to enable young Roma people to finish compulsory education and continue studying, thereby decreasing the rate of early school dropout, improving the conditions under which the Roma community can access the labour market and fostering equal opportunities.



Calí Programme

This Programme has the objective of increasing the social and labour market inclusion of Roma women by boosting equal opportunities and gender equality and fighting against all forms of discrimination, with special attention paid to the multiple forms of discrimination suffered by Roma women and by victims of gender violence.

3. Methodology²

3.1 Technical design of the evaluation

3.1.1 Objectives and scope of the evaluation

This evaluation has two main, complementary objectives.

- 1 First, we have attempted to **generate evidence demonstrating the results and impact** achieved by the Acceder Programme over its years of operation. That is, we have attempted to show the extent to which this Programme has had medium- and long-term effects, focusing mainly on its direct beneficiaries.
- 2 Second, based on this process of evaluation and evidence generation, we have attempted to **extract lessons to be learned** to enable improvements to be made to the Programme's implementation in the future, considering also the sustainability of the results obtained.

This evaluation also responds to the objectives of the FSG's Strategic Plan, which includes the promotion of transparency within the organisation, particularly in the use of public funds.

Finally, in connection with the above point, it is **hoped that the evaluation will serve as a tool for improvement**, and that its final recommendations can be taken into account when planning the future of the Acceder Programme.

In the course of this evaluation, it is necessary to remain aware of its limitations, and to this end we have identified the various aspects and areas which define its scope:

- > In terms of **timeframe**, this evaluation covers the period from the year 2000, when the Programme was launched, to 2019 (inclusive). In other words, the evaluation covers the entire period of the first 20 years of the Programme's operation.
- > In terms of **geographical scope** this evaluation has focused on analysing participation in all regions and localities where the Programme has been in operation at some point over these 20 years. This amounts to a total of 14 regions and 61 localities where the Programme is currently in operation, with additional data from other localities where the Programme has been in operation in past years but is not currently active.
- > In terms of **methodology**, the evaluation centres on the analysis of the Acceder Programme's results and impact over these 20 years, and a range of evaluative criteria and methodological approaches have been employed in this process.

² For more detailed information on the evaluation's methodology, the data used and the limitations of the evaluation: <https://www.gitanos.org/evaluacion20acceder> (only available in Spanish)

3.1.2 Approaches taken in the evaluation

As has already been explained, this is an evaluation of results, aiming to measure the Programme's results over the short, medium and long term, and analysing and assessing the contribution the intervention has made to achieve these results. The main characteristics of the evaluation are as follows:

- > It is an **external evaluation**, carried out by an independent team at Red2Red with specialist knowledge in the areas of employment policy and evaluation methodology.
- > It is an **ex-post evaluation**, given that it focuses on the period 2000-2019 and therefore analyses data from the past. However, given that the **Acceder** Programme remains in operation and that the lessons emerging from it have the character of recommendations for improvement, the evaluation may display some of the features of a mid-term evaluation.
- > It is a **summative evaluation**, in that its purpose is mainly to analyse and assess the results and impact achieved, and thereby offer a general assessment of the utility and the successes of the Programme. This approach will determine merit, value, meaning and validity (Patton, 2008), thus allowing decisions to be made about the Programme for the future.

So far, we have set out the characteristics of the evaluation. In terms of its approach, the option taken was that of a criteria-based evaluation. This allowed the most significant issues requiring evaluation to be identified. This was essential to the development of the evaluation questions, which in turn guided the development of the evaluation itself.

The six **criteria** which guided this evaluation are as follows:

Efficiency	This criterion allows the detection of the ability to bring about a desired or expected effect with the fewest possible resources or in the shortest possible time. In other words, it relates to the most rational use of means, resources and time in order to reach an objective.
Effectiveness	This is understood to refer to the degree to which the proposed objectives are met.
Sustainability	This refers to the development of the mechanisms (alliances, synergies and resources) necessary for the results and effects of the intervention, as well as the intervention itself, to be sustained over time ³ .
Impact	This allows the measurement of changes achieved in the social, cultural and political spheres, among others, whether these changes are positive or

³ The definition of the sustainability criterion provided here brings together two concepts: the sustainability of the results and effects of the Acceder Programme, and also the viability of the intervention itself, that is, of the Acceder programme

negative, expected or unexpected (regardless of whether a single effect can be isolated or causality inferred).

Relevance

This criterion attempts to measure the importance of the Programme, and how far it is critically important and useful in the context in which this is measured.

Human rights and gender focus

This criterion attempts to measure the extent to which the Programme complies with the norms which ensure the well-being of the groups within the population which suffer the greatest discrimination. These norms include the equitable treatment of the user population in order to correct possible injustices. This focus also includes the observation of any differences by gender.

3.2 Methods and techniques

To carry out this evaluation, both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used.

The aim of combining these two types of methods was firstly to be able to examine the object of investigation and understand the key elements of its development in depth, and secondly to obtain numerical data to extend this qualitative information and provide an overview of the Acceder Programme. It was therefore necessary to develop a range of data collection techniques for use at each stage of the evaluation.

> Document review and content analysis.

> **Review of databases.** The main source of data was FSG's programmes database, called *Portal de Programas*, which brings together detailed information on participants along with the various activities undertaken: training, companies, job offers, self-employment, etc.

The two techniques above were used across all stages of the evaluation. The following techniques, which were essential to the evaluation, were employed mainly during February, March and April 2021.

> **Semi-structured interviews.** As part of this evaluation process, a total of 12 individual interviews and 1 group interview were carried out.

> **Focus groups.** In the course of this evaluation, a total of 8 focus groups were held with different agents: FSG staff, Acceder participants, collaborating companies, etc.

> **Surveys.** The evaluation process also involved two surveys, aimed at different key agents and employing different methodologies.

- One of these surveys was sent to the public authorities who collaborate or have collaborated continuously with the [Acceder](#) Programme over these 20 years of operation, including local, regional and national government bodies. It was disseminated online and received a total of 36 responses.
- The second survey was carried out with people who had participated in the [Acceder](#) Programme over these 20 years and was completed by telephone. 400 people were contacted by the survey, representing a sampling error of 4.9% at a confidence level of 95%.

4. Object of evaluation: the Acceder Programme.

4.1 Brief introduction to the Acceder Programme

The Acceder Programme began in the year 2000 with the experience of an experimental project carried out between 1998 and 1999 in a neighbourhood of the city of Madrid. The Programme was later rolled out across various regions and is now present in a total of 14 Spanish regions.

Acceder promotes the access of the Roma population to the labour market as a gateway to social inclusion, thereby fostering equality of opportunities. To achieve this aim, the Programme has developed an integrated way of working which boosts opportunities for the Roma population in the labour market, particularly through the model of paid employment. Some of the objectives proposed in order to reach this aim are the following:

- Increase the **employability of the Roma population** through the development of the skills, capacities and knowledge required for access to the labour market.
- Improve **vocational qualifications** and the access of Roma people to salaried employment and occupations.
- Increase the **awareness of companies** of the situation of the Roma population in the labour market in order to achieve greater equality of opportunity in recruitment processes.
- Support in the process of **self-employment**, the creation of viable businesses and the development of competitive street trading projects.
- Generate **protected employment** initiatives and the creation of labour market inclusion posts, providing the possibility of a gradual approach into the labour market for Roma people.
- **Raise awareness of the prejudices and discriminatory practices** suffered by Roma men and women and improve their social image.
- Extend the implementation of **active employment policies** for the Roma population with the aim of effectively improving their living conditions and ensuring equal opportunities.
- **Create strategic alliances** which allow the impact of the actions carried out to be increased, or new initiatives to be launched which bring Roma people closer to the labour market.
- Develop **innovative actions** which equip the Roma population to meet the new technological, digital and operational requirements of the job market.

To offer an **integrated response to the situation of structural discrimination** faced by Roma people in the world of work, the Acceder Programme has developed a methodology based on per-

sonalised pathways for labour market inclusion. This methodology involves the provision of information, support, individual and group guidance, skills development, occupational and vocational training, job intermediation and the matching of workers to vacancies, support in self-employment processes and participation in other areas of social and labour market inclusion.

The people who enter the Programme follow a personalised pathway – thanks to staff specialising in mediation, guidance and job intermediation – and go through a process which facilitates their access to the job market and improves their skills and capacities through specific training. Each pathway includes holistic work, starting from the person's unique circumstances and based within the family environment, the community and the wider context in which they find themselves.



One of the singular features of this intervention is that the number of years over which people participate in the Programme can vary, being tailored to the needs of each person. This means that each individual may participate for a different number of years.

In general, [Acceder](#) pathways are made up of different activities or phases, which can be characterised as follows:

- **Activities** related to **Guidance** and **Active Job Search** include accompaniment, support and follow-up for each participant on their labour market inclusion pathway, from the first stages of welcome and needs assessment to the follow-up conducted once in employment. These activities include training and skills development, preparation and presentation of job applications, etc.
- Training actions are a key tool for the improvement of skills and professional capacities of people participating, delivered through multiple activities and training options.
- **Vocational courses** have been part of the [Acceder](#) Programme since its beginnings and offer practical training in real working environments, in collaboration with companies, aimed at preparing participants for specific posts.

- ***Aprender Trabajando (Learning by Doing)*** initiative offers a dual training model which has been in operation since 2013, aimed at young people and providing 840 hours of alternating theoretical and practical training on a pathway which rotates through different work positions. Companies are involved throughout the process, which includes training in personal skills, basic training and vocational training.
- ***Formatéate con Garantía (Training with a Guarantee)*** began in 2018 as a vocational training programme of 3 months' and 300 hours' duration aimed at getting younger participants active in the working world. Emphasis is placed on motivation and personal development, while a first contact with the world of work is provided through practical training in companies.
- **School Graduation Classrooms** were launched in 2016 with the aim of encouraging young Roma people (aged up to 30) to re-enter the educational system in order to graduate from compulsory secondary education.
- **Basic and/or digital skills courses** began in 2015 with the goal of developing a series of personal, social and digital skills to prepare participants for inclusion in the labour market.
- Access to employment and subsequent follow-up form the last part of the process, focused first on facilitating labour market entry and then on supporting the person once in work. During this phase, intermediation with companies with the aim of bringing the Roma population closer to the labour market is especially important. This process involves the identification of employment and training opportunities, the management of job offers and the establishment of alliances with companies which share the objectives of **Acceder**. The process situates companies as key agents in the process of labour market inclusion through salaried employment, and in this way, they come to form part of the ecosystem created by the Programme.

Within the overall model of the **Acceder** pathways, these have been adapted in various ways, with a particular differentiation between the two following types:

1. **Acceder pathway for labour market inclusion through salaried employment.** This includes guidance and active job-search activities, training, job intermediation, access to employment and support in employment. The goal is for the person to enter employment through recruitment by a company; either by means of company intermediation to facilitate this inclusion process, or by means of an active job search.

This pathway can be adapted to include the involvement of **Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISE)**, which facilitate the transition to employment for people in situations of greater exclusion and vulnerability by hiring them for a maximum period of three years. During this period, they learn to do a job in an authentic working environment at the same time as improving their employability and their ability to overcome the social and psychosocial consequences of exclusion.

Fundación Secretariado Gitano has three WISEs: **Vedelar**, in the gardening and forestry sector and with its headquarters in the city of Avilés (Asturias); **Nabut**, in cleaning services, industrial laundry, transport, home care services and ecocatering (under the trading name of El Fogón

Errante), with headquarters in Pamplona (Navarre); and **Uzipen**, offering services of assistance in information, maintenance, cleaning and mediation, with headquarters in Madrid.

2. Acceder pathway for labour market inclusion through self-employment. This includes the same activities as the previous type, but with the objective of labour market inclusion through self-employment, including the launch of the business and follow-up. This pathway is less frequently chosen and was integrated into the **Acceder** model starting in 2009. Among the interventions which support economic activity through self-employment, one could highlight the **Mercaemprende** Programme which carries out specialised interventions in the street trading sector, a long-established field of work for the Roma population. It impacts as much on the individuals involved as on their businesses, improving both their productivity and their competitiveness.

The methodology of using personalised labour market inclusion pathways as a means of boosting the inclusion of the Roma population has been complemented by a series of cross-cutting actions which seek to combat discrimination and foster equal opportunities.

Public awareness-raising and institutional action

This refers to raising awareness across society in general, among the agents who intervene in the job market – companies and potential employers – and among public authorities, with the aim of bringing about a change in the perception of training and employment for the Roma population. This involves highlighting the barriers facing this population in their access to employment, and the role played in this regard by prejudice and discrimination.

The production of studies and publications on the situation of the Roma population in terms of access to employment

Studies and publications are produced to raise awareness of the issues and difficulties facing the Roma population in their access to employment. Among these, we would highlight the comparative studies on the situation of the Roma population in Spain in terms of employment and poverty, carried out periodically in 2005, 2011 and 2018.

Technical assistance and training of public and private professionals who work with the Roma population

While activities have been carried out to ensure the **Acceder** Programme is delivered in the correct manner, particularly in its first years of operation, technical assistance and training have been provided to professionals in social intervention who work with the Roma population, with the aim of improving the social image of the Roma population and increasing understanding of their relationship with the labour market. A third type of activity has involved providing technical assistance over the years at the European level, along with the transfer of the **Acceder** methodology to other European countries, particularly in the south and east of Europe.

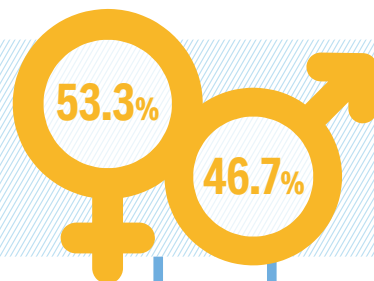
4.2 The Acceder Programme in numbers

PROFILE

7 in 10 people who participate are Roma



Greater participation by women than by men



RESULTS

109,875 people have received information from Acceder




82,091 people on personalised labour market inclusion pathways



1,591 people have been advised and accompanied in setting up their own business



360 people in situations of greater vulnerability have obtained protected employment through FSG's WISEs.



40.6% of the people who have participated have obtained at least one job, through either salaried employment or self-employment, after passing through the Acceder Programme



41% have taken part in some type of training activity



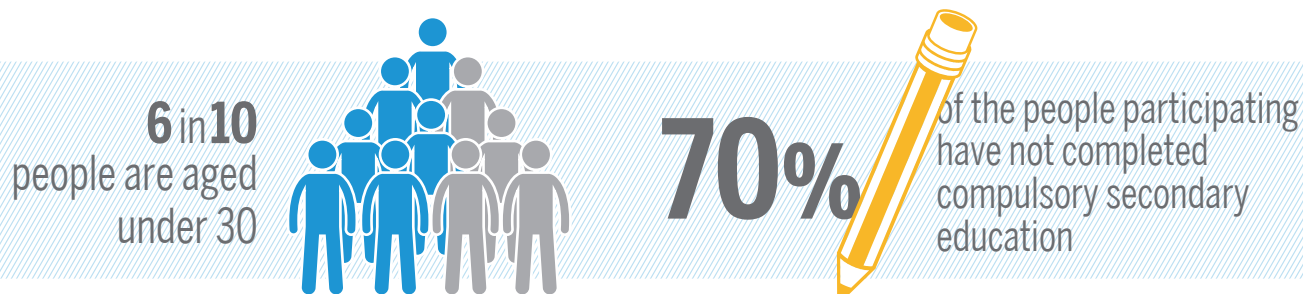
(33,664 people)

A total of 7,955 training courses have been delivered



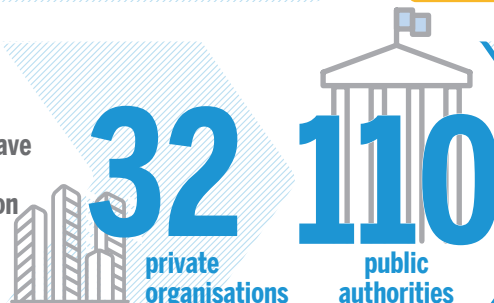
91,733 contracts have been signed as part of the Acceder Programme





Technical assistance activities have been carried out, involving collaboration with various public and private organisations, as well as the launch of innovative actions

All these activities have involved collaboration with more than



2 national
25 regional
20 provincial
63 local

TYPOLGY OF ACCEDER PATHWAYS

All pathways begin with an in-depth analysis of the person's employability, including an assessment of their personal and social circumstances and an evaluation of their skills. The aim is to define their professional objectives and agree on the actions to be included on their pathway. All pathways end when the person has attained the skills and the autonomy necessary to maintain their position in the labour market.

PATHWAY 1

GUIDANCE AND ACTIVE JOB-SEARCH ACTIVITIES + TRAINING COURSES

This is a comprehensive pathway which, after an employability assessment, continues with employment guidance, skills development, job-search support, and vocational, skills or other training. Access to employment is facilitated through company intermediation.

PATHWAY 2

GUIDANCE AND ACTIVE JOB-SEARCH ACTIVITIES

This pathway begins with an employability assessment then continues with employment guidance activities, skills development, and intensive job-search support. This pathway is for people who have decided not to do any specific training activity. Access to employment is facilitated through company intermediation.

PATHWAY 3

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

This pathway begins with an employability assessment and then concentrates solely on training activities. While on the pathway, the person may do one or several training activities. These may be vocational or skills-based but are always focused on employment. As on the other pathways, access to employment is facilitated through company intermediation.

4.3 Development of the Acceder Programme over 20 years

Over these 20 years of operation, the Acceder Programme has undergone a series of adaptations which have enabled it to continue to adhere to key principles for its intervention, such as **balanced participation of women and men**, bearing in mind that the active female population is smaller, and that achieving this balance therefore requires tailored strategies; **directing its activities towards the younger population**, who are more likely to continue with training and thus improve their chances of inclusion in the labour market; **focusing on the Roma population** but also including the non-Roma population, in an attempt to reproduce the reality of the labour market; and situating **companies as key agents** in the process of labour market inclusion through salaried employment, so that they come to form part of the ecosystem created by the Programme.

Based on the adaptations which have been introduced, four main phases can be identified in the development of the Programme over these 20 years.

A Expansion phase: 2000 - 2004

This phase begins with the launch of the Acceder Programme in 32 localities, and thanks to the creation of agreements with public authorities this is then extended to 57 localities.

The intercultural nature of the organisation is reinforced in the eyes of the Roma community by the key figure of the intercultural agent; the Programme's innovative character, its professionalism and the added value contributed by its ESF financing is emphasised to the public authorities; and an adaptive strategy, avoiding the word "Roma", is developed for use with companies to avoid the prejudice which exists towards the Roma population.

B Consolidation phase: 2005 - 2008

Important work in terms of campaigning and awareness-raising with institutions is carried out, with training activities directed towards public administrative bodies, publications, and three relevant campaigns: [Get to know them before judging them](#) between 2004 and 2005; [Your prejudices are the voices of others](#), from 2005 to 2006; and [Employment makes us equal](#) from 2007 to 2009. All these activities have the aim of showing the difficulties facing the Roma population due to the discrimination they experience when trying to access employment.

In addition, there is a push to achieve greater participation by Roma women in the Acceder Programme, with activities adapted to women's needs and awareness-raising around the need to share domestic responsibilities. Meanwhile, role models, especially female ones, are created among those that have been through the Acceder Programme in previous years and have then found employment.

The analysis of this phase demonstrates that the work of analysing and monitoring Acceder Programme data has been important to identify gaps in the implementation. In fact, the results of the adjustments made to fill these gaps show the Programme's ability to adapt to the needs found in the environment and to support good decision-making.

C Specialisation phase: 2008 - 2012

The activities and adaptations of this phase are an attempt to **deal with the consequences of the 2008 economic crisis** for employment in the Roma population. Solutions are sought to bring Roma people closer to the world of employment. Efforts at company intermediation are therefore intensified to enable the signing of national agreements with large companies, and self-employment is included as a line of work within the Acceder pathways. A strategic line is also incorporated into the Programme relating to the conception and promotion of WISEs, to provide a route towards labour market inclusion for people in situations of greater exclusion and vulnerability.

In addition, various studies are carried out which show that the main barrier to accessing employment for Roma people is their level of education. It is also observed that this cannot be changed once a person starts participating in Acceder as an adult, so it is necessary to start working on this factor at an earlier age.

Based on this reflection, the **Promociona** Programme is launched in 2009 with the aim that young Roma people complete their compulsory education and carry on studying in order to reduce the rate of early school dropout.

This phase shows the organisation's holistic vision, evidenced first by the analysis of prior issues and then by the creation of initiatives to help resolve them. Such issues include a low educational level, which affects the chances of labour market inclusion for Roma people when they later come to enter the Acceder Programme.

D Innovation phase: from 2013

This is considered a **stage of innovation**, in which the Programme continues to improve its methodology and its activities, adapting to the needs of the people participating in it and above all to the needs of the job market. The following are some of the most significant adaptations made in this phase:

- Development of training initiatives especially for young Roma people who are neither in work nor in education, adapting second-chance-training and dual-training models to the charac-

teristics of the young Roma population, and involving large companies in the design and delivery of this training. An example is **Learning by Doing** (2013)⁴, and later **Training with a Guarantee** (2018), focused on younger participants who need greater motivation and guidance to define their professional goals.

- Skills-based guidance is included through the **Emplea+**⁵, based on social evaluation of barriers and limitations along with skills evaluation including a standardised analysis of each person's level in order to design a skills training plan. Emplea+ also includes skills training.
- Launch in 2016 of a second-chance initiative to help young Roma people seeking entry into the labour market to graduate from compulsory secondary education.
- Adaptation of the **Acceder** methodology to the digitalisation of the labour market with the launch of a new initiative called **Empleando Digital (Employing Digital)**⁶. This includes two lines of action: a) training for **Acceder** professionals to help them adapt to the challenges of digitalisation and to changes in methodology, and b) technology training for participants to provide a bridge for those starting from a low training level.
- The development of a programme for the professionalisation of street trading called **Mercaemprende**. This Programme aims to improve competitiveness and enable the professionalisation, modernisation, and digitalisation of street trading stalls. This is achieved by means of a pathway which includes needs analysis, training (blended in-person and online training adapted for mobile phones), the creation of a stall improvement plan and support to carry it out.

During this phase, in 2016, FSG also launches the **Calí Programme**, aimed at improving the pre-work skills of Roma women. It is designed to respond to those Roma women who show interest in **Acceder** but who would face many barriers and difficulties in undertaking a labour market inclusion pathway.

⁴ Learning by Doing is a training model of 840 hours' duration which alternates theory and practice in companies and which offers a training pathway covering various working roles.

⁵ This tool is the fruit of the collaboration between various organisations driven by Accenture Foundation.

⁶ This project, carried out jointly by FSG, the Spanish Red Cross and Accenture Foundation and co-funded by the European Social Fund, aims through its employment programmes to develop digital knowledge and skills among people at risk of social exclusion.

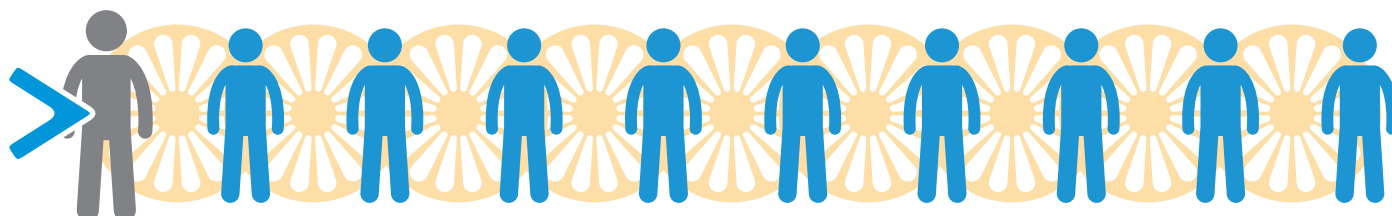
5. Results of the evaluation

While the previous section defined the object of evaluation and offered a detailed account of the key statistics relating to the **Acceder** Programme, this section will review and analyse the Programme's key principles and characteristics.

5.1 Coverage of the **Acceder** Programme

Since its beginnings, the **Acceder** Programme has been rolled out across different regions, and the total number of regions it operates in now stands at 14. This prompts the following question: **what percentage of the Roma population has the Acceder Programme reached?**⁷

The coverage of the Roma population by the **Acceder** Programme stands at around 11% over its 20 years of operation, which implies that **1 in 10 Roma people in Spain have participated in this Programme**. This is despite the fact that this estimate includes people who are not potentially economically active, that is, people aged under 16 or over 65. If we make an estimate based only on the active population, the figures for coverage increase to 5.8% in 2007 (+ 2 percentage points), 13.7% in 2015 (+ 5.2 p.p.) and 16.55% in 2019, almost 6 p.p. higher than the estimate based on the whole Roma population.



The increase in coverage over these 20 years accelerated in the years following the 2008 economic crisis, when the annual increase became greater than 0.67 p.p. The Programme's capacity for high penetration among the target population has made it a highly significant intervention, particularly in times of economic crisis when access to the job market becomes more complicated.

When the data are analysed geographically, regions such as Extremadura, Navarre, Cantabria and Aragon, where the Roma population is smaller, see significantly higher coverage: 31% in Extremadura and around 23% in the other three regions. On the other hand, in the case of

⁷ These data come from the Study-Maps on Housing and the Roma Population of 1991, 2007 and 2015, in which an estimate of Spain's Roma population is made based on the cities, districts and neighbourhoods accessed by the studies. For the analysis of coverage, we have used 3 cut-off points: the number of participants in Acceder until 2007, until 2015 and until 2019.

Andalusia and Valencia regions, where the Roma population is greater (estimated in 2019 at more than 200,000 and 62,000 respectively), coverage stands at 8% and 11% respectively. Other regions with high coverage are Castile and Leon (25%) and Castile-La Mancha (23%).

5.2 Labour market inclusion through the Acceder Programme

In this section we set out the direct and immediate results of participation in the Acceder Programme in terms of employment.

Methodological issues

It is important to note that this analysis of results in terms of labour market inclusion is limited to the period comprising the year when the participant begins his/her pathway and the employability assessment is carried out, plus the three following years. For this reason, it covers participants who entered the Acceder Programme between 2000 and 2017 (the cohorts of 2018 and 2019 were excluded as the labour market inclusion data do not cover the necessary 4 years from the date of assessment). The decision to analyse the inclusion data for 3 years following the employability assessment was taken on the basis that the majority of Acceder pathways have this period as their maximum duration. After these methodological decisions were taken, the total number of participants to be included in the labour market inclusion analysis fell from 82,091 to 64,894.

In addition, the Acceder Programme database, while very complete, has some limitations which must be borne in mind. For the first few years, labour market entries were over-estimated given that guidance and training activities were not usually recorded, while labour market entries were recorded. This was because the database was designed mainly for reporting results to the funder. Later on, it became clear that there was value in recording the other activities involved in the process and on the pathways chosen to improve the participant's abilities, knowledge and skills, and not merely the results in terms of labour market entries.

ALMOST 4 IN 10 PARTICIPANTS OBTAIN A JOB

37.2% of all the people who started participating in Acceder between 2000 and 2017 have entered the labour market by obtaining at least one job in the first 4 years after starting the Programme. This is equivalent to a total of 24,113 out of the 64,894 participants.

Between 2007 and 2008 the effects of the financial crisis were evident, with a decrease in labour market inclusion of almost 10 p.p. After that point, a phase of gradual decline began, reaching its lowest point in 2014 and rising again after that. If we look at the results by gender, there was a balance between women and men, with a rate of labour market inclusion of 37.6% among men and 36.7% among women.

In terms of trends over time, in the early years, labour market inclusion for men was higher than it was for women (except in 2005). This started to change in 2008, with inclusion rates being similar for men and women. It should be noted that in the period 2005-2008, after observing the lower participation rate among women in the [Acceder](#), the Programme implemented various measures to increase the participation of Roma women which succeeded in raising the figure in subsequent years to 50% or more.

Women achieve similar levels of labour market inclusion to men

The results suggest that in times of financial crisis, men's chances of labour market inclusion decline steadily. However, at times of economic growth, it is men who appear to access the labour market with greater ease.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPLETING COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION

After analysing labour market inclusion data by educational level, we can state that **the educational level is fundamental to achieving greater labour market inclusion.**

Obtaining the Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate makes a crucial difference to rates of entry into employment. 27.7% of those who have not finished primary education achieve entry into the labour market, compared with 34.4% of those who have finished primary but not secondary education (who make up the majority of Programme participants) and 47.4% of those who start the Programme having completed compulsory secondary education (13 p.p. higher than the previous group).

These data demonstrate the vital importance of education, especially for women, as a key variable which changes the trend in terms of access to employment.



ETHNICITY, A KEY FACTOR IN LABOUR MARKET INCLUSION

Based on the analysis given below, it is evident that **ethnicity is a very significant factor.** Even within the context of the [Acceder](#) Programme, Roma have a lower rate of labour market inclusion: 34.3%, compared to 42.5% for non-Roma people.

The analysis of inclusion data for the Roma and non-Roma populations participating in the [Acceder](#) Programme reflects the impact of discrimination against Roma people on their inclusion in the labour market, along with their disadvantageous starting position, characterised by low levels of education and a lack of vocational training or working experience.

The gap widens when the variable of gender is included as well, with Roma women being less likely to enter the labour market than non-Roma women. The difference is as wide as 10 p.p., while for

Roma men the difference with respect to non-Roma men is around 6 p.p.

The greatest differences between the Roma and non-Roma populations are seen in the group aged between 45 and 64, with differences of up to 13 p.p.

Ethnicity and educational level are seen to be key factors explaining levels of labour market inclusion. Results by educational level⁸ show that when Roma people obtain at least the Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate, their inclusion rates are equal to those in the non-Roma population, particularly among Roma women.

Table 1

Percentage of Acceder Programme participants 2000-2017 who enter employment, by gender, ethnicity and educational level at the time of entering Acceder.

		Men	Women	Total
Roma	Primary education not completed	28.4%	25.7%	26.9%
	Primary education (Years 1-6) and lower secondary education (Years 1-3)	35.3%	31.4%	33.4%
	Upper compulsory secondary education (Year 4 ⁹) and intermediate vocational training	46.9%	48.0%	47.5%
	Post-compulsory secondary education or higher education (advanced vocational training or university)	48.0%	52.2%	50.3%
	Other and non-accredited	19.2%	21.4%	20.4%
Non-Roma	Primary education not completed	33.7%	33.6%	33.7%
	Primary education (Years 1-6) and lower secondary education (Years 1-3)	37.5%	39.4%	38.5%
	Upper compulsory secondary education (Year 4) and intermediate vocational training	47.6%	47.0%	47.3%
	Post-compulsory secondary education or higher education (advanced vocational training or university)	48.0%	50.0%	49.3%
	Other and non-accredited	35.2%	33.7%	34.4%

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data. N=63,975 (cases where educational level is unknown are not included).

In fact, if we analyse the data focusing on Roma women, we can observe that at the two lowest educational levels, they have the lowest labour market inclusion rate. However, when we examine inclusion rates for Roma women with compulsory or post-compulsory education completed, they are higher than for all other groups, including non-Roma people, both women and men. The rate of inclusion jumps significantly, from 31% to 48%, for Roma women completing compulsory secondary education. Educational level is therefore not only a key driver for improving labour market inclusion rates in general; it is an absolutely decisive factor among Roma women.

⁸ Educational levels are based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 2011: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_\(ISCED\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED)).

⁹ The Spanish Secondary Compulsory Education Certificate would correspond to this level of education in ISCED.

5.2.1 Data on labour market inclusion by Acceder pathway

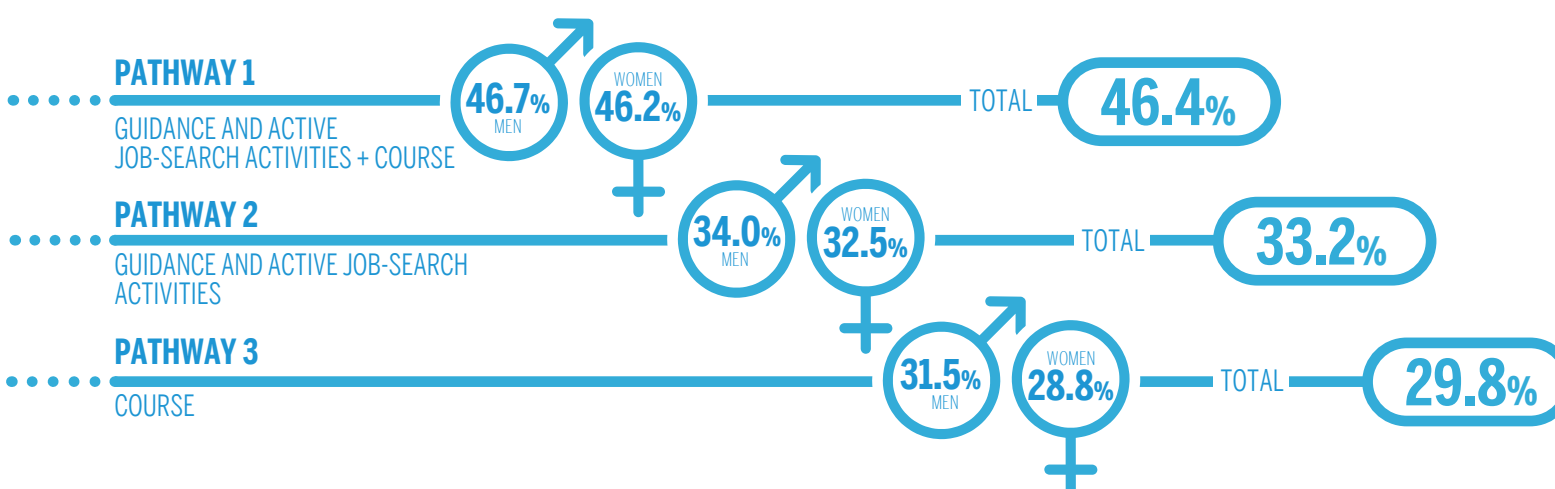
This section deals with labour market inclusion and its relationship to sociodemographic variables and the types of pathways followed by participants. We recall here the three types of pathways which were identified in the data analysis (explained in detail on page 19):

- **Pathway 1** guidance and active job-search activities, plus training courses.
- **Pathway 2** guidance and active job-search activities.
- **Pathway 3** training activities.

The pathway leading to the highest inclusion rate is the one including guidance and active job-search activities plus at least one training course (Pathway 1), with an inclusion rate of 46%. This is 9.2 p.p. higher than the Programme average (37.2%).

The data show that on all the pathways, **continuity in the intervention leads to a higher inclusion rate**, exceeding

The type of pathway matters, but continuity is especially important.



60% on Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 after 3 or 4 years of participation. However, there are some details to bear in mind, such as the fact that while Pathway 1 is more effective given participation of medium duration (2 or 3 years), on Pathway 2, which involves only guidance and active job-search activities, inclusion rates soar after longer participation (4 years).

When the data are analysed by ethnicity, once again **inclusion rates are seen to be lower for the Roma population than for the non-Roma population on all three pathways**. To this we should add that among the Roma population, rates for women are consistently lower than those for men.

If the inclusion rates for each pathway are compared with overall inclusion rates by ethnicity

(34.3% for the Roma population) we can see that Pathway 1 is more effective among Roma people, given that the increase in inclusion compared to the other pathways is much bigger (a 14 p.p. difference between Pathways 1 and 2) than among the non-Roma population.

When Pathway 1 is followed continuously over 3 or 4 years, the labour market inclusion rate for the Roma population is 50% after 3 years (compared with 64% of the non-Roma population) and 60% after 4 years (compared with 78% of the non-Roma population). Pathway 2 sees an inclusion rate of 54% among the Roma population after 3 years of participation (67% among the non-Roma population), and 67% after 4 years of participation (80% among the non-Roma population).

All this indicates that the Roma population requires more complete pathways (Pathway 1), followed with a certain continuity over time (3 or 4 years).

Educational level continues to be an important determinant, as the barrier separating those who do or do not have a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate has a crucial effect on the inclusion rate. Pathway 1 is the pathway which offers the highest labour market inclusion rate at each educational level, but there is also a greater difference in the inclusion rate between Pathway 1 participants who do or do not have a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate.

Considering together the variables of gender, ethnicity and educational level, it can be observed that when Roma women meet the minimum level of compulsory education (upper secondary education: 4th year of compulsory secondary education or intermediate vocational training), they achieve the same or even a greater rate of labour market inclusion when compared with non-Roma women. In fact, nearly 60% of Roma women with this level of education who complete Acceder's

Table 3

Percentage of Acceder Programme participants 2000-2017 who obtain a job, by Acceder pathway, educational level, gender and ethnicity

		Roma women	Non-Roma women	Roma men	Non-Roma men
Primary education not completed	Pathway 1 (guidance, job search + course)	34.1%	46.2%	35.3%	38.8%
	Pathway 2 (guidance and job search)	22.6%	31.4%	26.0%	32.3%
	Pathway 3 (course)	15.2%	14.6%	26.2%	29.4%
Primary education (Years 1-6) and lower secondary education (Years 1-3)	Pathway 1 (guidance, job search + course)	40.2%	48.1%	42.6%	46.0%
	Pathway 2 (guidance and job search)	26.3%	36.5%	32.3%	34.8%
	Pathway 3 (course)	24.9%	30.4%	29.2%	30.3%
Upper compulsory secondary education (Year 4) and intermediate vocational training	Pathway 1 (guidance, job search + course)	59.5%	57.6%	58.4%	55.4%
	Pathway 2 (guidance and job search)	38.7%	43.5%	40.5%	44.3%
	Pathway 3 (course)	49.8%	38.9%	43.5%	48.2%
Post-compulsory secondary education or higher education (advanced vocational training or university)	Pathway 1 (guidance, job search + course)	61.0%	63.2%	65.1%	61.3%
	Pathway 2 (guidance and job search)	47.9%	47.1%	39.9%	45.2%
	Pathway 3 (course)	53.6%	37.2%	50.0%	35.8%

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data. N=63,975 (cases where educational level is unknown are excluded).

Pathway 1 (guidance and active job-search activities plus a training course) manage to obtain a job.

These data serve to demonstrate the importance of educational level in all cases, but particularly among the Roma population, given that completing secondary education boosts labour market inclusion by 16 p.p. among Roma men and by almost 20 p.p. among Roma women on Pathway 1.

5.2.2 Data on labour market inclusion by type of training

This section will offer an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of various training actions for those undergoing some form of training.

The training actions to be analysed are categorised as follows:

- **Learning by Doing** is a dual training model of 840 hours' duration aimed at young people, alternating theoretical and practical training on a training pathway which covers various working roles. This model exists thanks to the involvement of companies throughout the process, which includes training in personal skills, basic training and vocational training.
- **Vocational courses** have been a part of **Acceder** since its inception and involve training activities designed to develop professional skills which equip participants to work in specific posts.
- **Courses in basic, cross-cutting and/or digital skills**, launched in 2015 and enabling the development of a series of personal, social and digital skills to prepare participants for labour market inclusion.
- **School Graduation Classrooms**, launched in 2016 with the objective of enabling young Roma people (aged up to 30) on a labour market inclusion pathway to re-join the educational system and obtain their Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate. There have only been 168 participants so far, so their data in terms of labour market inclusion have not been analysed.
- **Training with a Guarantee**, vocational training courses of 3 months' duration which aim to get young people active in the world of work. They combine personal development, personal and digital skills, and theoretical and practical vocational training in collaboration with companies. Data from this Programme have not been analysed in terms of labour market inclusion as it started in 2018.

All the training courses achieve an inclusion rate which is above the Programme average

Beyond participation in pathways and the continuity of the interventions, participation in the vocational training delivered by Acceder also helps to increase opportunities to access employment.

Table 4
Distribution of course types over the period 2000-20019.

	Number of courses delivered
Skills training	3,702
Basic skills	1,586
Digital skills	378
Other courses	1,738
Vocational training	4,253
Total	7,955

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data. Total no of training courses = 7,955.

All these training courses achieve an inclusion rate which is above the Programme average (37.2%), particularly the **Learning by Doing initiative**, with an inclusion rate which is nearly 18 p.p. higher, and vocational training courses, at 12 p.p. higher than the average. Moreover, the inclusion rate for men is higher than that for women. In comparison with people who do not undergo training, Learning by Doing participants see the greatest difference, with their inclusion rate being almost 30 p.p. higher.

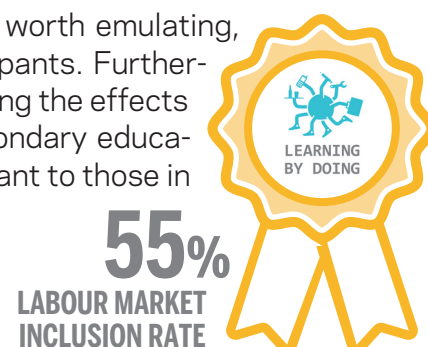
Table 5
Percentage of Acceder Programme participants 2000-2017 who obtain a job, by type of course and gender.

	Men		Women		Total	
	Participants	Non-participants	Participants	Non-participants	Participants	Non-participants
Learning by Doing	56.6%	25.9%	53.3%	26.1%	55.0%	26.0%
Vocational courses	48.8%	34.0%	48.7%	31.8%	48.8%	32.9%
Basic and/or digital skills courses	42.4%	24.0%	40.5%	23.3%	41.3%	23.7%

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

LEARNING BY DOING, KEY TO LABOUR MARKET INCLUSION FOR THE ROMA POPULATION

The data relating to **Learning by Doing** show it to be an intervention worth emulating, achieving a labour market inclusion rate of almost 55% of its participants. Furthermore, it is a key intervention for the Roma population in terms of reducing the effects of the barrier separating those who have completed compulsory secondary education and those who have not. It has shown itself to be particularly relevant to those in the Roma population who have the lowest educational levels.



The inclusion rate is above 50% for both Roma men and Roma women, while the [Acceder](#) Programme average is 33.6% for women and 36.1% for men. In the case of Roma women, it proves itself a model intervention for those who complete compulsory secondary education, with inclusion rates of over 60%.

When comparisons are made with those who have not participated in Learning by Doing, the results are extremely positive, given that the average inclusion rate is around 30 p.p. higher. The difference is particularly striking among those who have not completed their education, at 39 p.p.,

Table 6

Percentage of Acceder Programme participants 2000-2017 who participate in Learning by Doing (APT) and obtain a job, by gender, ethnicity and educational level.

		Men		Women		Total	
		APT Participants	Non-APT Participants	APT Participants	Non-APT Participants	APT Participants	Non-APT Participants
Ethnicity	Roma	22.1%	56.2%	21.4%	51.3%	21.7%	53.9%
	Non-Roma	30.5%	54.1%	30.1%	65.5%	30.2%	60.7%
Educational level	Primary education not completed	15.0%	56.9%	14.8%	50.0%	14.9%	53.6%
	Primary education (Years 1-6) and lower secondary education (Years 1-3)	21.2%	52.7%	21.2%	45.6%	21.2%	49.2%
	Upper compulsory secondary education (Year 4) and intermediate vocational training	35.3%	59.1%	33.1%	64.5%	34.1%	61.7%
	Post-compulsory secondary education or higher education (advanced vocational training or university)	36.3%	71.0%	35.9%	75.0%	36.1%	72.9%

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

and especially among men in this group (+42 p.p.). It is worth adding that a closer analysis of the inclusion rates for APT participants reveals that those who had previously participated in Programme activities, such as skills training and vocational training, experienced higher inclusion rates than those who came to the [Acceder](#) Programme and went directly into APT. The inclusion rate is 54.1% in the former case and 47.3% in the latter. This previous experience had a more significant impact for Roma. This demonstrates the importance of providing more complete pathways.

Based on the analysis above, it is clear that Learning by Doing is the specialised [Acceder](#) pathway which achieves the highest rates of inclusion. The differential impact on those who participate in it is significant and can be observed in all groups of the population.

The data show that it is a highly appropriate intervention for the Roma population, particularly for Roma men, achieving a reduction in the effects of the barrier separating those who have completed secondary education from those who have not. It has thus proved itself to be particularly useful for those among the Roma population who have the lowest levels of education.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSES AS A FOUNDATION OF THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME

Vocational training courses are the foundation of the **Acceder** Programme, as they are the courses with the greatest number of participants and fulfil the central objective of the Programme. They offer training which is tailored to the job market and to the productive requirements of companies, who collaborate closely in its delivery. They prove their worth through the high rate of inclusion achieved, at 49%.

Table 7

Percentage of Acceder Programme participants 2000-2017 who do vocational training courses (VT) and obtain a job, by gender, age, ethnicity and educational level.

		Men		Women		Total	
		Non-VT participants	VT participants	Non-VT participants	VT participants	Non-VT participants	VT participants
Age group	16 to 29	33.7%	48.3%	30.5%	47.4%	32.1%	47.8%
	30 to 44	34.1%	52.7%	33.3%	54.2%	33.7%	53.6%
	45 to 64	23.4%	46.1%	24.7%	46.6%	24.1%	46.3%
Ethnicity	Roma	31.0%	48.0%	26.5%	46.7%	28.7%	47.3%
	Non-Roma	38.1%	52.2%	39.4%	54.3%	38.8%	53.4%
Educational level	Primary education not completed	25.8%	39.4%	22.0%	38.8%	23.8%	39.0%
	Primary education (Years 1-6) and lower secondary education (Years 1-3)	31.5%	45.6%	27.2%	44.1%	29.4%	44.8%
	Upper compulsory secondary education (Year 4) and intermediate vocational training	41.3%	58.5%	40.2%	59.9%	40.7%	59.3%
	Post-compulsory secondary education or higher education (advanced vocational training or university)	43.0%	63.0%	46.4%	61.8%	45.1%	62.2%
	Other and non-accredited	23.4%	46.3%	23.7%	43.0%	23.5%	44.7%

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

The data relating to vocational training courses demonstrate that this type of training is very significant in terms of enabling labour market inclusion, with inclusion rates increasing by more than 15 p.p. with respect to those not participating in this type of training.

Looking more closely at participant profiles, this type of training has a significant effect in all age groups, with the impact being greatest in the 45-64 age group. Results by educational level, ethnicity and type of pathway all follow the general trend. Among Roma women, it proves itself to be a model intervention for those who have completed compulsory secondary education, achieving inclusion rates for this group of over 60%.

In general, inclusion rates for the non-Roma population are higher than those for the Roma population. However, intra-group comparison (i.e., between Roma people who have not undergone this type of training) reveals that this type of training has a greater effect among Roma people than among non-Roma.

SKILLS COURSES ARE USEFUL IN COMBINATION WITH OTHER TRAINING COURSES

Finally, the following analysis compares inclusion data for those who have undergone only vocational training courses with data for those who have done these courses along with basic and professional skills courses.

The data¹⁰ show that the effect of doing vocational training courses together with other skills training is positive, with an increase in inclusion rates of 6 p.p. compared with those who do vocational training courses alone.

Both inclusion rates and the impact of these courses are greater for the non-Roma population, with similar rates for men and women. However, one of the most significant findings is the fact that the overall inclusion rate is higher than the Programme average. The inclusion rate for Roma participants who undergo both types of course is 9 p.p. higher than the overall Programme average, and 11 p.p. higher than the Programme average for Roma people.

5.2.3 Intermediation with companies

INTERMEDIATION WITH COMPANIES, THE KEY TO 4 IN 10 CASES OF LABOUR MARKET INCLUSION

The Acceder Programme includes the important task of intermediation with companies, with the objective of facilitating access to the labour market through salaried employment for the Roma population. This intermediation is particularly important for groups who, as a general rule, suffer greater discrimination and have greater difficulties in accessing the labour market. Of all those who have obtained at least one job, 41.7% did so with the assistance of company intermediation.

In addition, the data demonstrate that this intermediation has focused largely on the Roma population, who comprise 71.5% of those who have obtained at least one job through company intermediation.

Almost half of Roma women have made use of company intermediation services (49.2%) to obtain a job, while among Roma men the figure is 40.5%.

Table 8
Contribution of intermediation to access to employment, by gender and ethnicity.

	Men	Women	Total
Roma	40.5%	49.2%	44.8%
Non-Roma	32.6%	37.6%	35.5%
Total	38.2%	44.8%	41.7%

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

¹⁰ The data analysed relate to the period 2012-2019, when these skills courses were first delivered.

These data serve to underline the importance of intermediation to achieve the objective of the [Acceder](#) Programme, which is to open the doors of companies to Roma people, present them with work opportunities and facilitate their access to these opportunities, particularly through salaried employment. It is clear that this intermediation work serves Roma people above all, and more specifically Roma women, of whom one in two who obtain a job do so through company intermediation.

The findings set out so far lead to the conclusion that company intermediation plays a fundamental role within the [Acceder](#) Programme, especially for Roma women. If this intermediation did not occur, it is reasonable to assume that access to employment for the Roma population would be considerably more difficult.

If we examine the impact of intermediation on access to employment over the 18 years studied, we can observe that its influence decreases in times of economic growth and increases in times of economic crisis. However, the consolidation of work with companies has meant that intermediation has continued to be important at all times. Even in 2017 when the country was in a process of economic recovery, the impact of intermediation was still more than 50%.

COLLABORATION WITH COMPANIES IS FUNDAMENTAL. SINCE 2013, 6 IN 10 CASES OF INCLUSION HAVE BEEN THROUGH COLLABORATING COMPANIES

As already mentioned, out of the total of 15,967 collaborating companies, 40.9% (6,524 companies) have recruited at least one participant during these 20 years. Focusing on participants, 41.7% of the total¹¹ have obtained at least one job thanks to this intermediation service. These data highlight the importance of establishing collaborations with these companies to create new opportunities for labour market inclusion for Roma people.

Of all those people who have obtained a contract with a collaborating company, 37.3% have been Roma women and 31.9% Roma men, which means that in almost 70% of cases this recruitment has focused on Roma people.

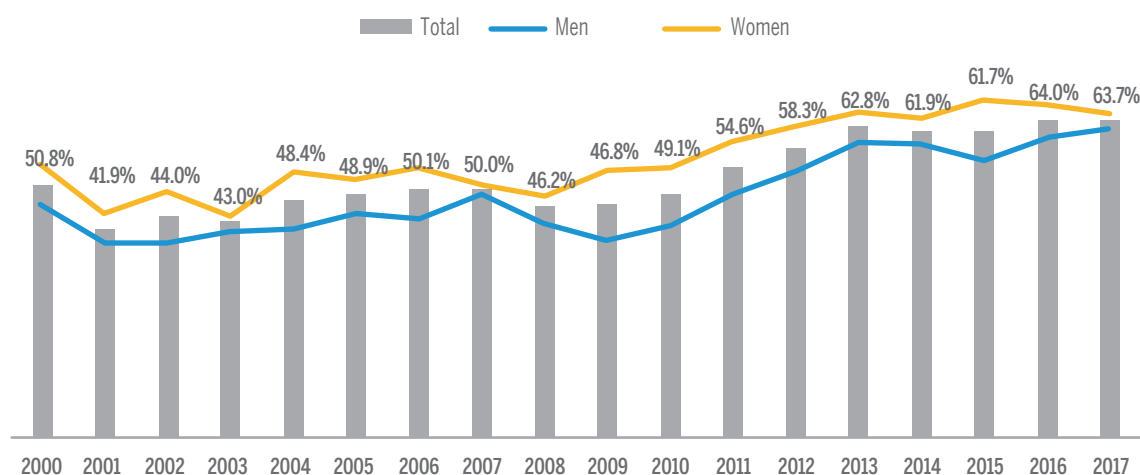
In the case of Roma women, collaboration with companies has had a greater impact on access, with 6 in 10 cases of labour market inclusion among Roma women occurring through collaborating companies.

Over the life of the Programme, 64% of those entering a job have done so through a collaborating company.

In general, the data on both company intermediation and collaborating companies show the

¹¹ It should be remembered that, for methodological reasons, the data in this section relate to 64,894 people rather than to the total of 82,091 people participating in Acceder.

Figure 1
Proportion of access to employment achieved through collaborating companies between 2000 and 2017.



Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

utility and suitability of this type of work with companies, particularly bearing in mind the great vulnerability of the people supported by the [Acceder](#) Programme. This type of intervention helps to reduce the inequalities faced by the Roma population in accessing employment when compared with the non-Roma population. The impact is greater for women, who face multiple inequalities both as Roma people and as women.

5.2.4 Other key actions aimed at labour market inclusion

THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PATHWAY, A MINORITY CHOICE WHICH RESPONDS TO NEEDS IN THE TARGET POPULATION

A total of 1,591 people have followed the self-employment pathway within the [Acceder](#) framework. This pathway involves guidance and active job-search activities along with training activities, access to work through the participant's own business and later follow-up. This line of action became a definitive part of [Acceder](#) in 2009. Although it did not match [Acceder](#)'s original objectives, it was identified as being necessary by some Programme participants. It was therefore decided to launch this pathway to offer support to people who choose to access the labour market through self-employment.

As far as labour market inclusion is concerned, 51.3% of the people (544) who have pursued this pathway have obtained work at least once, whether through salaried employment or through self-employment.

The great majority of people choosing this pathway are Roma people (83%), and 6 in 10 people on the pathway are men. This demonstrates that **the pathway was developed in response to**

a real need among Roma people, who see self-employment as a route into the labour market.

The greater participation by men shows the difficulty of combining entrepreneurship, which demands a large investment of time and involvement, with family life, where Roma women play a central role. In addition, the most common models of entrepreneurship among the Roma population are traditional in nature, involving activities which are passed from father to son and in which men are largely responsible for keeping up the family tradition.

However, the figures for women are also high, and thus the evaluation shows how women too are launching and maintaining self-employment projects, often with a more innovative profile and breaking with tradition to a greater degree. In this way, they break through barriers into new business areas and adapt to the requirements of today's labour market.

In summary, this is a type of pathway with certain unique characteristics, so labour market inclusion data for this pathway are not directly comparable with those for other activities carried out within the Acceder framework. What can be stated is that this pathway was created in response to the demands of the Roma population, and as such it is viewed very favourably for the opportunities it offers to accompany and support the target population in their decision-making with regard to self-employment.

WISES (WORK INTEGRATION SOCIAL ENTERPRISES)

As has already been explained, the Acceder Programme has three WISEs whose role is to provide an authentic yet protected working environment to allow people in situations of greater vulnerability to take steps towards the labour market. What distinguishes these companies, promoted by FSG, is the fact that they hire Acceder participants who have undergone processes of employment guidance, skills and vocational training, but who have been found to face a series of social and personal barriers which make it impossible for them to enter the labour market directly in unprotected or "normalised" working environments. The intervention is integrated into the Acceder Programme's various employment pathways.

The total number of people who have entered employment through these WISEs between 2000 and 2019 amounts to 313, 175 men and 164 women, with greater participation among Roma people.

Table 9
Participants 2000-2019 hired by WISEs, by gender and ethnicity.

	Men			Women			Total
	Roma	Non-Roma	Total	Roma	Non-Roma	Total	
NABUT	95.7%	4.3%	100% (46)	89.9%	10.1%	100% (69)	115
UZIPEN	75.5%	24.5%	100% (94)	75.5%	24.5%	100% (94)	188
VEDELAR	77.1%	22.9%	100% (35)	0.0%	100.0%	100% (1)	36
Total	81.1%	18.9%	100% (175)	81.1%	18.9%	100% (164)	339

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

In general, it can be said that this intervention meets its objectives in terms of creating a space for authentic yet protected employment, allowing people in situations of greater social vulnerability to obtain access to the labour market. It is therefore an intervention which facilitates labour market inclusion for a specific minority, particularly among Roma people (who represent 81% of its participants) and for those of a higher age than the average for the Programme as a whole.

5.2.5 Determining factors in labour market inclusion

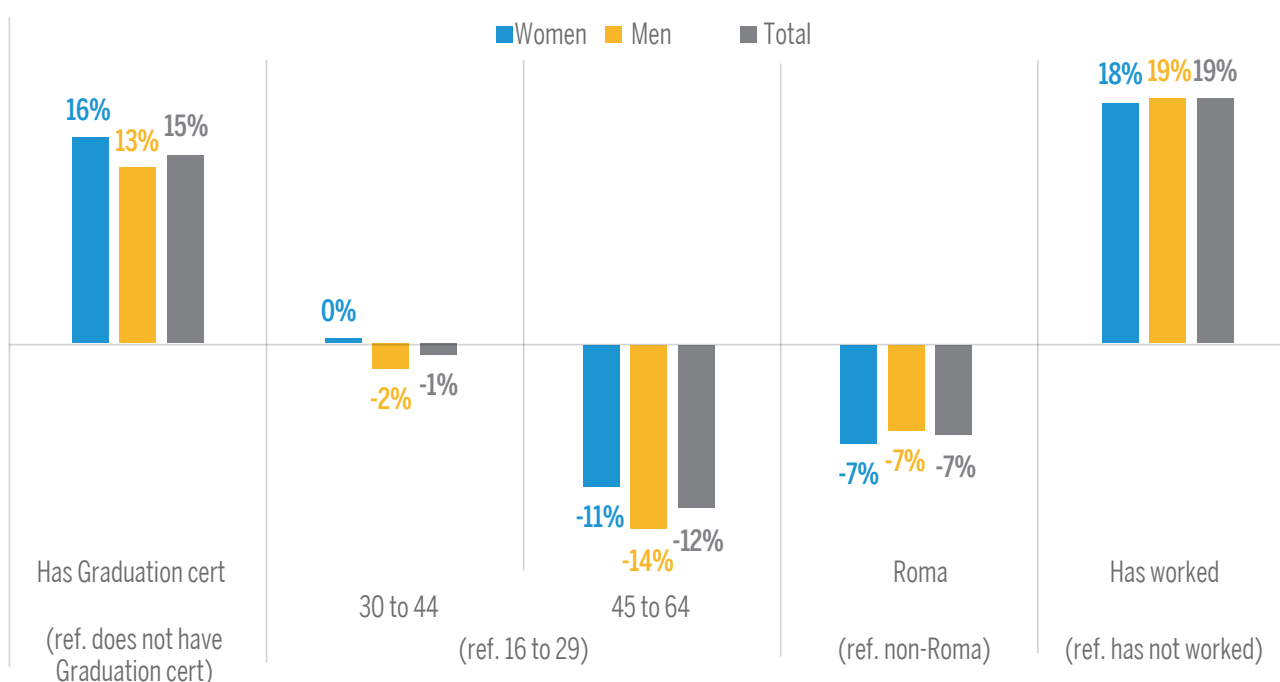
To gain a more in-depth understanding of labour market inclusion, a binary logistic regression analysis was performed to determine the likelihood of entering employment based on various sociodemographic variables and on participation in the **Acceder** Programme¹².

Focusing first on the sociodemographic variables, it can be observed that having a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate or equivalent increases the likelihood of labour market inclusion by 15%; among women the figure is 16%, while for men it stands at 13%.

People in the 45-64 age group are 12% less likely to enter employment than those in the youngest group (16-29), the difference being 11% among women and 14% among men.

Figure 2

Percentage of increase or decrease in the likelihood of entering employment, with respect to the reference category (ref.).



Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

¹² For a more detailed explanation of the methodology, along with the full results of the Regression analysis, see the full report. <https://www.gitanos.org/evaluacion20acceder> (only available in Spanish)

Ethnicity is also a key factor for understanding the success of the Programme in terms of access to employment. **Ethnicity has a similar impact among men and women.** When other variables are kept constant, being a Roma woman decreases the likelihood of accessing employment by 7.5% compared with non-Roma women. In the case of men, being Roma decreases this probability by 6.5%.

Another key variable to bear in mind, which the **Acceder** Programme cannot influence, is having previous work experience. The data show that **having worked before entering the Acceder Programme increases participants' likelihood of accessing employment by 19% among both women and men.**

However, as Figure 3 shows, the factors with the greatest impact on the likelihood of labour market inclusion, when all sociodemographic factors are held constant, are the pathway undertaken and the continuity of participation.

It must be remembered that the pathway associated with the most positive results throughout the analysis is Pathway 1, which includes guidance and active job-search activities plus training, when participation continues for three years or more.

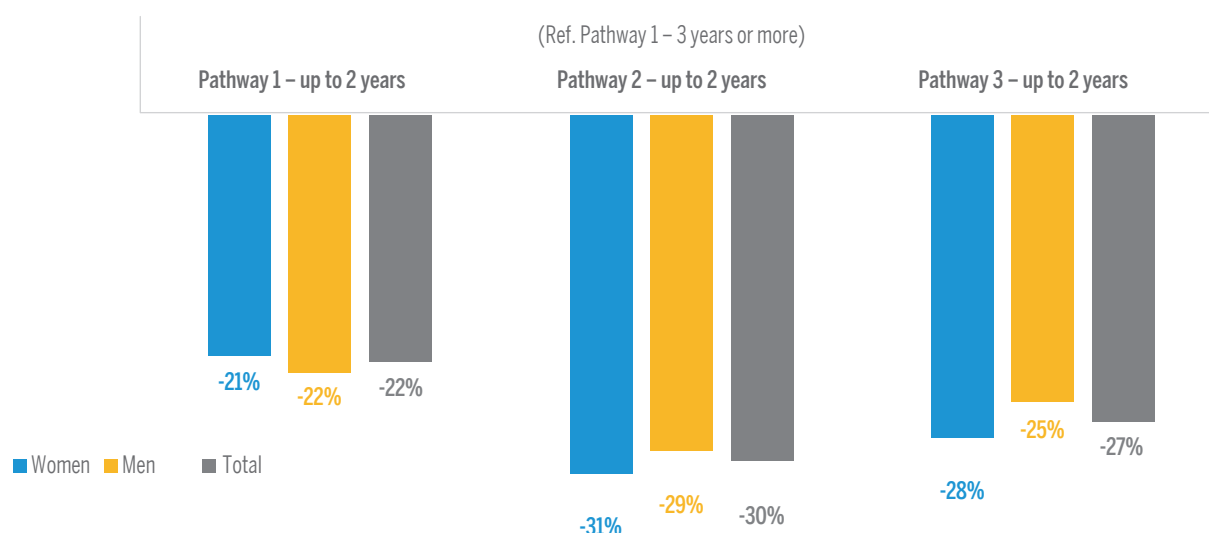
Using this pathway as a reference point, the results of the analysis are as follows

- Undertaking **Pathway 1 (guidance and active job search plus training)**, but for less time (only 1 or 2 years) is associated with about 22% less probability of accessing employment compared with those who follow Pathway 1 for 3 or 4 years, among both women and men.
- Undertaking **Pathway 2 (guidance and active job search) for 1 or 2 years** is associated with a lower probability of accessing employment. Among women, the probability is 31% lower while among men it is 29% lower.
- Undertaking **Pathway 3 (training) for 1 or 2 years** also yields a lower probability of entering employment. This probability is 25% lower among men and 28% lower among women.

The analysis provided throughout this section has reaffirmed the main conclusions drawn from the study's results with respect to the influence of gender, ethnicity and educational level. However, it has also revealed the importance of having previous work experience when attempting to access employment. Moreover, it demonstrates the contribution of the intervention and of the type of intervention, the activities done and the level of involvement in **Acceder**. In other words, irrespective of the influence of various social and demographic variables, the activity of the **Acceder** Programme itself has a very significant impact on its participants' chances of labour market inclusion.

Figure 3

Percentage of increase or decrease in probability of accessing employment on each pathway, with Pathway 1 (followed for 3 years or more) taken as the reference point.



Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

5.2.6 Achievement of the objectives set out by the European Social Fund (ESF)

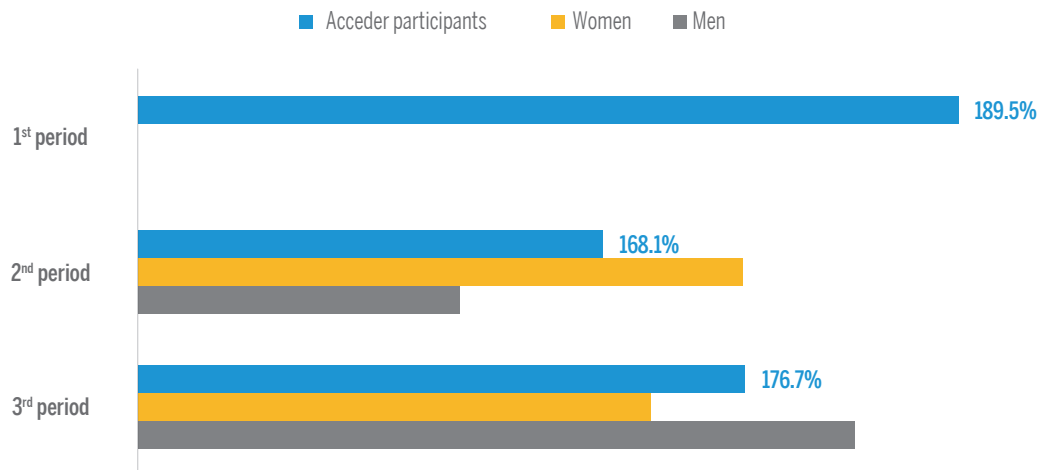
The continuity of the support received by the [Acceder](#) Programme over these last 20 years from the ESF demonstrates that the Programme has been able to respond to the objectives agreed between the funder and the Programme. However, this section will offer a brief review of the relevant indicators which have been in place during the Programme's three phases.

It should be borne in mind that over these 20 years, and during the ESF's three programming periods, there have been important changes in the way information is collected. The analysis will therefore be based on the indicators which have remained constant over time.

Two types of indicators can be distinguished. The first type relates to the reach of the interventions in terms of the number of participants. The second type examines the Programme's fulfilment of objectives in terms of the number of people trained and hired.

THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME SURPASSES OBJECTIVES IN TERMS OF REACHING ITS TARGET POPULATION

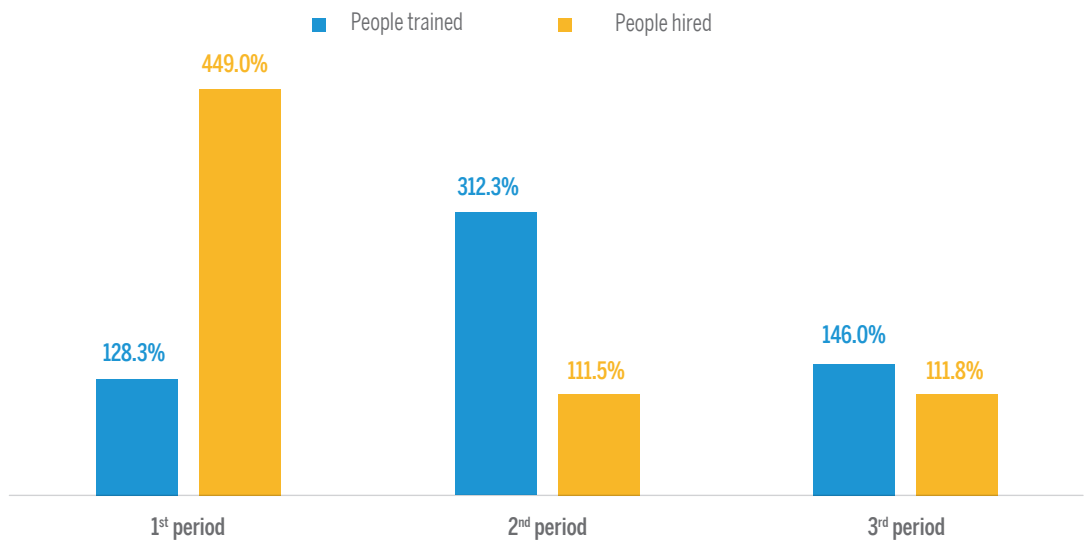
Figure 4
Achievement of participation objectives set out by the ESF, by programming period.



Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

TRAINING AND HIRING OBJECTIVES ARE ALSO MET

Figure 5
Achievement of training and hiring objectives set out by the ESF, by programming period.



Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

The data presented throughout this section demonstrate that the **Acceder Programme** has **more than fulfilled its objectives over these 20 years**, and that the Programme's continuity, one of its hallmarks, is closely linked to the achievement of these results.

The ESF has therefore supported and lent continuity to an intervention which surpasses its objectives, and which has continuously adapted to social and economic changes in order to continue responding to the needs of the labour market.

Beyond the need for FSG and the **Acceder Programme** to provide accountability to the ESF, these results suggest a very significant accomplishment. The following sections will explain the contribution of the ESF to the expansion of the Programme across the country, as well as to its rising profile in Europe, where it is becoming a model for interventions with the Roma population thanks to the ESF's support.

5.3 Efficiency of the intervention and sustainability

Having examined the results achieved by the **Acceder Programme** in terms of employment, this section will analyse, in terms of resources, how the **Acceder Programme** has been delivered, how efficient it has been, and finally how sustainable it is as an intervention.

In its 20 years of existence, the **Acceder Programme** has benefited from significant financial support which has sustained its operation over time, enabling it to reach a large number of people and achieve the very positive results described in previous sections. A significant proportion of the financial resources it has drawn on have come from the ESF, complemented by funds from other public bodies at national, regional and local level as well as private entities, which complete the financing contributed by the European Commission.

The European funding which was approved and delivered in the periods 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 was provided under the remit of the Operational Programme 'Fight against Discrimination'. The co-funding delivered in the period 2014-2020, meanwhile, was provided as part of two different operational programmes: the Operational Programme for Social Inclusion and Social Economy (POISES) and the Operational Programme for Youth Employment (POEJ)¹³.

In percentage terms, the **Acceder** pathways, which are the interventions directly involving individual Programme beneficiaries, have always accounted for around 90% of the funding in all

¹³ To provide some context, although funding periods for the Acceder programme are linked to the ESF's programming periods, that is, 2000-2006, 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, in reality its financial execution is governed by the rule "n+2". This means that financial execution takes place over two further years after the programming period; in other words, 2000-2008, 2009-2015 and 2016-2022 (in this evaluation, the final period analysed is the period 2016-2019, or 50% of what is planned for the whole period).

programming periods, the average figure standing at 90.3%.

From the remaining budget, campaigns accounted for 7.3% during the first programming period, while in the second and third periods technical support accounted for more than 6%.

The increased importance of technical support is in a sense related to the evolu-



Table 10
Financial execution by programming period and line of action.

	2000 to 2008		2009 to 2015		2016 to 2019		Total	
	€	%	€	%	€	%	€	%
Acceder personalised labour market inclusion pathways	53,401,633,00 €	89.7%	50,283,806,57 €	90.5%	38,087,194,07 €	90.9%	141,772,633,64 €	90.3%
Campaigns	4,318,799,00 €	7.3%	1,691,938,00 €	3.0%	1,074,754,00 €	2.6%	7,085,491,00 €	4.5%
Technical support, studies and political action	1,813,209,60 €	3.0%	3,556,168,21 €	6.4%	2,746,900,29 €	6.6%	8,116,278,10 €	5.2%
Acceder Programme	59,533,641,60€	100%	55,531,912,78 €	100%	41,908,848,37 €	100%	156,974,402,75€	100%

Source: own analysis based on Fundación Secretariado Gitano data.

tion of the Acceder Programme over the last 10 or 12 years, a time of innovation during which it has been possible to develop additional activities to improve the Acceder Programme, at times supported by external agents.

5.3.1 Efficiency of the Acceder Programme over its 20 years of operation

To analyse the efficiency of the Acceder Programme over its 20 years of implementation, we have used financial execution data in conjunction with the number of people who have been supported through each yearly payment. This analysis is accompanied by an ex-ante evaluation of the adequacy of the available financial and organisational resources for the implementation of the Programme's various activities.

A Global evaluation of the available resources

In analysing the financial resources available to the Acceder Programme over these 20 years, it must be remembered that it has been carried out in several programming periods, with various implications for FSG in terms of European funding.

A very positive assessment of the Programme's financial resources, as well as its structural and human resources, was offered by the agents interviewed who had been involved in its delivery over the years. In fact, the financial capacity of the Programme, along with the sustainability of its funding over time, was identified as one of the key factors in its success as an intervention.

However, some points should be noted with respect to the funding phases.

- > In financial terms, resources have been adequate, with the funding received and implemented each year matching what was expected. It is important to note that during the 2000-2006 programming period, at a time of both expansion and consolidation for the [Acceder](#) Programme, FSG received assistance from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to the value of 4,753,000.20€, which was co-financed to the sum of 7,312,308.00€. This was essential for laying the foundations for the [Acceder](#) Programme across the regions, as well as for extending FSG's presence nationally, enabling the Programme's launch in the year 2000 in almost 32 locations and its extension over the next 4 years to 57 locations. This is a demonstration of the considerable boost the Programme received thanks to Structural and Investment Funds.

As a complement to this, within the European funding framework a small amount was set aside to co-finance technical assistance, which has helped to guarantee the provision of support services to the various centres across the country. These services include those related to management, monitoring and control of resources, and to the requirements which have arisen at various points (studies, evaluations, research, etc.).

As for human resources, the information gathered during this evaluation supports the conclusion that as a rule, the resources have been adequate. In the execution of the Programme, different roles have been combined within teams to permit holistic, integrated interventions. In addition, it has proved possible to adapt staff profiles and activities to meet the various needs which have arisen over the years.

Furthermore, as part of the organisation's general approach, as well as due to its importance in this specific intervention, the [Acceder](#) Programme has relied upon intercultural teams since its inception. In 2020, more than 32% of the staff from the Fundación were Roma. The interculturality of the teams is undoubtedly one of the factors which have made it possible to reach over these 20 years so many members of the Roma population and incorporate them into the Programme.

B Efficiency of the lines of action

Before analysing the efficiency of the various **lines of action** considered separately, the high degree of interdependence between these lines of action should be noted. This means that, in terms of funding, it is not always possible to differentiate clearly and explicitly between the resources dedicated to each line of action.

The high degree of interdependence within the Programme, which can also be seen in financial terms, shows that discrimination and social exclusion are problems with multiple causes and a large number of intervening variables. This is the main reason why the Programme is delivered through the work of various agents and through various approaches.

ACCEDER PATHWAYS

Acceder pathways are the foundation of the Programme, focusing the intervention directly on participants by means of providing them with guidance and training along with access to employment. This access is facilitated through intermediation with collaborating companies, the work of WISEs, and activities related to self-employment.

The pathways therefore form the foundation of the intervention. Some of the activities involved in these pathways have been taking place throughout the Programme's 20 years of operation, and have accounted for most of the budget. In fact, in terms of the financial resources devoted to the Acceder Programme, these activities related to direct interventions have absorbed more than 90% of the total budget.

EFFICIENCY OF CROSS-CUTTING LINES OF ACTION: AWARENESS-RAISING, CAMPAIGNS, ADVOCACY AND STUDIES

As had happened previously, funding was only explicitly set aside for the "awareness-raising and campaigns" line of action during the first programming period, with 7.25% of the total budget for this period devoted to this area. During this time, different activities were carried out with the aid of this funding, from social awareness-raising campaigns to various studies and publications, and these served to create the only "Observatory on employment among the Roma population" to exist in Spain.

Starting with the second ESF programming period, the line of funding related to "campaigns" disappeared, and these campaigns began to be funded through State Programmes. The total investment amounted to 2,766,692.00€ over 11 years, from 2009 to 2019 inclusive.

In total, the sum devoted to campaigns and dissemination activities has amounted to 7,085,491.00€, which is 4.51% of the total cost of the Acceder Programme. This funding has made this line of action one of the keys to the success of the Programme.

For its part, starting in the second programming period the ESF fosters a line of action associated with "promoting transnational cooperation", which has been fundamental to achieving a significant impact at European level and which marked a milestone with the launch of the EURO-roma Network (European Network on Roma Inclusion under ESI Funds). In total, activities aimed at achieving impact at the European level have absorbed 1,275,034.47€, or 0.81% of the total budget allocated to the Acceder Programme.

This means that these cross-cutting activities, which have accounted for a very small proportion of the budget (5.33% of the Programme total: 4.51% on campaigns and 0.81% on transnational impact), have been highly significant to the overall performance of the Acceder Programme. They have helped to bring about the cultural change which institutions, companies and society at large need to undergo to improve the opportunities for training and employment available to the Roma population.

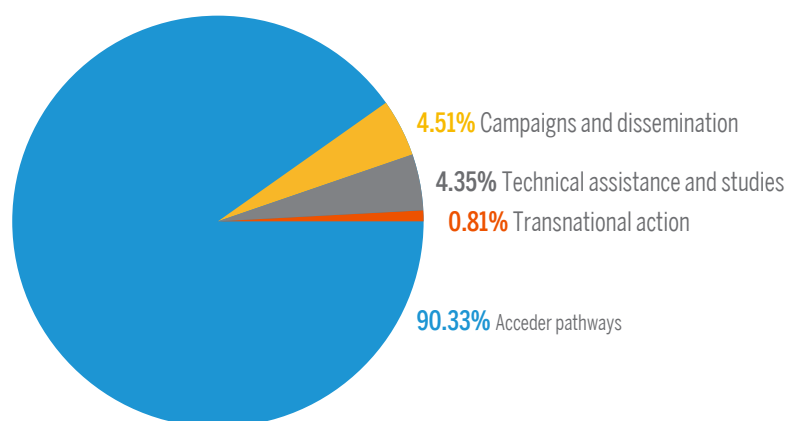
EFFICIENCY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance has been, along with the [Acceder](#) pathways, one of the lines of action which has received continuous funding during the implementation of the [Acceder](#) Programme. It has proved essential to the effective operation of the Programme, contributing to the monitoring, control and organisation of the Programme's resources. This includes controlling the Programme's general and coordination costs, ensuring that the Programme and its joint work run smoothly even when it involves teams operating in more than 60 different cities.

In absolute terms, a total of 6,841,243€ has been devoted to this area, 4.36% of the total [Acceder](#) Programme budget.

All this information allows us to visualise the distribution of the budget according to the various lines of action, with priority accorded to the lines involving direct interventions with the target population, and campaigns and technical assistance identified as two of the lines of action providing cross-cutting support to the [Acceder](#) Programme in the pursuit of its objectives.

Figure 6
Distribution of the Acceder Programme budget over the 20 years 2000-2019



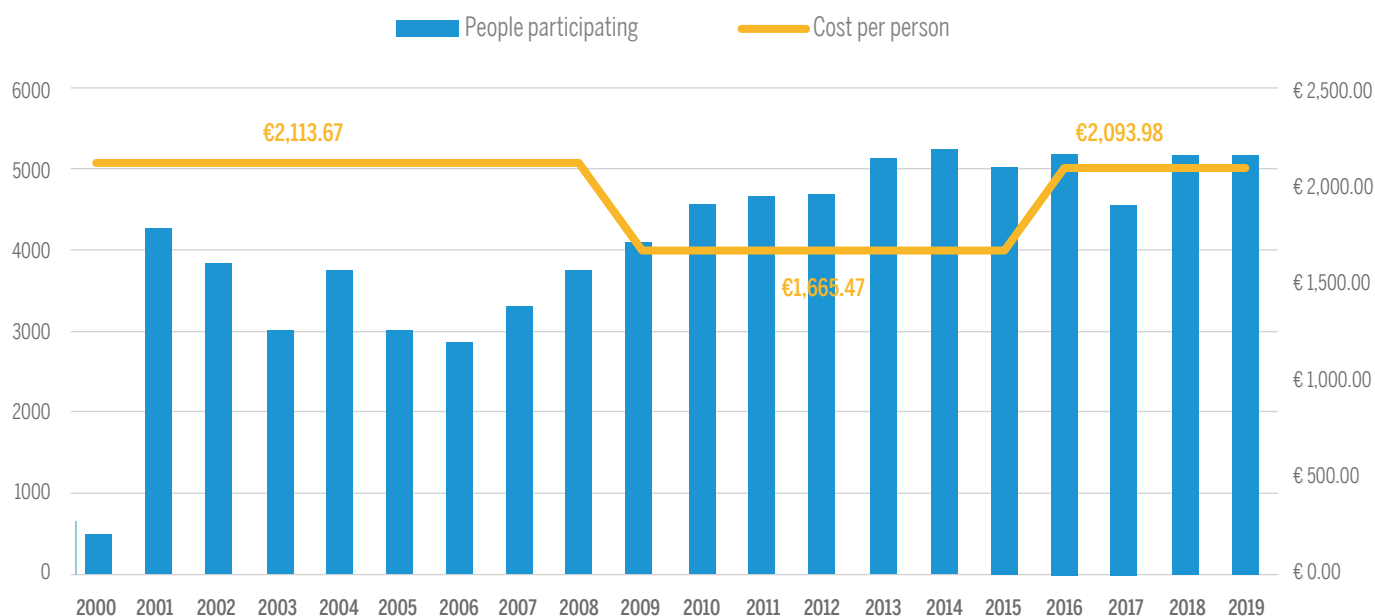
Source: FSG budget information relating to the Acceder Programme.

C Unit cost of the interventions

Having analysed the efficiency and distribution of the [Acceder](#) Programme budget according to its various lines of action, in this section we will examine the cost of the intervention in relation to the number of people participating in the [Acceder](#) Programme over these 20 years, in order to obtain a unit cost per participant.

The data demonstrate that the cost of the intervention in the first period was higher than in the two later phases. This was due to an initial period of greater investment which was necessary for the launch of the Programme, and a phase in which the [Acceder](#) Programme expanded in terms of both geographical coverage and the number of methods used in order to adapt to the needs identified in different geographical areas.

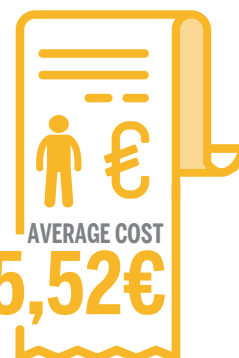
Figure 7
Unit cost of the intervention per participant.



Source: own analysis based on FSG data.

The second period was the most efficient, seeing a reduction in costs attributable to two main factors: first, the consolidation of [Acceder](#), now established in many locations and therefore requiring less start-up investment; and second, the economic crisis which began in 2008 and caused the number of people participating in [Acceder](#) to rise, even though the resources did not increase in line with this rise.

In the third period, the unit cost was similar to the first period, although the number of participants was similar to that seen in the second. The reason for the increase in cost during this phase lay in the increased investment made in a training model and pathway which focused more on the development of participants' skills. Another reason was the launch of more intensive training activities of a longer duration and with financial assistance for those in training, which therefore required a higher level of investment.



Irrespective of the variations between the three phases, the reference point for comparisons is the data provided in the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan, part 23, investment 4, on New regional projects for balance and equity. These comparisons lead to the conclusion that the Programme is exceptionally efficient; to carry out initiatives with highly vulnerable groups such as those carried out by the [Acceder](#) Programme, the reference cost is 6,000 euros¹⁴ while on the [Acceder](#) Programme the average cost of the interventions is around 2,000€. Other regional calls for initiatives¹⁵ have established the same reference cost for each pathway completed.

¹⁴ An average cost of 6,000 euros per person is quoted based on the example of a project which includes 100 hours of training activities, guidance activities and job-search support, along with other actions designed to favour labour market inclusion.

¹⁵ ORDER of 30 December 2019, which establishes the regulatory basis for funding to carry out a programme of preparation for employment, directed at people suffering or at risk of suffering social exclusion and in receipt of social inclusion income in Galicia (Risga). The order also forms the basis for the multi-annual call for proposals 2020 to 2022 (procedural code TR351H).

5.3.2 Sustainability of the Acceder Programme

The third of the financial analyses is related to the Programme's capacity to continue delivering the intervention, or in other words its capacity to sustain itself over time.

To this end, the analysis examines the attitudes and valuations of key funders of the Acceder Programme in order to assess and determine the probabilities of being able to sustain its operation and development over time.

A European funding, an essential driver of the Programme's development

As mentioned previously, European funding has been the main financial driver for the Acceder Programme over its 20 years of operation, having co-funded 71.39% of the total budget dedicated to the Programme in this time.

The nature of this funding, governed by programming periods which allow the delivery of interventions over the long-term, has fostered the development of multi-annual interventions. This permits the analysis and assessment of the medium- and long-term results.

The opinions offered by the various stakeholders consulted at European level who are familiar with the Programme indicate that the keys to its success lie in the results obtained; in its flexibility and capacity to adapt to emerging challenges and needs; and in the support received by the Programme at national level, including the multi-level work done by various agents.

Other factors identified as contributing to the Programme's success and sustainability over time are the fact that its work involves both Roma and non-Roma people; the integration of various agents into the model; the methodology of the Programme itself; and finally, the involvement of companies. The consultation demonstrates the value of continuing to work on the Programme in these ways.

The European Commission has already set out the new 2020-2030 EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation, so it seems clear that specific work with the Roma population will continue. It should also be noted that the recently approved EU Regulations governing the programming period 2021-2027 include once more a Specific Objective aimed at "promoting the socio-economic integration of marginalised communities, such as Roma people".

Bearing all this in mind, it seems clear that **there is an interest and commitment on the part of various agents at European level to continue working with the Roma population**. There is therefore no reason to think that EU support for the Programme will cease to exist; rather, it appears that it will continue to be a key driver for the Programme's operation and continuity.

B The support of the General State Administration for a model Programme for the Roma population

At national level, the [Acceder](#) Programme has drawn its funding from various sources throughout its existence. This has made the Programme a blueprint for the development of specific policies to promote the social and labour market inclusion of the Roma population, particularly for public authorities and networks of associations.

The national government considers the Programme to have played a vital role in the development of specific methodologies of intervention to promote the labour market inclusion of the Roma population. The continuation of the Programme thus enjoys governmental support. It is however true that interventions with this group, as with other vulnerable groups, are increasingly seen as the responsibility of the public authorities, as the provision of attention to the Roma population becomes normalised and the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination are integrated into services across the board.

Despite this progress, there is still a long way to go in terms of public authorities taking a more active role in interventions with the Roma population. Given that FSG has come to provide the blueprint for programmes of social and labour market inclusion for the Roma population, it seems clear that, although both the Programme and the role of the public authorities may evolve, the Programme will continue to enjoy national government support.

C Consistent support from regional and local funds has allowed the Programme to reach many parts of the country

Regional and local authorities have played a very significant role in the development and implementation of the [Acceder](#) Programme over these 20 years. In fact, along with the ESF, they have represented an essential source of finance for the rollout of the Programme across Spain, with the launch of [Acceder](#) teams in various cities being supported by this local and regional funding.

The survey carried out as part of this study shows that interest in collaborating on this Programme remains stable. To be specific, 67% of the public authorities surveyed hope to continue collaborating by offering the same level of resources, while 11% hope to offer more resources. There was only one case in which a reduction in the level of resources was envisaged (5% of the total).

Moreover, these authorities indicate that problems suffered by the Roma population, such as social discrimination and low levels of qualification, are still present. The [Acceder](#) Programme is identified as an intervention which, since its beginnings, has allowed them to respond to the associated needs of the Roma population (training, employment, needs related to poverty or social exclusion). In addition, FSG is identified as an organisation which is specialised in working with this community.

Based on the findings above, it is clear that the future of the intervention is relatively well assured. However, it is also true that, given a scenario in which public authorities wish to play a significant role in the fight against discrimination and the boosting of employment among the Roma population, a valuable strategy for the [Acceder](#) Programme could be to specialise in the specific lines of intervention where it is most effective.

5.4 Qualitative impacts of the [Acceder](#) Programme

Beyond the direct impacts of the intervention, such as labour market inclusion or the improvement of qualifications, this section will examine how the [Acceder](#) Programme has contributed to generating other effects both on direct beneficiaries of the intervention and on other agents involved in it. These include effects or changes detected by this evaluation among citizens in general, which may not be solely or directly attributable to this intervention but which have been facilitated by it.

5.4.1 Effects on the Roma population

In this section we wish to highlight additional effects of the intervention, not defined a priori as Programme objectives, but nonetheless observed to have resulted from the [Acceder](#) Programme.

For this purpose, we will examine two different groups among the Roma population: participants in [Acceder](#), and the people in their immediate environment within the Roma population.

A	Roma population participating in Acceder
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The labour market inclusion data provided in previous chapters have demonstrated the very high degree of inclusion achieved among the target population thanks to the Programme. However, the additional effects described in the following sections have also been observed.

CONSIDERATION OF SALARIED EMPLOYMENT AS A GENUINE WORK OPPORTUNITY

One of the keys to the Acceder Programme is its success in changing Roma people's views of salaried employment, enabling them to see it as a viable option for labour market entry which offers them a range of opportunities.

This re-orientation of Roma people towards the labour market, along with their increased knowledge of it, has enabled the Roma population to start breaking down the barriers represented by more traditional attitudes. As a consequence, there is a growing consensus among Roma people that access to salaried employment is their right, and that they should have the same opportunities as the non-Roma population to exercise this right.

These changes have reinforced the concept of citizenship for Roma people based on their empowerment in relation to the labour market. This in turn has led them to take control of decision-making when it comes to the professional paths they choose to follow.

REASSESSMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

Roma population is increasingly aware that improving their level of education, and at times their level of vocational training, will in turn improve their chances in the labour market. This fact is noted by three in four Acceder participants who answered the questionnaire.

This means that many people who have participated in the Acceder Programme, and who had dropped out of school early, have returned to education, having come to view this as a key factor in social and labour market inclusion. This can be observed in the discussions arising in the focus groups of participants and/or their families, who affirm that the Programme has "provided them with autonomy that they couldn't have had otherwise", that it has allowed them to "get their lives on track", and that they now have the opportunity to get a "decent job" thanks to their studies.

This effect is not only noted by participants and professionals working on the Acceder Programme, but also by those representing collaborating companies. This group also report observing another effect, which is that many of the people who come to the company through Acceder return to education, because they see that there is an opportunity after their training to access the mainstream labour market.

VALUE OF TRAINING TO ACQUIRE THE SKILLS NECESSARY FOR EMPLOYMENT

Alongside education, participants also agree in highlighting the importance of training, both skills training and above all vocational training, with 58% of participants (47,164 of the total of 82,091) stating an interest in training of some kind. This interest has increased over time, from no more than 35% of the Roma people participating in the early years of the Programme to 80% in the period from 2014 to 2019.

Participants also highlighted the ability of the [Acceder](#) Programme to adapt to the needs of the market, for example by offering training of a highly practical nature, tailored to companies' requirements.

The Programme offers a new vision of the options available to the Roma population in the labour market, while the development of participants through education and training brings improved opportunities for labour market inclusion. These factors are key to a change in the perceptions not only of Programme participants, but also of those close to them: parents, partners and children. They offer a new way of looking at the world which impacts on the family's expectations of employment and of education, especially among younger family members and the sons and daughters of people participating in the Programme. Some of the statements made repeatedly by course participants related to "my desire to see my son/daughter complete their compulsory secondary education".

This change of perspective on the labour market and on their social and employment-related situation in turn generates changes in people's relationships to their immediate surroundings. Expectations change along with the opportunities which are seen to be available to the younger Roma generation.

INCREASED AUTONOMY AND SELF-CONFIDENCE AMONG ROMA WOMEN

The efforts made within the [Acceder](#) framework to ensure the participation of women have been considerable over these 20 years, and the results obtained show that the inclusion rate among Roma women (33.6%) is now similar to the rate among Roma men (36.1%).

These positive experiences, along with the creation of an increasing number of female role models who are entering the labour market, particularly through salaried employment, have brought about a change in Roma women's vision of life. Greater importance is now given to issues which were not always considered, linked to the importance of the educational level, or the possibility of obtaining work with an employer.

For these women, this change in vision has translated into an increase in their independence and autonomy, has given them confidence in themselves and greater self-knowledge, and has provided them with an opportunity to plan their future. It is a profound change, yet has happened gradually as each Roma woman has entered the labour market and found that this represents a genuine opportunity.

This change is also shown by the survey of [Acceder](#) participants, in which 84.5% agreed that the Programme "has served to increase understanding that women must have the same opportunities". In fact, when this question is put to Roma women, the level of agreement is as high as 91.6%.

Taking all the above into account, it is unquestionable that the impact of the [Acceder](#) Programme has had a multiplying effect among Roma women, traditionally the group with the lowest level of employability in the labour market.

IMPROVEMENT IN QUALITY OF LIFE

Both for the Programme's direct beneficiaries and for the people closest to them, there has been an improvement in quality of life brought about by the improvement in income levels and, in the medium-term, by the stability potentially offered by salaried employment and the opportunities which open up in the labour market thanks to the experience acquired by participants.

In fact, in the focus groups, participants stated that obtaining jobs in companies sometimes allowed them to transform complex circumstances, "people who say that it has brought order to their lives, that it gives them a chance of stability, of money, of work (...) which may allow them, for example, to leave an unofficial dwelling, find a place to rent, bring order to their lives".

The participation in the Programme of both Roma and non-Roma people and the work experiences created within the Programme contribute directly, thanks to the frequent coexistence, to the **breaking down of many of the stereotypes** relating to each group. Often this is a direct effect which enables the achievement of other Programme objectives related to awareness-raising and the dismantling of prejudices. As shown by the Acceder participant survey, 57.3% agree that the Programme has helped to improve the image of Roma people in society in general.

PARTICIPANTS' OPINIONS OF THE PROGRAMME: VERY POSITIVE

Chapter 5.2 set out the Programme's inclusion data, while this chapter has identified some effects of the Programme on people's lives. On this topic, it is useful to look back at the data from a telephone survey carried out with a sample of 400 people who had participated in the Programme during these 20 years.

On a 5-point scale, people who had participated in Acceder gave the Programme an average score of 3.91 points. The evaluation was more positive among women (4 points compared to 3.82 among men), among people aged 16 to 29 (3.99 points) and among those who participated in the last programming period, from 2014 to 2019 (4.07 points).

Finally, the Programme's beneficiaries were asked about activities in the areas of awareness-raising and public influence, including campaigns, studies and direct advocacy with public authorities. They evaluated these activities as adequate. These are cross-cutting lines of intervention which facilitate and complement the direct interventions, as well as generating support for and driving the vision of the Acceder Programme. Those interviewed generally agreed that the steps taken in these areas had had a significant impact for the Roma population. This is seen in the respondents' evaluation of the "campaigns about employment and social discrimination", which scored 4.17 points out of 5, or the "studies on the barriers facing the Roma population", which scored 3.99 points.

B The immediate environment and the Roma community

So far, this report has analysed the Programme's effects on the people participating in it, but this section will turn to the changes generated in the participants' immediate environments, as well as the possible effects of the Programme on the Roma community as a whole.

REASSESSMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

One of the most significant effects on the people in the participants' immediate environment is probably the change in their attitudes towards education and the importance they attribute to it when seeking access to the labour market.

This has meant that **many people in the participants' immediate environment, such as partners, sons and daughters, have returned to education. Whole families have embraced the idea that firstly education and also vocational training are essential** if they wish to have genuine opportunities to access employment.

This process of transformation has come about thanks to the fact that one individual's experience has a knock-on effect on those close to them. If individuals perceive their participation to have positive effects, those around them tend to share this perception. In many cases this has led to whole families participating in FSG programmes, either [Acceder](#) or one of the other programmes available, depending on their starting point.

This can also be seen in the focus group discussions with participants' families, who say that they started by accompanying the participant to activities organised as part of [Acceder](#) or within the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, and ended up enrolling on training courses, finding employment, or receiving assistance of other kinds from FSG. This inter-relationship of [Acceder](#) and other activities, along with the integrated view it takes of the individual's life, thus ends up leading to the participation of those around them.

The visibility of participants' positive experiences to those around them, as well as the creation of role models within the Roma population, has led in turn to the empowerment of people close to participants by increasing their knowledge of their rights and of the opportunities that exist in the labour market. In group interviews with female participants, women affirm that participating in the Programme has made them "feel better about being Roma women; it isn't like before, women are valued now".

In terms not just of education but also of training, 74.5% of the [Acceder](#) participants who were interviewed consider that the Programme has contributed a lot or quite a lot to the fact that "Roma people see getting trained and qualified as something necessary".

**Thanks to Acceder,
people give increasing
importance to
education and training,
and therefore to
improving their
educational situation.**

It can therefore be said that the [Acceder](#) Programme, through its direct work with the Roma population ([Acceder](#) pathways and their knock-on effects), as well as its indirect work (campaigns, creation of role models, etc.) is leading people to place increasing importance on education and training, and therefore on improving their educational situation.

ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET AND ITS EFFECTS ON FAMILY ORGANISATION

In terms of employment, there has been an important change in the perception of salaried employment, which is now seen as a valid, positively valued work opportunity. This is shown by the solid backing of the family when a person decides to participate or considers participating in the [Acceder](#) Programme, the family environment becoming one of the main sources of support for participation. This change is also seen in the support networks that emerge within the family, and the acceptance of the need to share family responsibilities.

In other words, access to employment for the Roma population, and especially for women, has meant a re-organisation of the family. Although this may not be complete or imply total equality in every family, in many cases it has increased people's understanding of the implications of co-responsibility, and in some cases, it has even increased the acceptance of co-responsibility in practice. This change has been supported by [Acceder](#) Programme activities which aim to lay the foundations to enable women to share chores with their partners when the moment requires it.

In this way, attitudes of co-responsibility have developed along with the Programme itself, and even today this is one of the key elements which must continue to be emphasised in order to build on the impact of the [Acceder](#) Programme so far.

BREAK DOWN OF STEREOTYPES AND EMPOWER IN THE FACE OF ANTIGYPSYISM

The changes described in this section have affected not only the individual's immediate environment, but also the Roma community as a whole. For example, a change has been identified in the importance given to studying and training, and there has also been an empowerment of Roma people, with the result that they are increasingly aware of their rights and therefore of the discrimination they have suffered.

For Roma people, access to salaried employment and the development of relationships with non-Roma people have helped to break down stereotypes, in a two-way process of discovery and recognition flowing between the two 'groups'.

Finally, the process of raising Roma people's awareness of their rights as citizens **has led to their empowerment, and to the development of a more critical and combative vision of the discrimination they suffer** simply for being Roma. This has been one of the most significant effects of [Acceder](#), despite not being an objective directly pursued by the Programme.

In a sense, the process of empowerment in relation to opportunities in the labour market has generated an increasing awareness of the situation of the Roma population more generally, which participants then share with those in their immediate environment and their community. This in turn creates an increasingly critical attitude towards incidents of antigypsyism.

5.4.2 Effects on society as a whole.

So far, we have presented the main changes and effects brought about by the Programme among the Roma people who have participated in the Programme, and among those closest to them. However, the Programme has also had a significant impact on other social agents associated with the [Acceder](#) Programme.

In the following section, we describe the effects on the people participating in the Programme who are not Roma. We will then turn to effects on collaborating companies, the general population as a whole, and finally other social agents.

A Non-Roma population participating in the [Acceder](#) Programme

The results for the Roma population participating in [Acceder](#) can be extended to non-Roma participants. In other words, due to the profiles of these people, the majority of whom live in situations of social vulnerability of various kinds, the Programme's effects on them are similar to the effects seen for the Roma population.

Specifically, these effects include an increased perception of salaried employment as a genuine work opportunity; an increase in the importance the participants place on education and training for their future personal and working lives; and a change in their expectations of work and of life thanks to their access to salaried employment. This means they have new opportunities and experience an improvement in their quality of life.

Obviously, it is also necessary to bear in mind the breaking down of stereotypes among these participants regarding the Roma population. What they 'expect' of Roma people, and how they see them to be in reality, has changed as they share spaces, experiences and the journey towards salaried employment with Roma people.

B Collaborating companies

Companies are often seen as isolated or as simple entities in themselves. However, companies are composed of groups of people who hold specific views of society, and in most cases these views recreate pre-existing social stereotypes.

THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME, A PIONEERING EXPERIENCE FOR MANY COMPANIES

Companies reproduce the stereotypes and prejudices which exist in society relating to Roma people, and this is the reason for the efforts expended by FSG on awareness-raising during company intermediation. Without these efforts, access to salaried employment for the Roma population would have remained even more limited.

Among the companies which have participated in the [Acceder](#) Programme, a significant change in the perceptions and image of Roma people has been identified, both among those in positions of responsibility and among ordinary workers. The Programme has thus been able to contribute to a shift in the image and perception of the Roma population within companies.

Companies have thereby demonstrated the effectiveness of [Acceder](#), given that for many people in the companies this was their first experience with the Roma population. The observed effects were then consolidated through continued participation.

Companies' opinions of the Programme are very positive, based on the effects of its activities on the company itself, both from the point of view of teams and the integration of new members, and in terms of the social change these experiences have helped to bring about.

The companies agree that for them, participating in [Acceder](#) does not only mean contributing to the inclusion of Roma people in salaried employment and to the breaking down of stereotypes. In terms of work and productivity, the opinions and assessments of the business community and its workers are also very positive.

This all goes to reinforce the intention of many of these companies to continue to work and collaborate with the [Acceder](#) Programme, and this supports the continuity of the collaboration over time.

However, it should be noted that, in the opinion of Roma participants, FSG teams and representatives of the collaborating companies, a significant part of the business world still clings to certain stereotypes in the same way as society in general, and this can complicate its collaboration with FSG.

These assessments demonstrate that despite the steps forward taken over the years, particularly with companies who have collaborated with the Programme and offered the 'opportunity to try', Roma people still find themselves facing discrimination, both when trying to access employment and when having their work 'analysed' once in employment. There is evidence of a double standard being applied when work is assessed, depending on whether or not the worker is Roma.

C Citizens in general

As has already been explained, the [Acceder](#) Programme includes lines of action which focus on the fight to break down the stereotypes and prejudices regarding the Roma population which exist among the rest of the country's citizens. These actions include campaigns, studies and activity to influence institutions. This section will describe some of the changes which have been seen in this respect over these last 20 years.

BREAKING DOWN STEREOTYPES THROUGH PERSONAL CONTACT

The first discovery made during this evaluation process was that it has been, and continues to be, personal contact and close relationships which have the greatest effect in terms of breaking down stereotypes. The [Acceder](#) Programme's interventions with non-Roma people and its work with companies have been two of the activities which have been most responsible for these changes.

ANTIGYPSYISM AS A FORM OF STRUCTURAL DISCRIMINATION

It has been stated that the [Acceder](#) Programme, along with the activities that other organisations and collectives have been carrying out in this area, has contributed to a reduction in discrimination. However, there is still general agreement that the Roma community is one of the communities which experiences the greatest discrimination in Spanish society, having suffered for years from structural discrimination, which means that many prejudices and stereotypes relating to Roma people persist in the popular imagination to this day.

The '*Comparative study on the situation of the Roma population in Spain in terms of employment and poverty 2018*', carried out by Fundación Secretariado Gitano, found that 39% of Roma women and men who were interviewed felt that they had suffered discrimination in the past year, regardless of age.

The study also offered an in-depth exploration of the employment expectations of Roma people. 50% said that what they would most like to be doing in one year was to be working, but only 30% thought they would achieve this aim. This reflects the fact that Roma people's experiences of discrimination reduce their future expectations in terms of inclusion in the labour market.

The *Study of the perception of discrimination* conducted by the Spanish Centre for Sociological Research (CIS) in 2013 and 2016 reveals that "being Roma" may be one of the factors leading to the greatest discrimination in Spain today. Around 60% of the Spanish population states that they would choose not to live in the same neighbourhood or building as Roma people, or not to rent a flat to Roma people, or would try to avoid doing these things (this proportion increasing between 2015 and 2017). Half hold similar opinions when it comes to their children going to the same school as Roma children or marrying a Roma person.

STRUCTURAL DISCRIMINATION REQUIRES LARGE-SCALE STRATEGIES

The effect of the [Acceder](#) Programme on society as a whole is very limited, given that it works primarily through direct contact with people, and contributes to breaking down stereotypes by facilitating access to salaried employment. Given that the target group suffers a form of structural discrimination which is deep-rooted in Spanish society, as reflected in the studies mentioned above, it is unlikely that one Programme alone can have a substantial impact.

This does not diminish the impact on Spanish society which the Programme has been able to have by means of establishing direct contacts, creating role models who break down stereotypes, challenging hoax messages spread about the Roma community, and gaining greater support for these efforts from institutions by means of political advocacy.

As has been seen in other areas, the process of change over these 20 years has been gradual. Effects on society as a whole have increased in parallel with the development of the Programme, the improvement of its results, and the increase in the number of people who have been touched by the Programme in one way or another.

D Social organisations

In its beginnings, the [Acceder](#) Programme was a reference point for social organisations when it came to the use of personalised pathways, especially for organisations working with the Roma population. This was due to its highly innovative approach compared with programmes that had been implemented up to that point. As well as its innovative approach, the Programme offered intermediation work with companies, thus taking an active role in terms of facilitating access to employment.

For organisations working with the Roma population, the [Acceder](#) Programme represented a break with the way they had worked previously. It went beyond offering support in the form of aid for those in situations of vulnerability, delivered through the intervention of social services; instead, it offered a new way forward, based on employment and delivered through labour market preparation and inclusion.

5.4.3 Effects on public authorities

As far as public institutions are concerned, the contribution and impact of the [Acceder](#) Programme has been very significant. For these institutions, the [Acceder](#) Programme has meant access to a group which has historically experienced discrimination, which has suffered from a lack of visibility, and which has finally been reached by means of a tailor-made intervention with proven results. This has all been achieved thanks to a change in the approach to intervention, with a focus on salaried employment and on obtaining concrete results.

The capacity of the Programme to generate information has also facilitated its adaptation and the development of specialised activities to respond to arising needs. At the same time, the Programme has served as a starting point for the development of intervention strategies for the Roma population.

To understand exactly what the [Acceder](#) Programme has meant for public authorities, it is necessary to consider the following:

- To begin with, the Programme **helped to make visible the structural problem of social discrimination suffered by Roma people**. This problem was previously “invisible” and impeded access to the labour market through salaried employment for Roma people, and even its consideration as a genuine option. The problem was finally made visible through the generation and publication of data on the situation of the Roma community in Spain.
- It constituted a break with the public image of the Roma population that had existed until then, associating them in public policy terms with dependence on welfare and purely financial assistance, with resistance to salaried employment, and with life outside the system. The Programme proved that an integrated approach, where Roma people were offered the same opportunities as the rest of the population, could enable them to enter salaried employment, integrate socially, and see salaried employment as a viable option for their working lives.
- The data generated on the Roma community, along with the results of the [Acceder](#) Programme, **revealed the discrimination they suffered, making it difficult for them to access employment on an equal footing with the rest of the population**. This discrimination was revealed thanks to the Programme’s communication work. This pushed public authorities to work actively to establish cross-cutting interventions, including employment-related objectives and interventions to boost social inclusion, along with actions to break down social stereotypes and prejudices.
- All this work carried out at national level has been accompanied by work to achieve influence at European level, sometimes promoted by EU institutions themselves. One significant achievement in these terms was the launch of the **EURoma Network**, made possible thanks to work carried out within the framework of the [Acceder](#) Programme in Spain, together with the willingness of the EU to fund projects related to the Roma population. Another is the establishment of the [Acceder](#) Programme as a blueprint for success when working with the Roma population in Europe.
- In recent years, the effect of the [Acceder](#) Programme on public authorities has been demonstrated by the confidence they place in FSG as an agent specialised in working with the Roma population. This has permitted the launch of a range of activities such as the Promociona Programme, and methodological adaptations such as Learning by Doing, which take specific approaches based on the experience and knowledge generated over the years, and which enjoy the support of public institutions.

5.4.4 Effects on the organisation

All the information set out so far shows how the [Acceder](#) Programme has generated and contributed to various changes in the agents who are involved, in one way or another, with the operation of the Programme.

THE PROGRAMME THAT ALLOWS US TO UNDERSTAND FSG

It is clear that all this development has brought about changes in the organisation itself, helping to consolidate certain general characteristics which have now become **key elements, such as professionalism, innovation and results orientation**. It has also contributed to the development of cross-cutting actions which run alongside all the programmes, from the defence of human rights to the consideration of structural issues in all its activities. The following points set out the most significant effects and changes which the [Acceder](#) Programme has brought about in the organisation itself at all stages of this process.

- It has reinforced a way of working within FSG which builds on the original model and integrates what has been learned through the experience of delivering the Programme. This has meant that key elements of the Programme, such as innovation, adaptability, specialisation to a particular group, professionalism and accountability, are both made visible and absorbed by the whole organisation and the mechanisms it uses in interventions.
- Across the board, it is clear that the [Acceder](#) Programme has formed the foundation of the organisation's activities. As the FSG programme with the greatest activity and largest amount of resources over many years, it has aided FSG's regional development and consolidation.
- The Programme has helped to shed light on the situation of the Roma population, being in its early years one of the main sources of information on the community both for the organisation itself and for the public authorities.

A HOLISTIC INTERVENTION WITH THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME AS ITS FOUNDATION

The changes described above are changes which the [Acceder](#) Programme has generated in the organisation over its years of operation, allowing FSG to carry out adjustments, modifications and innovations as an organisation. It is therefore possible that the [Acceder](#) Programme's most significant impact on FSG is achieved through its role as a foundation and a store of experience, allowing the organisation to develop and launch other integrated, inter-related programmes, and thus to offer a package of holistic interventions to the Roma population.

As the [Acceder](#) Programme has developed, then, it has generated learning by gathering data

and detail on the causes of the discrimination suffered by the Roma population. It has also supported the development of additional activities, in some cases integrated as further lines of action (campaigns and awareness-raising), and in other cases launched as new programmes, responding to the needs identified among the people who have been touched in some way by [Acceder](#).

- As noted earlier, the **Promociona Programme**¹⁶ is one of the main results of this learning. This Programme encourages young Roma people to complete their compulsory education and carry on studying in order to decrease the early school dropout rate and improve the conditions under which the Roma community can access the labour market, thus promoting equal opportunities. Over the years, the [Acceder](#) Programme demonstrated that a majority of Roma people have problems due to their educational level. These problems are more difficult to solve once a person has joined [Acceder](#), so it was decided to try to tackle the issue at an earlier age.
- Another example of such learning is the **Calí Programme**¹⁷, focused on working with Roma women to improve their social and labour market inclusion, fostering equal opportunities and gender equality and combating all forms of discrimination. The [Acceder](#) Programme led to the conclusion that among Roma women, particularly those with certain profiles, a series of common circumstances existed which constituted barriers to accessing employment. These needed to be tackled through a specific intervention prior to these women entering the [Acceder](#) Programme.

These are just some examples of how the [Acceder](#) Programme has contributed to changes in the organisation, and they show clearly the importance of its contribution across the board to the organisation's fight against the discrimination suffered by Roma people, as well as to the facilitation of access to the labour market as a key driver of social inclusion.

THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME AS THE BACKBONE OF THE ORGANISATION

In the view of FSG's staff, the [Acceder](#) Programme is a fundamental intervention and constitutes the "backbone" of the work of the Fundación. It allows work to be carried out using a proven methodology, with a history of good results based on vast experience. It also allows new challenges to be identified so that other actions can then be launched to respond to the more specific needs emerging over the years.

¹⁶ The Promociona Programme started in 2009.

¹⁷ Launched in 2016.

Taking all of the above into account, it is clear that the effect of this intervention on FSG has been profound. It is the organisation's longest-established Programme, having formed the foundation of its work for 20 years. It has permitted the identification of needs and supported the launch of new activities throughout this period.

Most of the adjectives which define the organisation today are therefore also adjectives which define this Programme. It is clear that the Programme would not exist without FSG, but it is also true that the organisation would not have evolved in the way it has without the existence of this intervention.

1 in 10 Roma people
have participated in the
Programme
(11%)



4/10

participants obtain a job,
through either salaried
employment or self-
employment



The pathway with the
greatest intensity of
activities over a duration
of 4 years increases
labour market
inclusion to

60%

among Roma people



Doing
vocational
training
increases the
average inclusion
rate to

49%



55%

of those
who participate
in Learning by Doing
obtain a job

6/10

labour market
inclusions since
2013 are through
collaborating
companies



51.3%

of the people
completing a
self-employment
pathway obtain
work



The people who have
entered work
through WISEs
between 2000
and 2019 are
mainly Roma



Having a
Compulsory
Secondary
Education
Certificate increases
the chance of getting
a job by

15%



Previous working
experience increases
the chance of getting
a job by

19%



+90%

of funding has been
invested in direct
interventions with
beneficiaries



An efficient
Programme with
an average cost of
1,925,52€
per participant



5.5 Keys to the Acceder Programme

To conclude, this section examines how the Acceder Programme incorporates a focus on human rights and gender rights as one of the main foundations of its operations.

One of the main activities of the Acceder Programme which has included this focus since its inception is the **systematic collection of sociodemographic information relating to participants**, such as their gender, age, ethnicity, nationality etc. This information comprises one of the key bases for the analysis of the Programme's activities. The rich dataset created means that it is possible to perform data analysis related to the Programme broken down by these variables. This allows the identification of differences which could be caused by issues related to gender or to other sociodemographic characteristics which may intersect with ethnicity to create circumstances of social vulnerability.

A GENDER PERSPECTIVE SINCE THE BEGININGS OF ACCEDER

In terms of implementation and the gender perspective, as mentioned earlier, after 3 years of the Programme's operation, the technical team identified a trend towards lower participation by women.

Based on these early data, the Acceder Programme started to develop different strategies and positive actions to try to correct this inequality, created by the assignation of gender roles which associated women with (unpaid) reproductive and care work and men with productive work. All the strategies developed since that time have included an attempt to incorporate a gender perspective, adapting interventions to the needs and possibilities which are found to exist. Some examples are the following:

- At community level, **the role of intercultural women mediators** was reinforced, identifying one of the first and main difficulties as that of reaching women in neighbourhoods with a Roma population.
- At the same time, Acceder carried out community awareness-raising work, attempting to highlight the **importance of the participation of Roma women** in a Programme aimed at the entire Roma population.
- At the level of the women's environment, two synergistic activities were carried out. First, **work within women's family context** was reinforced, raising awareness of the importance of balancing work and other tasks, and of sharing responsibilities between partners in a couple. At the same time, the Programme adjusted its activities, training courses and even the type of companies collaborating. Bearing in mind the persistence of gender roles in society, the Programme introduced a degree of flexibility in order to facilitate the participation of women.
- There has also been a process of creation of **female role models** who may serve as inspiration for other women, as well as the creation of spaces for women's participation and the integration of an intersectional perspective. This perspective serves to foster the empowerment of

women, and the recognition by women of the multiple discrimination they face as women and as Roma people.

- In terms of employment and training, some reflection is necessary. These areas still see a degree of horizontal and vertical segregation. That is, when the training received on the Programme is analysed, a certain segmentation is observed by gender of participants in terms of the content and specialisms chosen, generally following the pattern of 'masculine' options (construction and manufacturing industries, facility and machinery operators, agricultural labourers, etc) and 'feminine' options (shop and warehouse assistants, domestic and cleaning services, etc)¹⁸. The training is still considered to be effective in the short-term, in terms of breaking through the initial barrier and encouraging women to leave the domestic space. However, ambitions must be extended in the future to include increased participation by women in sectors with greater social recognition and better future prospects.

The strategies above, incorporating a gender perspective, have contributed towards progress made in terms of increased equality between women and men. It has been observed that **this progress has been accompanied by changes taking place in society as a whole over these 20 years**, as well as in the situation of Roma women.

- The efforts to reach Roma women have borne fruit in terms of their entry into salaried employment. The overall figure stands at 33.6%, which is to say that 1 in 3 Roma women who have participated in [Acceder](#) have obtained a job.
- A result of all this cross-cutting work is that over the years, it has become normal to see Roma women in the working world, and this is reflected in the fact that Roma women increasingly have the support of those closest to them when participating in the [Acceder](#) Programme.
- Finally, the integrated work carried out by the Programme has contributed to the empowerment of Roma women, raising their awareness of the possibilities and opportunities they have, as well as helping them to see the benefits of training and salaried employment for their own development and fostering their autonomy.

A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE AS A FOUNDATION OF THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME

The integration of a gender perspective, with its contribution towards equality between women and men, is in itself a way of defending a human rights perspective. Furthermore, bearing in mind both FSG's overall strategy and the nature of the target population, the [Acceder](#) Programme has included a human rights perspective since its inception.

In its work with the Roma population, the [Acceder](#) Programme has attempted since its beginnings to instil the concept of citizenship, to inculcate in Roma men and women an awareness of their rights as citizens of the Spanish state. Access to salaried employment was established from the beginning as a key way to defend this right to full citizenship. This process broke

¹⁸ The specific data relating to training course participants by sex can be found in Annex 9 (available only in Spanish).

through a barrier which the Roma population had traditionally faced, revealing the opportunity for social inclusion offered by access to salaried employment.

In terms of participation, the Acceder Programme has attempted to **develop strategies which favour social participation, enabling the Programme to reach the largest possible proportion of the population and in particular those groups among the Roma population who face the greatest difficulties**. These include for example Roma men and women of non-Spanish nationality, those with some form of disability, and other groups for whom labour market inclusion is even more difficult.

Another line of action to break down discrimination, implemented since the beginnings of the Acceder Programme, has been its work with non-Roma people. This is despite the fact that they do not form the main target group. Through this work, the Programme aims to increase **knowledge of diversity, break down stereotypes and generate synergies**, at the same time creating bonds between people in which ethnicity does not matter. This is an awareness-raising strategy with a multiplying effect, aimed at promulgating a vision of salaried employment as a right for all citizens.

One example has been the creation of intercultural work teams, allowing the beneficiaries of the Programme to observe skilled work being carried out at first hand, with a clear highlighting and multiplying effect.

All the initiatives described above have continued with some degree of stability over the 20 years of Acceder's operation. The following are some strategies which have undergone changes in these years:

- In the **business world**, key to the success of the Programme, a strategy was developed in the early years whereby the Programme's approach was explained to companies, along with the fact that it worked with people in situations of social vulnerability. However, it was not mentioned that the majority of participants were Roma. This strategy was an attempt to avoid an initial impulse among business people to reject the Roma community. The idea was to pursue the primary objective of getting companies to commit to the Programme, and from that point onwards, work to explain the focus of the Programme and reduce the prejudices which existed in the business world.

This strategy has been gradually modified as the Acceder Programme and FSG have become more overt in their activities, as the positive experiences of many companies have become known, and as company intermediators have gradually increased awareness and recognition of the prejudices which exist towards Roma people. Today, the strategy is much more direct and transparent, highlighting that participation in the Programme is a tool which the company itself can use to combat discrimination and benefit from the enrichment which comes from having a diverse workforce.

- As mentioned earlier, the first communication campaign aimed at the general public was launched in 2004, and such campaigns were carried out more systematically from 2010 onwards. This change exemplifies the incorporation of a human rights focus. This was deemed

The evaluation has indicated the contribution made by this Programme to the weakening of stereotypes, facilitating the normalisation of salaried employment for Roma people.

necessary when experience on the Programme, supported by analyses by the technical team, revealed that the discrimination and prejudice faced by the Roma community were more systematic than originally thought, and therefore required action aimed at society as a whole.

In terms of results, **the information gathered all points to a greater recognition by Roma men and women of their own rights and obligations as full citizens, leading to an increased assimilation of the concept of citizenship.** This has meant an increase in the empowerment of the Roma population and in their awareness of the discrimination they suffer and have historically suffered, and against which they can defend themselves using the legal processes available to them, rather than simply accepting it as “given”.

This increase in empowerment has a generational element; while older members of the population continue to accept such discrimination to a certain degree, the younger generation has a much more combative attitude, refusing to accept discrimination as a “normal” part of being Roma leading social protest and asserting their rights when faced with these situations.

As far as companies are concerned, the Programme’s approach has succeeded in **bringing about changes in many of the collaborating companies, increasing their interest in working with Roma people and helping to encourage other companies to join the Programme as well.** This has all had an impact in terms of breaking down stereotypes, both within companies themselves and among people related with these companies either directly (workers) or indirectly (clients).

Moreover, both in companies and in wider society, the evaluation has shown the contribution the Programme has made to the reduction of stereotypes and the normalisation of salaried employment for Roma people. Nonetheless, the Programme’s work towards this normalisation is still considered to be an area where efforts need to be intensified.

The analysis set out in this section supports the conclusion that **both the focus on human rights and the focus on gender have been present throughout the Programme’s development, both in its initial formulation and in the adaptations which have been made in the course of its implementation.** In fact, some of the decisions taken over these years demonstrate that the Programme and its technical team have always incorporated intersectionality as an integral part of its approach. Acceder’s development has been analysed, for example, in terms of the various forms of discrimination Roma people may face.

These strategies have had a significant impact in terms of defending human rights and equality between men and women. They have functioned as tools to ensure these principles are defended, operating in step with the changes that have occurred in society in general over these 20 years.

From this point of view, the Acceder Programme has not been the only driver of such changes. However, through its interventions and working methods, it has supported and accompanied Roma people in fighting for their rights and against discrimination. In this way it has facilitated the inclusion of the Roma population in the general social changes which have taken place.

6. Conclusions

The evaluation of 20 years of the **Acceder** Programme has yielded findings on the reach of the Programme, its development and results, the efficiency of the intervention, its sustainability, and the impacts felt by various agents. To round off this process, the main conclusions drawn on the basis of this evaluative exercise will now be set out.

The **main conclusion** of this evaluation is that the **Acceder** Programme is **achieving its objectives**, and that in addition to this it is helping to generate **social and institutional changes** which create an environment favourable to the fight against the discrimination faced by the Roma population.

However, this is not all the Programme has achieved. This evaluation has shown that it is not only an **effective programme** (providing access to employment for 4 in 10 of its participants), able to surpass the objectives agreed with the European Social Fund (scoring over 100% for each). It is also an efficient programme, with the average cost of each pathway (under 2,000€) being three times lower than the reference cost set by the public authorities. These results are the fruit of an intervention based on a well-founded methodological model which incorporates an innovative approach, collaboration with companies, and a specialisation in working with the Roma population. Thanks to these strengths, the intervention boasts the participation of more than 10% of Spain's Roma population.

The conclusions will be set out in the following order. First, conclusions will be presented regarding the direct results of the **Acceder** Programme, relating to access to employment. Second, the impact of the Programme will be analysed, focusing on the agents experiencing each of the changes brought about. Third, the factors determining the success of the intervention will be set out, relating to the implementation, approach and efficiency of the Programme. Fourth and finally, we will identify the main limitations identified in the course of this evaluation in relation to the implementation of the **Acceder** Programme.

6.1 Results in access to employment which demonstrate the success of the **Acceder** Programme

1 The **Acceder** Programme, an effective Programme which enables 4 in 10 participants to obtain a job.

The evaluation has shown that the effectiveness of the **Acceder** Programme is very high: 37.2% of the Programme's participants obtain a job within four years of beginning to participate. If we ignore the time elapsed,

the data show that more than 40% of participants have obtained employment over these 20 years.

The labour market inclusion data show differences in terms of participant profiles. **Ethnicity and educational level are the two main explanatory variables.** For example, the fact of being Roma reduces the likelihood of obtaining a job, while people who have com-

pleted compulsory secondary education are 15% more likely to obtain a job than those who have a lower educational level.

② The Acceder Programme has surpassed every objective set by the ESF in terms of participation, training and access to employment.

The data gathered for this evaluation have shown the effectiveness of the [Acceder](#) Programme in terms of meeting its objectives over 20 years of operation, surpassing 100% for every objective set. In the case of some objectives, it attained figures 4 times higher than those envisaged.

These results form the basis for the continuity of the intervention over time, with the ESF as a key supporter and funder of an intervention which has met and surpassed its objectives and which, furthermore, has adapted throughout its years of operation to social and economic changes in order to continue responding to the needs of the labour market.

For this reason, the support of the ESF is considered vital to the geographical expansion of the intervention as well as to its status at the European level, where it is seen as a model for interventions with the Roma population in the EU.

③ Having a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate considerably increases the labour market inclusion rate, especially among Roma women.

This evaluation demonstrates that **educational level is a key variable** explaining a person's chances of accessing employment,

especially in the case of the Roma population.

For instance, the inclusion rates both for Roma women and Roma men are lower than those for non-Roma people when comparing people who do not have a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate. However, the trend is reversed among people who do have a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate. The inclusion rate increases by 15 p.p. overall (from 33% to 48%) when people obtain a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate, but Roma people (and particularly Roma women) in this group have a higher inclusion rate than non-Roma people in this group. Roma women with at least a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate therefore have the highest inclusion rate of all.

Having work experience before joining [Acceder](#) is also a significant factor; having such experience is associated with a 19% increase in a person's chances of accessing employment.

The figures presented in this evaluation show the wisdom of placing emphasis within the Programme on increasing the educational level of the Roma population, given the clear difference in results obtained.

④ The Acceder pathway including training along with guidance and active job-search activities, over a duration of at least two years, offers the keys to success in labour market inclusion.

Among the various pathways created as part of the [Acceder](#) Programme, the evaluation has shown that the Acceder-type pathway, including training along with guidance and active job-search activities, is the most effective in facilitating access to employment,

especially when followed for two years or more. People following this type of pathway have an inclusion rate of 46.4%, while the rate for those following the pathway which only offers guidance and active job-search activities is 33.2%, and the rate for those who only take training courses is 29.8%. In each case, it can be observed that inclusion rates rise along with time spent participating in the Programme, with the optimal amount of time spent on the Programme being between two and three years.

The evaluation has shown that the non-Roma population has a greater chance of accessing employment, which implies that Roma people require pathways of greater intensity (the *Acceder*-type pathway) and longer duration (two or three years). When this pathway is followed by Roma people who have a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate, the inclusion rate rises to 60% for Roma women and 58% for Roma men.

5 People who undergo the *Acceder* Programme's training activities have inclusion rates which are above the average for the Programme, especially in the case of vocational training courses and *Learning by Doing*.

The evaluation has shown that undergoing training activities as part of the *Acceder* Programme increases inclusion rates with respect to the Programme average. There is a difference in all cases of more than 15 p.p., showing the effectiveness of these training activities.

- **Vocational training courses**, one of the Programme's main training activities, aim to develop professional skills which equip people for specific posts. These courses form the

Acceder Programme's training base. People undergoing this kind of training have inclusion rates of nearly 49%, almost 12 p.p. higher than the average for the Programme. The positive effect of these training courses on the Roma population is greater than that on the non-Roma population, as seen from the increase in the inclusion rate compared with those who do not undergo such training. Among Roma women with a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate, the inclusion rate increases considerably, climbing as high as 60%.

- **Learning by Doing** shows itself to be a model training activity, offering its participants the highest labour market inclusion rates at over 55%. The activity succeeds in reducing the difference in inclusion rates between people who have completed secondary education and people who have not. In other words, it is a particularly helpful training programme for Roma people with low levels of education, achieving an inclusion rate for this group of more than 50%.
- Alongside these two training activities, and as a complement to them, **courses in basic and digital skills** emerge as a form of support for the main forms of training, being shown to improve rates of access to employment when followed alongside other training courses of greater intensity. For example, there is an increase of 15 p.p. in the inclusion rate when participants take *Learning by Doing* alongside these skills courses, compared with those who take *Learning by Doing* alone. The increase is 6 p.p. when vocational training courses are taken along with these skills courses, compared with those following vocational training courses alone.

⑥ Work with companies has proven fundamental for access to employment, especially for the Roma population.

The evaluation has shown that 4 in 10 cases of labour market inclusion are achieved as a direct consequence of intermediation work with companies during the final phase of the [Acceder](#) pathway, after guidance, active job-search activities and training. Intermediation is used in most cases concerning Roma people (71.5% of those participating) and it proves particularly useful for women, given that almost 45% cases of labour market inclusion among women are achieved through intermediation.

Of the total number of people who have obtained employment, 51.7% have done so on at least one occasion through companies collaborating with the [Acceder](#) Programme. This figure has risen to over 60% since 2013. Once again, both participation and the frequency of access to employment through collaborating companies is higher among Roma people, and in particular among Roma women.

These results show the value of work with companies; the results suggest that it helps to reduce inequalities in access to the labour market for the Roma population compared with the rest of the population, with a direct influence on their ability to enter employment. In the case of Roma women, this intermediation helps to reduce the inequalities in access to employment due both to their ethnicity and to the fact that they are women.

⑦ Self-employment pathways and WISEs are additional resources which show the Acceder Programme's ability to adapt.

Both the self-employment pathway and the work with WISEs are small-scale activities in terms of absolute numbers of participants. Nonetheless, these activities, started nine years after the Programme's launch, are a demonstration of the Programme's capacity to adapt and adjust to the needs of the Roma population.

- People following the **self-employment pathway** experience an **inclusion rate of over 50%**, a figure which implies certain peculiarities in the sense that inclusion depends directly on the launch of a self-employment project.
- In the case of WISEs, 100% of the people who work in these companies have an experience of employment, in a protected yet authentic work environment designed for people in a situation of increased social vulnerability. Roma people represent 81% of those participating, and participants are of a higher age than the average for the Programme.

6.2 Impact of the Acceder Programme on different agents

1 Improved quality of life thanks to greater job stability, increased autonomy, self-confidence and importance given to education and training.

The fact that more than 1 in 3 Roma people who participate in Acceder have obtained a job has changed the Roma community's view of salaried employment. It is now seen by this group as a genuine opportunity to access the labour market, and this has sparked increased interest in and knowledge of labour market opportunities, as well as increased confidence in their ability to take them up.

The Acceder Programme has helped Roma people to understand the importance of education in accessing employment, as indicated by 3 in 4 of those surveyed. This change in perception is in line with the change in Roma people's views of training, which they now view as a tool to facilitate their access to employment. To illustrate this, in the Acceder Programme's early years, 35% showed interest in training, while in more recent years the figure has risen to over 80%.

Access to the labour market through salaried employment often brings with it greater economic stability and greater autonomy in planning one's life. This is especially significant in the case of Roma women, and contributes to improving the quality of life for the women themselves as well as for the people close to them.

These impacts on the lives of Acceder's participants, brought about by their entry into the labour market and the change in their

views of salaried employment, are seen among both Roma and non-Roma participants of similar profiles.

2 Among Roma women, access to employment creates greater empowerment as well as having transformative effects on their community.

The information gathered through this evaluation has shown that the drive to ensure the participation of Roma women has had good results in terms of their labour market inclusion; however, their entry into the employment also has transformative effects within their community.

Women's entry into employment has frequently involved a degree of reorganisation within their families. In some cases, this has included the assumption of shared responsibilities as a normal practice in their households. This helps to create favourable conditions for Roma women to enter salaried employment, with increasing support from families for women to take this option.

However, the effects go deeper. **The process of accessing employment has led to the empowerment of many Roma women**, strengthening their sense of autonomy and independence. The changes mentioned here have not all happened at the same pace; rather, their impacts have multiplied as **new female role models** have emerged within communities. This process has been particularly effective among the younger population.

③ **There has been a general reassessment within the Roma community of the value of education and training, along with empowerment in the face of antigypsyism and changes in family organisation.**

The Roma population has observed how their chances of accessing employment increase in line with an increase in their educational level. This has led to a change in perspective among the people surrounding the Programme's participants, **altering their attitude to education and training** so that these are now seen as fundamental factors in access to employment.

The perceived importance of educational level for life in general, and in particular for accessing employment, has become patently clear in the 35 p.p. decrease between 2005 and 2018 in the proportion of people who are illiterate or who have not completed primary education. The point is further illustrated by the 11 p.p. rise in the proportion of the Roma population who have their Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate or a higher qualification.

All the changes described above have contributed to an increased awareness among the Roma community of the discrimination they face. Roma people increasingly acknowledge the situations of discrimination they have suffered and continue to suffer as a community, which for a long time have been seen as normal, or have not been seen at all. This has sparked a process of empowerment which has created an increasingly critical, combative attitude towards incidents of antigypsyism.

In addition, the generation of successful role models in terms of access to employment, particularly among women, has brought about

changes within families, who increasingly practise shared responsibility within their households and offer support for women taking this option. In other cases, people close to the [Acceder](#) participant have returned to formal education in order to obtain their Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate.

④ **In the Programme's collaboration with companies, there is a barrier in terms of obtaining their initial participation. However, once they have started to collaborate, this collaboration is sustained over time and contributes to breaking down stereotypes.**

The main conclusion relating to the participation of collaborating companies is that their experience with the [Acceder](#) Programme has been very positive; after their first experience with the Programme, the majority decide to continue participating. It is therefore vital to ensure that this first experience can form a foundation for the activities they may be involved in later.

The main effect of the intervention on the companies themselves is related to the **breaking down of stereotypes existing on both sides**, both in the companies' workers' views of the Roma population and vice versa. The Programme helps to prove to companies that, given the same opportunities as other people, Roma people are just as suitable for employment. This reveals that the barriers to employment facing the Roma community are rooted in a process of structural discrimination, based on unfounded stereotypes and prejudices.

5 The impact on citizens has been limited, being achieved mainly through direct contact between Roma and non-Roma populations.

The evaluation has shown that the impact of the [Acceder](#) Programme on society as a whole has been limited, being based on the breaking down of stereotypes relating to the Roma population thanks to direct contact between people. This contact has been generated in two contexts: in the activities involved in the inclusion pathways, on which 30% of participants are non-Roma people, and in collaborating companies.

Beyond this effect, which is significant yet limited, the evaluation has found evidence that the Roma community suffers structural discrimination with deep roots in Spanish society, as is reflected in multiple studies. This makes it truly difficult for a single Programme such as [Acceder](#) to make a substantial impact on this discrimination.

Despite this, the achievements of the Programme among the country's citizens are notable, including the generation of direct contacts and new bonds between individuals, the creation of role models among the Roma population who have successfully joined the labour market, and the launch of actions to challenge hoax messages about the Roma community.

6 The Acceder Programme has increased the attention paid by public authorities to Roma issues over these 20 years, finally achieving their inclusion on the public agenda.

The impact of the [Acceder](#) Programme on public authorities is very significant, although it has varied over the 20 years of the Programme's existence. In its early years, the Acceder Programme contributed to the generation of information and to making visible a problem of discrimination suffered by part of the population, which had not previously received the attention it deserved. In addition, in this early phase, the [Acceder](#) Programme went even further, breaking with the traditional approach to interventions with the Roma population, and moving away from an assistance-oriented focus to a focus on preparing and activating people to enter employment.

Once this first change had been achieved at national level, over the following years the [Acceder](#) Programme carried out work aimed at influencing the work of institutions at national and European level. This involved gaining recognition for the [Acceder](#) Programme as a model intervention at European level, at the same time as laying the foundations for the creation of national strategies for the Roma population, including this new focus on labour market inclusion.

This has all been reflected in the National Strategies developed over recent years and in the multiple Spanish regional strategies (10 in effect in 2018) which specifically include work with the Roma population. The [Acceder](#) methodology has also been integrated within some public employment strategies.

In general, the [Acceder](#) Programme has contributed to ensuring that public authorities focus squarely on a community which historically has suffered discrimination, which had little visibility, and which has now been reached by an intervention which is spe-

cialised in working with this population and whose results speak for themselves. This has all been achieved through a change of strategy involving a new focus on access to salaried employment and a results-driven approach.

7 The Acceder Programme, the backbone of FSG and the key to understanding the organisation's current approach.

The [Acceder](#) Programme has come to form the backbone of FSG, and therefore many of the features which have been identified as characteristics of this intervention are also closely associated with the organisation as a whole. Specifically, features such as professionalism, the capacity for innovation and the focus on results are today hallmarks as much of FSG as of the Acceder Programme.

Along with this contribution, the [Acceder](#) Programme has had a direct impact in terms of increased knowledge of the Roma population at FSG, including a deeper understanding of the various causes of the discrimination they suffer. This has permitted FSG to increase its social and institutional impact, as well as informing the launch of other actions to meet the needs of the Roma population.

The [Acceder](#) Programme has therefore become **the foundation upon which FSG has built an integrated intervention**, working in the different areas and on the different factors involved in the structural discrimination suffered by the Roma population in Spain.

8 Acceder's working methodology, based on work with companies and personalised pathways, has become a blueprint for work done by social organisations with vulnerable groups.

From a methodological point of view, three of the most innovative elements of the [Acceder](#) Programme since its beginnings, 20 years ago, are now integrated into the work of most social organisations.

The first of the three elements are the inclusion of intermediation and **work with companies** as a standard part of an individual's pathway. The second relates to the organisation of the intervention based on **personalised pathways**, with an emphasis on the needs of the person and not on the Programme itself. The third is the fact that the Programme's work with Roma people is focused on **employment**. This represents a break with the aid-related approach which was the most common approach 20 years ago.

The adoption of these methods by other social organisations is not a consequence only of the [Acceder](#) Programme, as other experiences are also relevant. However, it is undeniable that the continuity of the intervention, its achievement of the objectives, and its participation in different spaces in order to share learning have all contributed to a change in the nature of interventions carried out by various social organisations.

6.3 Factors explaining the success of the intervention

1 The integrated vision of the Acceder Programme is a determining factor in its success.

Throughout this evaluation it has been noted that one of the most innovative elements of the Programme is its focus on employment. Even so, the intervention includes an analysis of and a response to the needs of the person considered as a whole, taking into account all the variables which may be involved in the process of fostering their inclusion in the labour market. This approach requires a focus on all parts of a person's life. It also brings with it the need to take into account the person's environment and their family, and to ensure that the change affects the family members too, increasing the possibility of further changes.

- In terms of employment, this integrated approach requires methodological adaptations within the Acceder Programme to take into account the specific characteristics and requirements of the individual. An example is Learning by Doing, which offers financial help and work experience within the framework of a training intervention. The Acceder Programme has also launched various other actions such as the Calí Programme. This Programme aims to develop a series of pre-employment skills among Roma women, which are necessary in order to access labour market, and which therefore need to be developed for Acceder to be truly effective.
- Bearing in mind the environment in which participants live, the Programme's integrated vision involves carrying out various

activities which focus on the people, particularly family members, who surround the Acceder participant. This enables them to accompany the participant in the process of change. Proinfancia or Promociona are programmes that focus on the children and adolescents of the families, while the Calí Programme focuses on Roma women.

- Finally, other types of activities have emerged connected with lines of intervention in which both the participant and the people around them may need assistance. Such activities help the individual to continue participating in Acceder and thereby sustain their chances of accessing employment. Examples are actions in the areas of housing, health and the fight against discrimination.

The Acceder Programme has thus put into practice a series of complementary actions responding to its integrated vision of each individual's needs, which helps to ensure the quality of the intervention as well as the inclusion of a greater number of people in the process of change.

2 Confronting discrimination against the Roma population from a holistic perspective has proved fundamental to achieving the Programme's objectives.

From its inception, the Acceder Programme has observed that the discrimination suffered by the Roma population in Spain has a structural component. It is thus understood that it is not enough simply to offer an integrated response to the needs of the Roma

population itself; rather, more extensive action is required, aimed at breaking down stereotypes and creating an ecosystem which facilitates the inclusion of the Roma population in salaried employment.

This holistic perspective implies the need to work with non-Roma people as part of the [Acceder](#) Programme, bringing about contact between people of different ethnicities in order to break down stereotypes. It also suggests that working with companies is essential to the achievement of labour market inclusion through salaried employment. The Programme has also carried out significant activities aimed at raising social awareness and influencing institutions. This enables the Programme to achieve an impact on society as a whole and more specifically on public authorities, on other social organisations, and on agents of social influence such as the communication media and the education sector.

All this work has been carried out with the aim of creating a favourable environment so that, if the right intervention is applied and the participants in [Acceder](#) improve their working skills, their chances of accessing the labour market will not be reduced by the social discrimination which the Roma population faces in Spain.

③ Access to employment, a key factor by which “a virtuous circle is created”, allowing further changes to happen .

The [Acceder](#) Programme is achieving its objectives in terms of labour market inclusion, and based on this achievement, it is helping to generate social and institutional change. This in turn creates an environment which

supports the fight against the discrimination suffered by the Roma population.

Since its launch, the [Acceder](#) Programme has therefore firmly believed that the achievement of the hoped-for result, that is, an increase in access to salaried employment for the Roma population, is the best possible means of consolidating its intervention, generating a positive image and thereby having an impact on various key agents.

It can be observed that the Programme’s integrated intervention with [Acceder](#) participants, and its holistic view of the discrimination suffered by the Roma population, mutually reinforce each other in terms of results. In other words, the changes seen in the people participating, their access to employment and the improvement in their quality of life and that of their community offer information which encourages other agents, identified by means of this holistic perspective, to get involved in the process of change and of fighting against discrimination.

In this way, the direct results of the [Acceder](#) Programme drive the involvement of other agents such as companies, which both facilitate access to employment for the Roma population and help to generate social change within this population. In this way, a “virtuous circle” is created in which effects on Roma people, changes in the community and impacts on their environment are all inter-related.

④ The entire process takes on greater significance thanks to the reach of the Programme: 1 in 10 Roma people in Spain have participated in the Acceder Programme.

In addition to the Programme's positive results, it is worth noting the significant reach and coverage of the Programme, which has allowed it to extend its positive impact to a very significant proportion of the Roma population of Spain. Over its 20 years of existence, the Acceder Programme has seen the participation of 58,451 Roma people, which amounts to 11% of the country's Roma population. This figure rises to 16.6% if we consider only those of economically active age.

These data demonstrate the high degree of penetration the Acceder Programme has been able to achieve among the Roma population, making it a reference point for this population, and enabling the creation of social change in the community as increasing numbers of people participate in the Programme.

The coverage figures show the Acceder Programme's capacity to respond to the needs of Roma people, creating a multiplying effect on other people in their environment by encouraging them to participate in the Programme itself or in the complementary activities which surround it.

⑤ The focus on results is key to the generation of role models within the Roma community and creates a “calling card” to be used with other key agents.

The Acceder Programme, as previously stated, has attempted to achieve results over the short and medium-term in order to 'prove' itself. This allows the Programme to generate further changes and continue with its intervention. For this reason, it has adopted a 'results-oriented' approach which has meant prioritising work with a certain profile

of individual: mainly young, with a balance in participation between men and women. Participants' levels of education are above the average for the Roma population, although the level is still generally low, and they have an existing motivation to access salaried employment.

This prioritisation and results-oriented approach has permitted the creation of role models who can foster a positive image of salaried employment among the Roma population, particularly in the early years of the Programme, at the same time as breaking down stereotypes linking the Roma population solely with welfare-based assistance.

The results achieved have provided an ideal basis upon which to encourage and boost the participation of other agents, meaning that the results-oriented approach has provided a “calling card” for the Acceder Programme from its first days of operation.

⑥ The Acceder Programme is in a process of constant change, but has enduring hallmarks related to innovation and adaptability.

The evaluation shows that over these 20 years the Acceder Programme has proved itself a living programme, in constant movement, with the capacity to adapt to changes and even to anticipate them. This capacity to adapt, linked to the innovation that lies at the heart of the Programme, has become its hallmark.

However, there are other hallmarks. Over its 20 years of life, the Acceder Programme has established a range of other defining characteristics, including the professionalisation of

the staff team, its specialisation in interventions with the Roma community, the capacity to innovate in its actions, the focus on results, the interculturality of the organisation, and the defence across the board of human rights and gender equality.

Moreover, the evaluation of the [Acceder](#) Programme has demonstrated that all these characteristics have been consolidated as the intervention has continued. It has been the implementation of the Programme, along with the experience of the people associated with it, which have in the end established these characteristics as hallmarks of the organisation itself.

7 The Acceder methodology is now well-established and ensures a high degree of efficiency in its interventions.

One of the most significant aspects of the [Acceder](#) Programme is that it employs a well-established methodology which emerged from a pilot project and has been gradually refined as the Programme has been implemented, based on continuous analysis of its activities. This has allowed the [Acceder](#) methodology to undergo adaptations which ensure even greater effectiveness in its achievement of results.

These results demonstrate that the pathways and their adaptations are of high quality, and also that the [Acceder](#) Programme is a highly efficient intervention. To be specific, the evaluation has shown that the cost of each [Acceder](#) pathway is less than 2,000€ (1,925.52€), which is three times lower than the reference cost currently used by various public authorities.

8 European funding has provided the intervention with continuity over time and has brought about changes in attitude within the Roma community.

Over the 20 years of life of the [Acceder](#) Programme, European finance has accounted for more than 70% of its total funding, forming the financial base upon which the Programme has been run. Moreover, the phasing of the funding, based on periods of several years' duration, has permitted the generation of medium- and long-term effects which would otherwise have been difficult to contemplate. Some of the changes described here have not occurred immediately or uniformly, but rather have been gradual and have arrived in various stages.

The continuity of the intervention has in turn allowed the creation of changes in expectations and attitudes among the younger generation. It is not only that the younger members of the population are more aware of the opportunities offered by the labour market, they also confront the situations of discrimination suffered by the Roma population in a way which clearly shows a process of empowerment, a generational change, supported by the implementation of the [Acceder](#) Programme over a period of 20 years. In the process of working to achieve attitudinal changes, the focus on the younger population has been of key importance. It is this generation's ability to see new opportunities as well as to follow new paths, distinct from those followed in the past, which has allowed these attitudinal changes to take place.

In this context, European funding, along with finance from national public authorities, regional and local funding has been the driving force behind the implementation of this

Programme and has allowed its impact to be measured after 20 years of operation.

⑨ The integrated nature and holistic perspective of the intervention show the incorporation of a Human Rights and Gender perspective which underlies the development of the Acceder Programme.

The evaluation has demonstrated that the human rights and gender perspective has been integrated into the Acceder Programme since its inception. This has involved the adaption of many of its activities in order to incorporate these perspectives. Some of the activities carried out over the years show how the

Programme and its technical team have integrated an intersectional approach across the board, adding an extra perspective and allowing the analysis of Acceder's operations based on the various types of discrimination which Roma people may face.

The integration of these perspectives in the foundation of the Programme has had effects in terms of the results achieved; for example, the process of empowerment of the Roma population as a whole has involved the claiming of their rights as full and equal citizens. Roma women, meanwhile, have found themselves driving the social changes in terms of gender equality which have taken place both in society as a whole and in the Roma community over these 20 years.

6.4 The Acceder Programme has some weaknesses

① There is room for improvement in terms of the quality of employment generated through the Acceder Programme.

Throughout this evaluation, there have been suggestions indicating that the employment generated by the Acceder Programme could be improved. The evaluating team is aware that the quality of these jobs is often limited by the educational and training profile of the people seeking employment. Nonetheless, this profile has gradually improved as the years have gone by, and even for those with a more limited profile, sectors and jobs which meet certain minimum quality criteria should receive preference.

The low quality of the positions offered represents a limitation on the potential improve-

ment in people's quality of life. If they do not obtain a job which offers a certain degree of stability, this can also be counter-productive in the sense that some people's first experience of salaried employment will be a negative one.

② Identify jobs which break with traditional gender roles and offer employment beyond traditionally ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ sectors.

Both in training and in access to employment, it can be observed that both women and men tend to aim at jobs and sectors which are traditionally seen as ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’ respectively. In the context of the [Acceder](#) Programme, this is considered an appropriate starting strategy to break down initial barriers to employment. However, after 20 years of work, a re-orientation of this approach is needed so that the focus is not simply on finding jobs, but on breaking down gender stereotypes in the working world.

If this does not occur, then by continuing to assume traditional gender roles in employment, Roma women will end up doing jobs that offer lower social recognition, normally accompanied by lower salaries. This means that gender inequalities will continue to be reproduced.

③ The Programme has limitations in terms of its ability to sustain the participation of people with short-term needs.

The [Acceder](#) Programme takes into account a series of factors connected to motivation as a requirement for participation in the Programme, along with age, gender, ethnicity and educational level. However, certain profiles experience limitations as regards the access and continuation in the Programme even if they meet all the requirements. These are mainly the profiles of people whose basic needs are not met.

In other words, there are people who, while

they are interested in participating in the Programme, have short-term financial needs which oblige them to continue working in their current situation. For this reason, they are not able to participate in the intervention in a sustained, long-term fashion.

④ An overwhelmingly urban programme which has not yet reached the rural world.

Since its beginnings, the [Acceder](#) Programme has been designed as a primarily urban Programme, implemented in the main cities of Spain, and focused in many cases on employment in the services sector, most commonly located in urban settings.

This implies a limitation in its reach, as it fails to offer activities or chances for participation to Roma people in rural settings. While these people face similar problems to those in urban settings in terms of discrimination and access to salaried employment, they therefore lack the opportunity to access an intervention of the kind represented by the [Acceder](#) Programme.

⑤ It is necessary to continue working on awareness-raising with companies to ensure double standards are not applied to the Roma population.

Despite the positive results achieved with collaborating companies related to the breaking down of stereotypes, and the opening up of new opportunities for the Roma population, the working Roma population contacted in the course of this evaluation have pointed to some discouraging dynamics which exist in companies.

In general, they have identified the existence of a double standard when the work of Roma employees is assessed. They have indicated that, despite the awareness-raising activities carried out with companies, certain stereotypes still exist which mean that Roma people are obliged to constantly “prove” that they are worthy of employment.

involvement of these agents, along with the limited impact of the Programme upon them, is considered a weakness of the [Acceder](#) Programme.

6 Limited impact of the Programme on Spanish citizens in general.

The [Acceder](#) Programme has contributed to highlighting the discrimination which is experienced by the Roma population and the anti-gypsyism which exists in society and affects all areas of their lives. However, the effects of the Programme on Spanish citizens in general have been limited. This is related to the fact that the discrimination suffered by the Roma population has a structural component, which can only be resolved by very ambitious, long-term action.

With this in mind, although the [Acceder](#) Programme has provided an example of how such discrimination can be confronted, what has become obvious is that one Programme alone cannot tackle discrimination of a structural nature.

7 Very limited impact on socialising agents which could act to combat the discrimination experienced by the Roma population.

The evaluation has found that despite some efforts being made, the involvement of two key socialising agents, in the form of the communication media and the educational community, has been very limited. The limited

7. Learning, proposals and recommendations of the Fundación Secretariado Gitano

The commissioning of the evaluation of the [Acceder](#) Programme which is presented here was a response to three key concerns which are always present in the activities of the Fundación Secretariado Gitano.

First, **the need to be accountable for the action taken with the support of public funds and the work of the many different agents involved in this initiative** over two decades. Accountability not for the good use and deployment of the resources used, given that there already exist effective, long-term cost control mechanisms, but for the value of the investment made in terms of the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of the Programme.

Second, **the need to support by scientific evidence the interpretation of the data, the results and the intuitions of FSG staff about the validity of the approaches taken to its work**, the methodological choices made and above all the impact and social value of the Programme.

Finally, and this relates to the recommendations made below, the need to **reflect on the intervention implemented over these 20 years and extract lessons to be learned**. These lessons can be applied in the improvement and further development of the Programme itself, and can also be taken into consideration in the design and shaping of public employment policies. In particular, these include policies directed towards the Roma population and more generally those directed towards the groups which suffer the greatest exclusion and vulnerability in their relationship with the labour market.

7.1 Future challenges for the [Acceder](#) Programme

In terms of the future development of the [Acceder](#) Programme, the evaluation which has been carried out offers very valuable information on the changes and challenges which need to be undertaken in the coming years. It also offers important information on the methodological options which have been revealed to be most effective and which should therefore receive the firmest support. In addition, it identifies the variables (such as level of education) and profiles (such as those of women and young people) which act as key factors and offer great potential for change to bring about progress towards social inclusion for the Roma community.

It is necessary to find increasingly effective responses to the needs and difficulties of a Roma population which is increasingly diverse and less homogeneous. This population includes people and families in situations of severe exclusion, with low levels of qualification and poor conditions for accessing employment, but also an emerging generation of young men and women who are better qualified than previous generations and have clear expectations and motivation to enter the labour market.

These are some of the challenges and changes which the [Acceder](#) Programme must be prepared for in the coming years if it is to adapt to the social transformations taking place and continue to be an effective, valuable Programme for the social inclusion of the Roma population:

1 From the Acceder Programme to the Acceder ecosystem: responses adapted to an increasingly heterogeneous population with diverse needs.

Throughout its 20 years of life, the Programme has adapted to changes in society and the working world, as well as to the changing reality and social situation of the Roma community itself; changes which Acceder's activities have helped to bring about.

Our aspiration is that over the next decade Acceder should continue to be the main intervention boosting the social inclusion of the Roma population. In practical terms, this means the Programme will need to maintain the characteristics which have been identified in the evaluation as the keys to its success. At the same time, changes will need to be introduced to resolve some of the weaknesses and inadequacies detected, and to adapt to or anticipate the transformations taking place in the Roma community and the wider social and economic transformations which are in progress.

Starting from the original Programme and the standard Acceder pathways, over recent years more specific, specialised initiatives have been developed. In the future, these must continue to be developed and consolidated to form a coherent ecosystem which can provide personalised responses to the needs of a Roma community which is increasingly diverse and heterogeneous. At the same time, the Programme must generate employment opportunities for Roma people in an economy and a job market which is undergoing radical change.



- **Pathways for access to employment for Roma women** in a situation of vulnerability (Calí Programme).
- **Dual Training Initiatives.** On-the-job training, supported with a grant, in collaboration with companies (Learning by Doing and Training with a Guarantee).
- **Street trading and support for self-employment.** Responses to protect and modernise an activity which accounts for 47% of the working members of the Roma community and provides support for half of Roma families (Mercaemprende)
- **Second chance and return to education initiatives** for young Roma men and women who dropped out of the education system early, supporting them to obtain school qualifications (Secondary Education Classrooms)
- **Technological pathways** to provide training for young Roma men and women to access newly created jobs requiring digital knowledge and skills. More highly-qualified, higher-quality jobs (Empleando Digital Programme).
- **WISEs** which broaden opportunities for access to employment within a protected environment, for Roma people in situations of greater vulnerability.
- **Labour market activation or inclusion pathways for Minimum Income recipients** to provide access to employment for adults and educational success for children in households which are in conditions of severe or extreme poverty (pilot Programme of integrated pathways for Minimum Income recipients).

② Integrated pathways: from education to employment.

The conclusions of the evaluation indicate the decisive role of the initial level of qualification and education in access to employment, and especially to higher-quality employment. However, it also demonstrates the important

role played by the [Acceder](#) Programme (and other FSG interventions) in terms of the reassessment of the value of education by participants and, by extension, the Roma community as a whole.

These conclusions should be translated in operational terms into a broadening of the perspective of the “personalised pathways”, creating a continuum from interventions in the educational field (Promociona Programme) to interventions which act as bridges into training and employment.

③ A focus on activation and qualifications for Roma women to access employment.

This is a clear area for future improvement of the Programme. The entry of women into the labour market has been observed to be one of the factors with the greatest impact in terms of gender equality and the capacity to transform the structural conditions of poverty and discrimination affecting the Roma community. Both this evaluation of results and impact and the Comparative study on the situation of the Roma population in Spain in terms of employment and poverty 2018 show the huge increase in opportunities to access employment for those Roma women who have obtained at least a Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate. At the same time, indicators of inequality between Roma women and Roma men are reduced, as well as indicators of inequality between Roma and non-Roma women.

However, the overall figures for Roma women accessing employment remain very low, and this suggests a clear way forward for the [Acceder](#) Programme. There is a need to strengthen and broaden the specific, innovative interventions to provide training and support to Roma women to access employment, particularly more highly-qualified employment.

4 Young people in the Acceder Programme.

The other target profile for the Programme is that of young Roma men and women, who start at an enormous disadvantage compared with other young people (with three times the general youth unemployment rate, much lower starting qualifications, and very frequently with family responsibilities). The objective is to boost the guarantee of vocational training and access to high quality jobs for young Roma people, a group which is increasingly diverse, better qualified than the previous generation and with clear expectations and motivation to enter the labour market.

5 Provide more intensive training and link this training to the needs of the labour market.

The evaluation of the Programme clearly shows the effectiveness of pathways of greater intensity which provide more specialised training, and which include companies as active participants in the process. Such pathways achieve inclusion rates of more than 60%. The future of the Programme therefore lies in reinforcing the process of intermediation with companies, providing more specialised training and increasing collaboration on dual training programmes, all these ideas having been tested through initiatives such as Learning by Doing.

6 Pathways for the digital era.

The swift digital transformation of society, the economy and the job market has opened up new opportunities. However, it also presents many risks and uncertainties for the most vulnerable groups in the population, who may find themselves left behind and stuck in lower-qualified jobs offering less stability and security. Over the coming years, the Acceder Programme must take on a “spearheading” role,

creating effective responses to provide access to jobs which require a high level of digital skills. In this way it must create a reliable route into such jobs for young Roma men and women, at the same time as raising the expectations of young people and breaking out of the limited fields of employment which members of the Roma community aspire to at present.

Initiatives emerging from the Acceder Programme such as Empleando Digital, delivered in collaboration with technology companies (such as Accenture), must become an area for innovation and collaboration with companies, specialising in training and access to employment with a significant technological component. Such employment can then offer added value to Roma people in terms of quality, stability and protection of working conditions.

7 Roll out the Programme to other cities and to rural areas.

One of the keys to the success of the Acceder Programme identified by the external evaluation is the high degree of penetration and relevance among the Roma population as a whole. However, the evaluation also identified the Programme’s low presence in rural areas as a weakness.

The work of the coming years needs to centre on bringing the opportunities offered by Acceder to the greatest possible number of Roma people in the greatest possible number of areas, including large centres of population which are not currently covered, but especially those smaller centres of population scattered across Spain where many Roma people live. This will be a challenge for Acceder in terms of innovation and changes to the standard model of assistance, based until now on the work of professional teams operating out of central offices.

7.2 Proposals for public policy on employment and social welfare

Over the 20 years of existence of the [Acceder](#) Programme, there have also been employment initiatives led by other social organisations (such as the Spanish Red Cross, ONCE Foundation and Cáritas Spain) within the framework of the ESF Operational Programme ‘Fight against Discrimination’ and later of the Operational Programme for Social Inclusion and the Social Economy (POISES) and the Operational Programme for Youth Employment (POEJ). These activities have constituted a rich social laboratory for public policies aimed at the groups who suffer the greatest exclusion and discrimination, especially in terms of employment.

This has generated a continual output of experiences and knowledge relating to approaches, processes of intervention, methodological options and the evaluation of these options. All this experience and knowledge must be put to good use, and should thus inform the design and implementation of employment and social welfare policies over the next decade for the groups within the population who are most socially vulnerable or excluded from the labour market.

1 A specialised response for the employment of the most vulnerable and excluded groups.

The present moment sees the launch of the new Spanish Strategy of Active Employment Policies, new opportunities represented by the funds of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, and a new programming period for the EU Cohesion Policy Funds (ESF+ and ERDF). Together, these create an optimal scenario for the development of a specialised model of active inclusion for socially excluded groups, in collaboration with the Spanish State Public Employment Service (SEPE), the Regional Public Employment Services and organisations involved in social action.

The main recommendation is aimed at profiting from the experience gained over these two decades of social initiative, essentially funded with public money, and now established across the country with a high degree of penetration in the groups towards whom its activity is aimed. It is recommended that this experience should be integrated into the active employment policy framework as an

element of the specialised services offered by the Public Employment Services. More specifically, it should be an element of the services aimed at the people who are most vulnerable in the labour market, especially migrants, people of foreign origin, Roma people, people with disabilities and in general people who find themselves affected in specific ways by structural processes of discrimination and social exclusion.

In terms of responses tailored to the most vulnerable groups, a second proposal relates to young people. Spain is one of the countries with the highest figures for youth unemployment in the EU; however, the problems of unemployment and lack of training are three times as prevalent among the Roma population. In sociodemographic terms, the Roma community is a young population, with 66% of its members aged under 30 years old. For this reason, employment policies focused on young people and the implementation of Youth Guarantee programmes have a great transformational impact on the Roma community. It is therefore vital that young Roma people should be a priority target group of these employment policies, and that meas-

ures should be implemented which are tailored to their circumstances and their levels of qualification in order to facilitate access to high-quality training and jobs.

Finally, in practical terms, it is necessary to put forward socially innovative responses involving public-private partnership. These responses must bring together the public employment services, specialised social initiatives and companies which can provide employment (as allies who are increasingly aware of their social responsibility and the value of diversity and of protecting rights) in order to bring about the active inclusion in the labour market of the most socially vulnerable groups.

Efforts over the coming years should focus on bringing the services offered by [Acceder](#) to the largest possible number of Roma people in the largest possible number of areas. These should include large centres of population which are not currently covered, but in particular the smaller centres of population, scattered across Spain, where many Roma people live.

This will also present [Acceder](#) with a challenge in terms of innovation and changes to the standard model of assistance, based until now on the work of professional teams operating out of central offices.

② Integrated employment and education pathways to help Minimum Income recipients become economically active.

Another recommendation is based on the confirmation of the value of the “integrated approach and holistic perspective” of the [Acceder](#) Programme. This is the recommendation that the same approach and perspective should be applied to responses to the complex circumstances presented, for example, by households receiving the Minimum Income or included in other basic income programmes.

This would involve the implementation of a range of integrated measures for the active inclusion of members of these households. These measures should be versatile and tailored to circumstances and would complement the social support currently offered, with training and employment pathways for adults and guidance and educational support pathways for children. The Programme has created a privileged space for social innovation by bringing together employment services, social services and specialised social organisations.

7.3 The key role of European Funds as financial instruments for innovative social inclusion policies

The success of the [Acceder](#) Programme, demonstrated by this evaluation study, is in the end the success of the vision, the decisions and the form taken in Spain by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds), in particular the ESF. These conclusions should also be assessed and interpreted by those responsible for these programmes, with a view to extracting lessons about the correctness of the decisions taken over these years. These lessons can inform decision-making in future programming periods for the EU Cohesion Policy Funds.

It is 20 years since the creation of the Multi-Regional Operational Programme ‘Fight against Discrimination’ (POLCD) within the ESF framework. This opened up a powerful and innovative line of intervention to allow those suffering the most from vulnerability and discrimination to receive a specific benefit from the ESI Funds coming into our country.

In the year 2000, the POLCD provided scope for action by a number of social organisations specialised in interventions with socially vulnerable groups, by inviting them to participate in the Programme in conditions of equality with other public organisations. They became managers of the Programme (Intermediate Bodies) and were provided with a significant volume of funding and a timeframe of seven years to carry out their activities. The results, in terms of the number of participants and their labour market inclusion, have been extraordinary, and demonstrate that this decision was well-founded.

This decision, clearly a significant one for inclusion policies, was one of the key starting points for the success of the initiative, and has triggered a chain of effects, both on national public policies and at European level. It contributed to reinforcing the role of NGOs for the ESF, and underlined the value of specialising in work with vulnerable groups. In successive programming periods these choices became firmly established through their inclusion in the Regulations, highlighting the pioneering role played by the ESF in our country.

Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the ESF, far from being simply a financial instrument, has also performed the role of a guide for social policy. These programmes have served as a de facto rehearsal for public policy on training and employment for the Roma population where before there was no such policy.

From these findings, a number of recommendations emerge for the future role of the main source of support for the [Acceder](#) initiative and for other programmes run by social organisations within the ESF framework in Spain. These recommendations could be taken into consideration for the new EU Cohesion Policy Funds programming period 2021-2027:

① Ensure the participation of specialised social organisations in the management and implementation of EU Cohesion Policy Funds.

The first recommendation is obvious: maintain or boost the presence of specialised social organisations as operators of the EU Cohesion Policy funds. This external evaluation has demonstrated both their effectiveness, through the results and impacts achieved among the most vulnerable groups, and their rigorous and efficient management of the funds.

② Maintain the conditions which ensure the success of these initiatives through the programming periods.

Some of the factors identified by the evaluation as key to the [Acceder](#) Programme’s success, in terms of the results and impacts achieved, are closely linked to funding conditions and programming decisions.

The Funds do not merely allow the financing of certain activities; they also allow these activities to be carried out under optimal conditions in order to achieve the intended impact and social change.

For example, they allow the [Acceder](#) Programme to implement “long-duration pathways”; to ensure a high degree of “penetration and relevance of the intervention among the target population”; to provide “training of high intensity which ensures high rates of labour market inclusion”; and to test out innovative initiatives. This is thanks to the decisions to provide sufficient funding; to guarantee the stability of the Programme throughout the entire period of implementation of the funds; to support the expansion of the project across all the regions involved; and to provide flexibility so that changes and innovations can be introduced throughout each funding period.

③ Transfer lessons learned to Regional Operational Programmes.

After two decades of experience in [Acceder](#) and in the initiatives of other NGOs launched within the framework of the ESF's Multi-Regional Operational Programmes, it would seem reasonable to call for the transfer of their approaches and their collaborative model to the Regional Operational Programmes.

The Regional OPs have considerable room for improvement in terms of their specific impact on the most vulnerable groups in our society. It would be helpful not only to include in their programming the specific objectives and investment priorities set out in the Regulations, but also to incorporate some of the conditions which have been in place for the Multi-Regional Programmes. These include the participation of specialised social organisations operating at regional level, along with funding which ensures projects are robust, have impact, and above all prove sustainable over the entire period of implementation.

④ Transfer this accumulated experience to other Funds and Initiatives: ERDF, Youth Guarantee, Child Guarantee.

In the programming period 2000-2006, the private operators involved in the Multi-Regional OP ‘Fight against Discrimination’ were also able to draw on an ERDF programme which complemented the activities of the ESF. This opportunity, vital for the launch of [Acceder](#), was not maintained in later programming periods.

The contribution of the ERDF was particularly valuable in terms of increasing the effectiveness of the actions undertaken based on ESF funding. The investment in the infrastructure of the social organisations permitted the renovation and adaptation of facilities which had in many cases become obsolete or were no longer adequate. It also provided funds for the purchase of decent equipment, including the investment needed for digital transformation. These investments were key complements to the activities undertaken. The combination of different sources of European funding is foreseen in the Funds Regulations, based on the understanding that synergies are thereby generated which contribute to achieving a greater social impact, although they are not necessarily designed to be used in combination.

Other large-scale European social investment initiatives planned for the next programming period, such as the Youth Guarantee and the Child Guarantee, should incorporate the lessons learnt over these years from the POLCD, the POEJ and the POISES which are highlighted in this evaluation. These lessons will be key in achieving a greater impact among the most disadvantaged groups.



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