CONFERENCE

September 28, 2016
Civican (Caja Navarra Foundation) - Pamplona

WORKING STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE ROMA SOCIAL INCLUSION AT A LOCAL LEVEL

SUMMARY REPORT

PROGRAMME AND CONTENTS

The conference, which was attended by 102 people, was structured around 4 sessions:

Opening Session

- Mª Dolores Ruiz Bautista, Deputy Director General of Social Programmes, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality
- Gema Mañú Echaide, Director General of Social Inclusion and Protection, Government of Navarre
- Antonio Vázquez Saavedra, Second Vice-Chairperson of the Spanish Roma Council
- Javier de Frutos, Deputy Director of Social Rights of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces
- Marisol de la Nava, Director of the Social Action and Community Development Area of Pamplona City Council

Session on experiences "How to promote Roma social inclusion at local level: learning from practical experience"

- "Promoting the participation and visibility of Roma"
  Natxo Bellido Suay, Councillor-Delegate of the Presidential Office, Coordination of Areas and Projects and Contracts for the Alicante City Council
- "Social inclusion through a community development programme"
  Gal·la Cortadellas Bertran, Director of the Sant Cosme Action Plan, Prat de Llobregat City Council
- "Promoting social inclusion of Roma women from a rural perspective"
  Juan Carlos Castillo Ezpeleta, Mayor of Peralta City Council
- "Intervention with Roma from Eastern Europe"
  Eduard Baster Boix, Social Inclusion Officer, Consorci de Benestar Social Gironès-Salt
- "Promoting employment and education from a local perspective"
  Alberto Rivera de la Puente, Head of the Social Services Section of Malaga City Council

Chair: Ricardo Hernández, Spanish Roma Council

Working groups and plenary debate on Recommendations for promoting Roma social inclusion at the local level"

1. Promoting employment and education from a local perspective
2. Promoting the participation and visibility of Roma
3. Implementing community development programmes
4. Intervention with the Roma from Eastern Europe
5. Promoting the social inclusion of Roma women with a special focus on rural areas

Facilitation: Spanish Roma Council and Fresno team

Closing session

- Mª Dolores Ruiz Bautista, Deputy Director General of Social Programmes, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality
- Miguel Laparra Navarro, Vice-President of Social Rights, Government of Navarre

Main developments in recent years

- Recognition of the cultural contribution of Roma through the creation of the Roma Culture Institute.
- School enrolment rates (infant/primary) are at the same level as the rest of the population.
- Greater empowerment of the Roma woman.
- The training and qualifications of Roma mediators/community representatives who actively participate in specific social inclusion actions.
- Development and reinforcement of Roma civil society organisations.

Persistent problems

- Roma political participation remains low.
- Absenteeism and early school leaving are very high and well above the national average. Problems of access to secondary and higher education persists.
- The deterioration of certain areas where many Roma families live, especially in the urban environment.
- The concentration of Roma in some areas, especially in peripheral city areas. The concentration of Roma students in some schools.
- The schools in these neighbourhoods are ghetto schools.
- Persistent negative prejudices and stereotypes in society.
- Insufficient health preventive measures, especially in relation to some diseases.
- Illiteracy (functional) in adults.

Errors to be avoided

- Not providing a system of participation or consultation with Roma when policies are implemented, especially when specific actions are carried out.
- Not taking into account the characteristics of Roma when implementing general policies and assuming that they are accessible to all or that there is no need for adaptations.
- Failure to take account of prejudices, stereotypes and anti-Roma feelings when designing specific policies.
- Seeking a single dialogue when the Roma community is diverse. Participation is generally low.

Challenges for municipalities in the coming years

- A better combination of the mainstreaming approach with the target approach in implementing policies and actions to promote social inclusion at the local level.
- Analysing what adjustments would be necessary to make in general policies in order to ensure greater and better access to such services for Roma.
- Greater participation and involvement of Roma in political, social, cultural and community life.
- Improving the social image of Roma and recognising their contribution to society.
- More spaces in the local environment for Roma participation.
- Eradication of slums and substandard housing.
- Recruitment of Roma in local authorities.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION FROM A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

1. Leading and implementing local strategies for Roma inclusion in the medium/long term, given that it is at the local level that the problems of the people must be tackled and where the intervention is most real and effective.

2. Changing the intervention methodology, paying special attention to the participation Roma (bottom-up and top-down), which must be present throughout the entire process of strategy development (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation).

3. Adequate funding in line with the objectives and actions envisaged and which is not possible without the political commitment of local authorities.

PROMOTING THE PARTICIPATION AND VISIBILITY OF ROMA

1. Making the contribution of Roma visible and valued in the municipality through specific symbolic events but also promoting the participation of Roma in other events.

2. Involving Roma in targeted actions to promote their inclusion, but also in other actions that are implemented at a local level.

SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

1. Recruit Roma in the teams of the municipalities.

2. Undertake small-scale activities that generate social capital in which Roma and non-Roma can participate together (cooking workshops, music...).

3. Include experts in intervention with Roma in the mediation teams, who can be reference/contact points when carrying out targeted actions.

INTERVENTION WITH ROMA FROM EASTERN EUROPE

1. Undertake cooperation initiatives with the countries of origin, with information and awareness campaigns, in collaboration with the embassies and with the support of the institutions of the countries of origin as well as Roma Civil Society Organisations.

2. Be aware of and address the characteristics and cultural peculiarities, making a better diagnosis of the situation and needs Roma from Eastern Europe in those municipalities where there is a greater concentration to identify more effective measures or to make adjustments that allow a better intervention.

3. Ensure compliance with their employment rights through involvement and co-responsibility initiatives between businesses and workers.

4. Encourage the creation of inter-cultural spaces where there can be participation, dialogue and mutual understanding.

PROMOTING THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF ROMA WOMEN FROM A RURAL PERSPECTIVE

1. Reinforce and empower Roma women who can lead the change: encouraging the women themselves to lead the projects with adequate support.

2. Support and raise awareness about the different roles of Roma women in actions that involve both men and women.

3. Work on inclusive human relationships between equals, especially in adolescence.

4. Create spaces that facilitate the meeting of women in which they can self-organize and undertake initiatives and, by means of which, training and support tools can be offered.

5. Promote actions to prevent absenteeism and early school-leaving.

OPENING SESSION

Mª Dolores Ruiz Bautista, Deputy Director General of Social Programmes for the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, pointed out that the conference was in line with the European Commission's recommendations, which highlight the need to promote a more effective implementation of strategies for Roma social inclusion at a local level. Furthermore, the 2012-2020 National Strategy for Roma Social Inclusion and its 2014-2016 Operational Plan highlight the importance of strengthening collaboration between all the actors involved in these policies, including governmental administrations and civilian society, with the exchange of information and experiences being a fundamental part of the process. Lastly, she laid out the objectives of the conference, those being: 1) To reflect on the current challenges of the local authorities in the area of Roma social inclusion; 2) To be aware of examples of strategies or measures promoted by local authorities in this field, in a series of specific areas such as employment, education, participation, social inclusion of Roma women, etc.; 3) To propose recommendations to forge ahead with local strategies for the promotion of Roma women.

José Antonio Jiménez Jiménez, representing the Spanish Roma Council, stressed the importance of involving local organisations when promoting. He underlined the importance of involving Roma in targeted actions as well as in mainstreaming policies. The visibility and social image of Roma is a crucial challenge.

Javier de Frutos, Deputy Director of Social Rights of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, highlighted that FEMP has three resolutions which define the work carried out on matters related to social inclusion and equality and non-discrimination. In relation to this, he stressed the importance of local organisations leading such policies. In addition, he outlined some of the actions carried out by the FEMP by means of which these initiatives can be promoted. 1) dissemination of information to associated municipalities; 2) selection and exchange of good practice; 3) strengthening the coordination between the local organisations.

Marisol de la Nava, Director of the Social Action and Community Development Area of Pamplona City Council highlighted the important role of local authorities in social inclusion and cohesion in fostering active participation of all citizens, understanding that diversity adds to and enriches all peoples and that this is an important challenge for Roma and for the administrations that have the job of promoting inclusion and equality. In relation to this, she explained that the City Council is paying special attention to promoting Roma social inclusion and that in order to achieve this it is crucial to foster coexistence and mutual awareness and to involve Roma women who have a fundamental role to play.

Gema Mañú Echaide, Director General of Inclusion and Social Protection of the Government of Navarre, highlighted the importance of coordination between the three administrative levels (national, regional and local) and congratulated the Ministry's initiative in this regard. She stressed that although there had been many developments in terms of Roma social inclusion in recent years, there were still important challenges to be faced, in particular the improvement of their social image and a greater balance and synergy between mainstream policies (housing, education, health, employment and social services and benefits) with targeted measures to ensure equal access of Roma to their rights. In this respect, she explained that in Navarre they are developing the social inclusion strategy as well as a strategy for the Roma social inclusion in coordination with the various levels and key participants, especially at the local level, which will be based on the following concepts:

- Participation of Roma: their participation is essential to achieve good results.
- Making Roma visible in a positive way.
- Influencing the media for a more positive and less stereotypical image.
- Maintaining the achievements made in the area of health.
- Investing in education where individualized support and mentoring plays a fundamental role.
- Housing as a right with specific programmes and the necessary support.
- Active inclusion.

How to promote Roma social inclusion at local organisations: learning from practical experience

EXPERIENCE: Community mediation project in Celrà, Bordils and Flaçà (Girona)
CONSORCI DE BENESTAR SOCIAL GIRONÈS-SALT

Project started in 2013

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

- Community mediation project in Bordils, Celrà and Flaçà (Girona), aimed especially at the intervention with the Romanian Roma population.
- Main objectives:
  - Deal with individual/family needs and support local public services.
  - Diagnose the situation and encourage the welcoming of this group.
  - Facilitate closeness and relationship building with the group.
  - Promote coexistence and mutual understanding between different groups.

REASONS BEHIND THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- A very significant Romanian Roma presence in the area due to their employment by two meat companies.
- Initial problems in the neighbourhood among people and the use of public spaces.

MAIN ACTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Phase 1: Diagnosis and reception	Phase 2: Building relationships	Phase 3: Promotion mutual knowledge and understanding
• Diagnosis / understanding of the people's needs. • Information on local institutions and services. • Identification of problems.	• Approach strategies: informative sessions on topics of interest (employment rights, neighbourhood communities, documentation of foreigners…). • Activities of interest: football team, etc. • Discussion groups on coexistence issues.	• Promotion of inter-cultural communication and awareness of cultural diversity: spaces for participation, local magazine, etc. • Awareness-raising of and conflict management in neighbourhood communities, in public spaces and in relation to waste collection. • Coordination and collaboration with local services and organisations: awareness raising, training and advice.

Cross-sectional intervention:

- Attention to individual/family needs.
- Public services support: translations and interpretations.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

- Link with the Roma community.
- Greater trust in institutions.
- Advice and support in foreigner matters.
- Some spaces of positive relationship between Roma and non-Roma.
- Greater awareness of the group in terms of coexistence and civic matters.
- Management of specific conflicts in neighbourhood communities and public spaces.
- Professionals who are more aware and more informed about the Roma community.

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

- Some clearly perceptible results.
- Project legitimised by the different agents involved.
- Clear referral points for Roma.
- Useful project from a double perspective: for the local services and professionals and for the target population.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES

Project related	Related to the target population	Environment related
• Lack of more human resources. • Intervention with youth and minors. • At some point, divergent intervention strategies.	• Objective: to work and earn money to return; no will to stay or integrate. • High mobility, partly due to recruitment conditions. • No tradition of participation in community life. • Little importance is attached to the education of children.	• Negative perception of the local population. • Large group: little need for interrelationship. • Very long working hours: makes it impossible to carry out training, activities, attending interviews, etc. • Expansion of one of the meat companies: rumours of another significant arrival of Romanian people.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- Promote the participation of the Roma community in the standard activities and organisations of the region.
- Promote activities that acknowledge the existing cultural diversity.
- Strengthen the involvement of the meat companies: training, etc.
- Possibility of creating a Local Citizenship Board.
- Contribute to the empowerment of women.
- Encourage work with young people and minors.
- Influence educational aspects at a global level.

Contact:

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EXPERIENCE: "Peer group" - programme to combat school drop-out rates among Roma students

PERALTA TOWN COUNCIL

Project started in 2015

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

- To improve and encourage relationships and collaboration among all students (Roma and non-Roma, immigrant and non-immigrant, male and female students).
- To use the most suitable public resources and standardise their use (municipal library, cultural centre, etc.).
- To end early school-leaving and failure in secondary school (mainly among adolescents in the Roma community, but not exclusively).
- To activate educational support measures starting from the last years of primary school in order to achieve the best academic adaptation at secondary level.
- To not only achieve educational success at secondary level but also the continuation of studies, in this case for Roma teenagers.
- To encourage the involvement of mothers in the educational success of their daughters (adult training, night school reinsertion, etc.).

REASONS BEHIND THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- The primary focus of this project has been that students can help each other and take part in the project.
- The second reason behind the project was recognising that addressing these issues is complicated and the involvement of teachers, parents, students, associations and the City Council is necessary in order to achieve results.

MAIN ACTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Support classes for students who are struggling to pass and who have limited financial resources.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

- 100% of Roma students this year have obtained the secondary school diploma and are enrolled in middle-level courses.
- Improvement in the attitude and effort of Roma girls who are coming to the High School, due to having examples of other Roma relatives who have succeeded in school.
- Improvement in the self-esteem and empowerment of Roma girls.
- Reinforcement of support classes for Roma students, both at Primary and Secondary level and, in many cases, taught by qualified Roma students.
- Creation of a group of Roma "adults" who have resumed their studies and are enrolled in secondary education at night school or by distance learning.
- Commitment to the interest group and participation in forums: the network against poverty, youth section of Gaz kalo, the "Quintos" festival in Peralta, etc.

SUCCESS ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAMME

- The strong involvement of some key participants: the High School, the teacher, Mari Carmen de Carlos, the local Roma association, Santa Lucía, and the commitment of mothers from the association.
- Collaboration with Gaz Kaló, in line with the 2012-2020 National Strategy for Roma Social Inclusion in Spain, with the Santa Lucía de Peralta Association and with Social Services.
- Coordinated work and free-flowing contact with students and their families.
- The rural profile of the city, where all children are enrolled in school regardless of ethnicity or social status.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES

- Dealing with problems at two levels: affective and educational. For its success, the bonds of trust generated between teachers and students have been very important.
- Dealing with certain complex behaviours.
- Overcoming issues that have influenced the project's implementation:
  - Gender issues.
  - Social / family issues (breaking with stereotypes that are not conducive to student development).
  - Economic issues (poor financial situation).
  - Political issues (involvement and support from the City Council).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- Maintain a constant level of support for this project, the results of which are long-term.
- Solve the financing issue: it will be difficult to bring the project to a successful conclusion without funding for support classes. A loan should be introduced, at the beginning of the course, for those who have problems paying for tuition, books, transport, etc. and which may be returned on receipt of a state, regional or local grant, or by stage payments.
- The City Council also has a subsidies system approved, which is supplemented by the state and regional grants. This is the most immediate and safest support they have when it comes to meeting the costs of their training.
- Adapt the municipal agreement to the problems that arise at a given time.
- Continue with the school's involvement and gaining the trust of parents.
- Use conflicts positively, as an engine of change.

Contact:

Peralta Town Council
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EXPERIENCE: community project in the Palma Palmilla district from a local perspective
MALAGA TOWN COUNCIL

Project started in 2006

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

A community project in the Palma Palmilla district, in the Malaga capital, a neighbourhood with high levels of marginalisation and a high percentage of the population at risk of social exclusion. The main objective of the project is to break this chain of marginalisation, mainly by stimulating education and employment.

REASONS BEHIND THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- Multifaceted social problems in families
- Unemployment
- Minors at risk
- Risk of social exclusion
- Safety issues

MAIN ACTIONS/ACTIVITIES

- Establishment of working groups where employees from public authorities, members of the Third Sector and neighbours analyse the specific problems of this sector and develop actions to resolve them.
  - Employment Group
  - Education Group
  - Health Group
  - Youth Group
  - Safety Group
  - Housing Group
  - Cleaning Group
  - Culture Group
  - Resources and Services Group

RESULTS ACHIEVED BY THE EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION GROUPS

- Employment:
  - Launch of the "El Buen Vivir" Project and Employment Insertion, with an employment integration success rate of 85% of participating families.
  - Study of economic activity in the area with analysis of sources of employment.
  - Fostering of self-employment through entrepreneurship courses.
- Education:
  - Networking with local schools and colleges.
  - Implementation of a local absenteeism protocol.
  - The promotion of Roma women in both the formal and non-formal education system.
  - Programme of prevention and education in values "Aventura de la vida".

SUCCESS ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAMME

The programme's success is based on the participation of the neighbours, especially the Roma community, at three basic levels of involvement.

- Analysis, evaluation and prioritisation of the main problems which affect the citizens in the neighbourhood.
- Definition, programming and development of specific actions for intervention in problematic areas.
- Assessment of the actions and implementation of new initiatives.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES

Achieve greater participation and involvement of Roma population in community initiatives, especially of Roma women, who are often the real engines of social change in the neighbourhood.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Explore in greater depth the spaces for coexistence and the interrelationship between the various working groups - education, employment, safety, inter-cultural, etc.

Contact:

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EXPERIENCE: Action plan for the Sant Cosme neighbourhood
PRAT DE LLOBREGAT TOWN COUNCIL

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

To make the neighbourhood one more area of the city, in terms of civic and social dynamics and the exchange and provision of services, while taking into account that community work addresses collective social situations from awareness to intervention.

REASONS BEHIND THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- To ensure coexistence and avoid initiating a downward progression and a deteriorating neighbourhood;
- To be innovative in the implementation of strategies and good practices in public policies;
- To enhance the versatility, agility and synergy of the team of professionals directly or indirectly involved in the action plan.

MAIN ACTIONS/ACTIVITIES

- Educational plan for the Sant Cosme area:
  - Co-responsibility among the agents.
  - Education understood as a lifelong process.
  - Improvement in results.
  - Social cohesion.
  - Professional growth and satisfaction.
- Socio-community intervention project:
  - Citizenship and coexistence.
  - Interculturality.
  - Families and education.
  - Target groups and social inclusion.
- Programme to support coexistence in the neighbourhood stairways:
  - Conflict management;
  - Promotion of co-responsibility;
  - Technical advice.
- Programme to support and revitalise associations and cultural activities.
- Plan for the promotion of social economy enterprises in the region.
- Training and employment insertion programme.
- Planning of urban reform.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- Create a driving team with key players, with monthly meetings.
- Make administrations co-responsible.
- Focus on the discussion regarding rights and obligations.
- Work on people's language so that it is not stereotypical.

Contact:

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WORK GROUPS
Recommendations for promoting the social inclusion of Roma at the local level

GROUP 1. Promoting employment and education from a local perspective

BARRIERS

In the educational area:

- Adapting and managing the diversity of the education system to the uniqueness of Roma child population is not always satisfactory. Cases and situations have been detected in which the education system does not embrace or adequately integrate diversity. This often results in a feeling of rejection on the part of Roma pupils and their families.
- There are cases of Roma families who do not always adequately value education, which means that they do not see it as something fundamental and necessary for the future of their children.

In the employment area:

- The anti-Roma feelings, the prejudices and the stereotyping against Roma make it much more difficult for a Roma person to be hired, simply because they belong to this minority. A strong rejection of the Roma population persists.
- The level of qualifications and training of Roma remains low, especially in comparison with the national average. Of particular concern is the school drop-out rate, which is well above the national average.

LESSONS LEARNED / TRANSFERABLE ELEMENTS

- Co-responsibility in these actions is fundamental: the administrations and other agents involved, as well as the Roma, have rights and obligations and each party must accept its commitments and be jointly responsible.
- The participative or working groups have been very useful tools for coordinating actions, defining priorities, setting objectives and sharing resources.
- Networking among the key participants is essential in order to be more effective and to better manage resources.
- Long-term projects are the ones that change the dynamics and achieve better results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Leading and implementing local strategies for Roma inclusion in the medium/long term, given that it is at the local level that the problems of the people must be tackled and where the intervention is most real and effective.

2. Changing the intervention methodology, paying special attention to the participation Roma (bottom-up and top-down), which must be present throughout the entire process of strategy development (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation).

3. Adequate funding in line with the objectives and actions envisaged and which is not possible without the political commitment of local authorities.

GROUP 2. Promoting the participation and visibility of Roma

BARRIERS

The ones that were most agreed upon:

- The concept of participation and how it should take place is still not defined. The participation and the outcome of participatory processes should always be binding on the Administration.
- There is considerable ignorance of the Roma community and the interests of the Roma population and it seems that the public authorities are not interested in obtaining this information but one of the main barriers identified is the lack of quality information.
- There are no channels of participation or those that exist are not sufficient.
- The anti-Roma feelings have an impact on this lack of participation.

Other barriers to be taken into account:

- The authorities are committed to the search for valid interlocutors, which sometimes means that there is only one interlocutor.
- There is no agreement on the priorities proposed by the Administration and those proposed by the Roma civil society organisations.
- There is a feeling of mutual exclusion.
- There is ignorance and mutual prejudice.
- There is no inter-cultural discussion.
- Participation depends on activism, in other words, there is no participation unless it is demanded by Roma civil society organisations.
- Women are more excluded than men in the participatory processes.
- The crisis has worsened the quality of participation.

LESSONS LEARNED / TRANSFERABLE ELEMENTS

The ones that were most agreed upon:

- Institutional and symbolic recognition are important to promote the role of the Roma in Spain.
- A comprehensive and broad approach, as well as the involvement of key participants from different communities, contributes to mutual understanding, inter-cultural exchange and improvement in the social image of Roma.
- Promoting flamenco as an expression of the Roma culture can help improve their social image.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Making the contribution of Roma visible and valued in the municipality through specific symbolic events but also promoting the participation of Roma in other events.

2. Involving Roma in targeted actions to promote their inclusion, but also in other actions that are implemented at a local level.

GROUP 3. Implementing community development programmes

BARRIERS

- The low participation of Roma, especially those living in conditions of social exclusion.
- The channels of participation do not always take the diversity into account (associations do not represent the entire Roma population).
- Policies are designed from the top down.
- Loss of physical relationship spaces.
- Crisis of association philosophy and the rise of individualism.
- Low participation by young Roma.
- Plans are only developed when the situation is extreme.
- Few resources and little investment.
- Absence of tangible results.
- Limited technical coordination.
- Little knowledge about the situation of the Roma population. An incomplete or distorted assessment is common.
- Lack of leadership in the Roma community.
- Fear and mistrust between Roma and non-Roma citizens.
- The Roma do not identify very much with their municipality.

LESSONS LEARNED / TRANSFERABLE ELEMENTS

- Greater political and technical involvement in the policies aimed at the Roma people improves their success.
- The teams for mediating with the Roma community play a useful part in improving the trust between the different communities.
- The inclusion of the Roma in the teams that develop and implement policies aimed at Roma increases their success.
- Organising workshops (on culture and cooking, for example) in a public space shared with the community in which Roma and non-Roma people participate, improves the relationship with the environment and encourages Roma to continue participating.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recruit Roma in the teams of the municipalities.

2. Undertake small-scale activities that generate social capital in which Roma and non-Roma can participate together (cooking workshops, music...).

3. Include experts in intervention with Roma in the mediation teams, who can be reference/contact points when carrying out targeted actions.

GROUP 4. Intervention with Roma from Eastern Europe

BARRIERS

- There is widespread ignorance about Roma from other EU countries (specifically of Romanian origin, such as the fact that they were kept as slaves for a period of four hundred years, until given their freedom in 1874) and a high degree of negative prejudices and stereotyping. Furthermore, it is necessary to differentiate between the population that is motivated by the desire to find employment with the intention of returning to their country and those who live in an environment of exclusion and marginalisation.

- The association movement among Roma from Eastern European countries is scarce and for some it is not very representative given their bad experience since the communist era.

- Many Roma people from Eastern Europe do not have access to basic services due to the fact that some of them lack documentation or simply remain illegal.

- Ignorance of or poor knowledge of the language is an additional impediment.

LESSONS LEARNED / TRANSFERABLE ELEMENTS

- This is a group of people who are difficult to reach due to their tightness and their lack of trust. This makes them difficult to work with and achieve short-term results.

- In order to achieve satisfactory results, they must be actively involved in the formulation of the measures to be considered. Coordination between all parties involved is crucial, despite the difficulty.

- A spokesperson figure who acts as a "voice" in community mediation is valued.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Undertake cooperation initiatives with the countries of origin, with information and awareness campaigns, in collaboration with the embassies and with the support of the institutions of the countries of origin as well as Roma Civil Society Organisations.

2. Be aware of and address the characteristics and cultural peculiarities, making a better diagnosis of the situation and needs Roma from Eastern Europe in those municipalities where there is a greater concentration to identify more effective measures or to make adjustments that allow a better intervention.

3. Ensure compliance with their employment rights through involvement and co-responsibility initiatives between businesses and workers.

4. Encourage the creation of inter-cultural spaces where there can be participation, dialogue and mutual understanding.

GROUP 5. Promoting the social inclusion of Roma women with a special focus on rural areas

BARRIERS

- Social prejudice.
- The differences in the general equality of the society combined with a particularly patriarchal Roma culture in which women are often in the background. In some cases, resistance to Roma women playing another role in the community has been identified.
- Early marriage.
- (More control) social and community pressure in smaller areas (group conditioning).
- Lack of participation in municipal activities and in associations (unless there is an association of Roma women in the municipality) and of community leaders.
- Lack of individual empowerment.
- Lack of training and employment, especially in small towns.
- Early school leaving among women and difficulties in continuing with post-compulsory education, especially in low-income families.
- Greater isolation of Roma women, especially in rural areas.
- Difficulty in obtaining access to standardised resources.
- Health problems and premature motherhood.

LESSONS LEARNED / TRANSFERABLE ELEMENTS

- The involvement of women as agents of change is proving to have very good results, including in rural areas.
- Work on empowerment and leadership for women is fundamental, but it is important not to do so in isolation from men, it requires the involvement of the whole community.
- The involvement and combined work of key institutions (public services and local authorities) results in better and more sustainable results over time.
- Educational integration is fundamental (school segregation is a barrier).
- Promoting Roma women's groups or associations is a positive way to strengthen empowerment and entrepreneurship.
- The micro-loan scheme is an initiative that has worked well and could be used more.
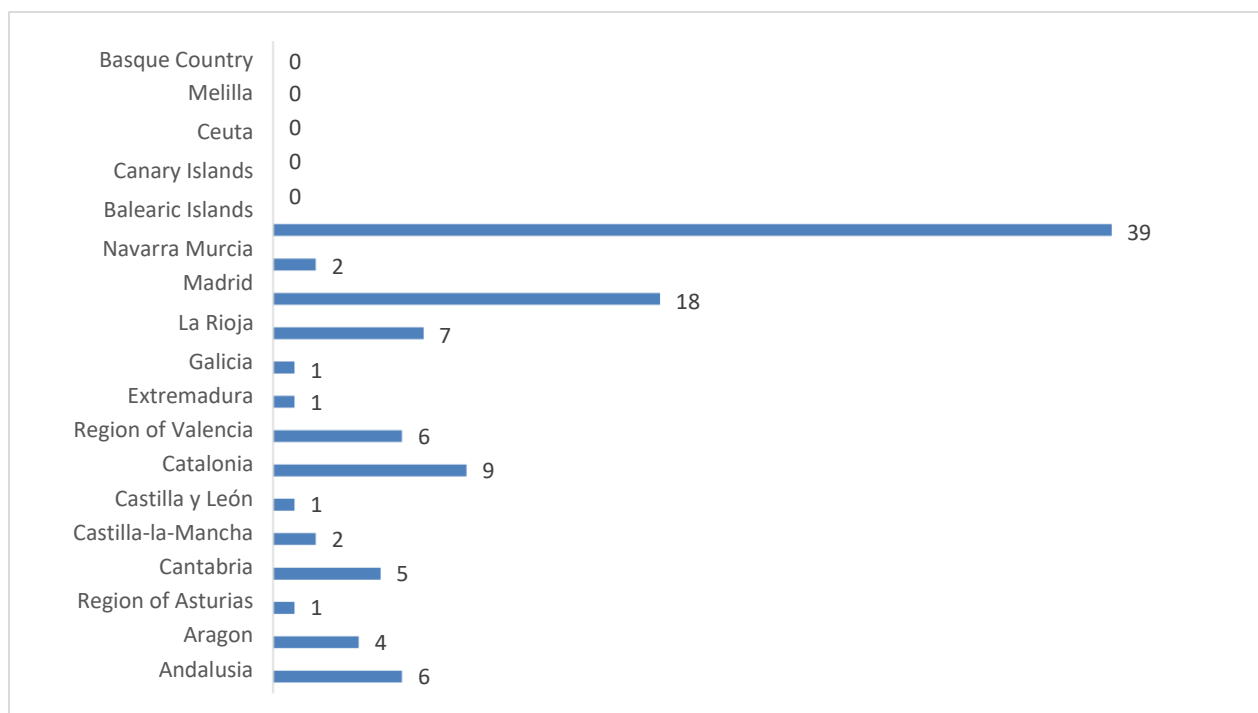
OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reinforce and empower Roma women who can lead the change: encouraging the women themselves to lead the projects with adequate support.

2. Support and raise awareness about the different roles of Roma women in actions that involve both men and women.

3. Work on inclusive human relationships between equals, especially in adolescence.

4. Create spaces that facilitate the meeting of women in which they can self-organize and undertake initiatives and, by means of which, training and support tools can be offered.

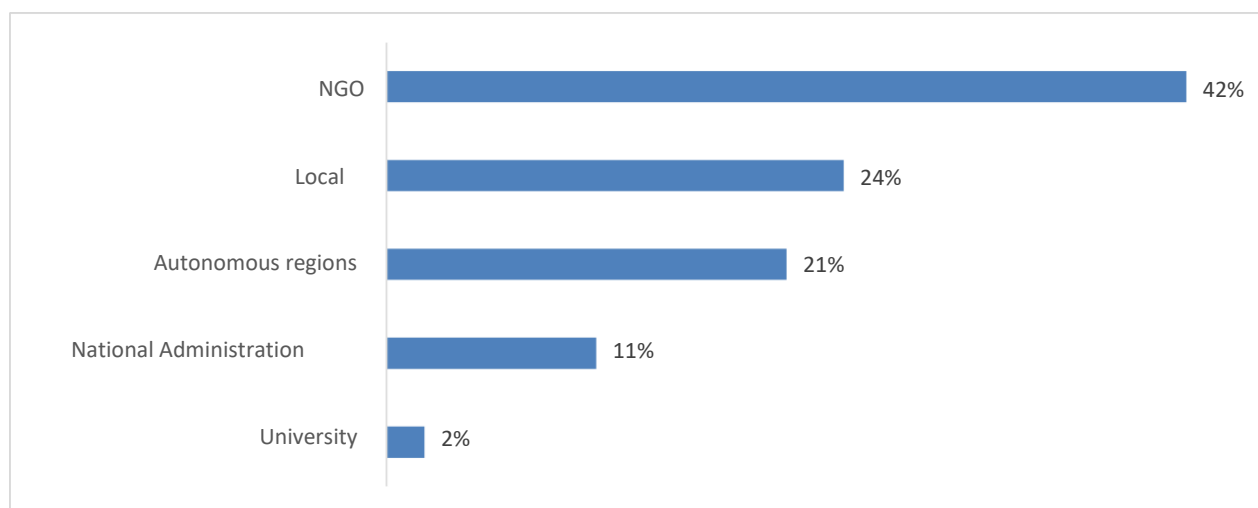5. Promote actions to prevent absenteeism and early school-leaving.

PARTICIPANTS AT THE SESSIONS

102 people participated in the conference with the following profile.

Geographical origin

Region	Value
Basque Country	0
Melilla	0
Ceuta	0
Canary Islands	0
Balearic Islands	0
Navarra Murcia	39
Madrid	2
La Rioja	18
Galicia	7
Extremadura	1
Region of Valencia	1
Catalonia	6
Castilla y León	9
Castilla-la-Mancha	1
Cantabria	2
Region of Asturias	5
Aragon	1
Andalusia	4
	6

Type of institution or organisation

Type	Value
NGO	42%
Local	24%
Autonomous regions	21%
National Administration	11%
University	2%

Gender

Gender	Value
Men	42%
Women	58%

Position in the institution or organisation

Volunteer — 6%

Parliamentary representative

Technical — 60%

Management — 33%

Role in the conference

Organisation — 4%

Attendee — 83%

Facilitation — 2%

Speaker — 6%

Opening/closing — 5%

Conference: Working strategies to promote Roma social inclusion at a local level
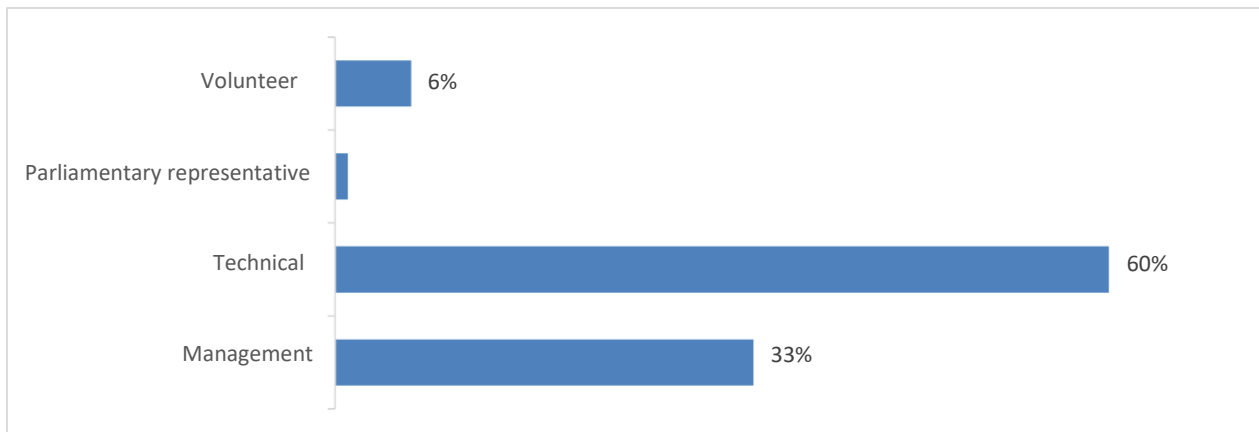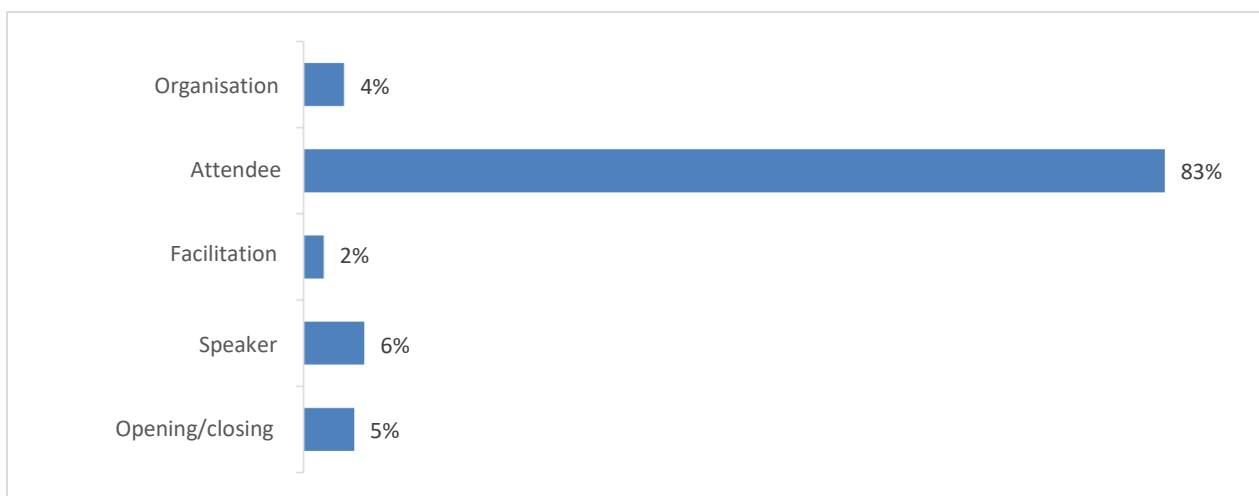
EVALUATION

My expectations have been met with regard to the reason why I participated in this event

Category	Percentage
To a large degree	24%
To a reasonable degree	44%
Somewhat	24%
To a small degree	7%

The objectives outlined in the programme have been achieved

Category	Percentage
I strongly agree	19%
I agree	60%
Neutral	19%
I don't agree	2%
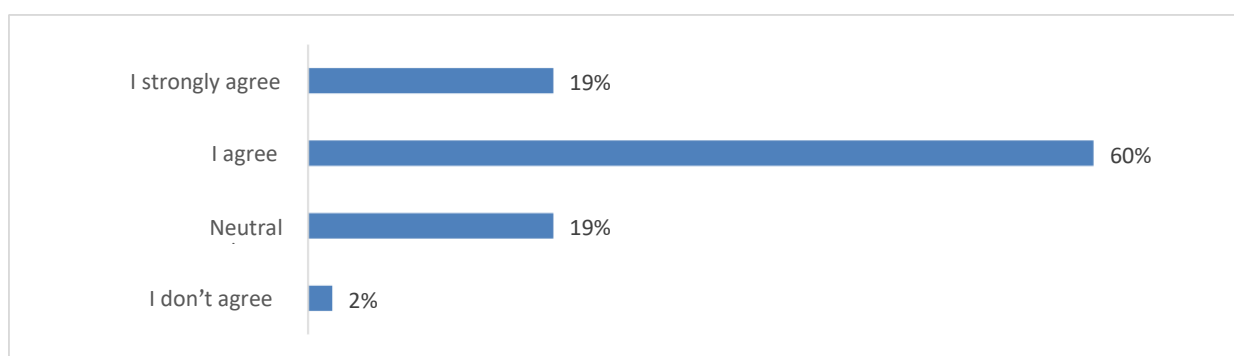
The content has proved to be interesting and motivating

Category	Percentage
It was very interesting and motivating	34%
It was quite interesting and motivating	53%
It was somewhat interesting and motivating	13%
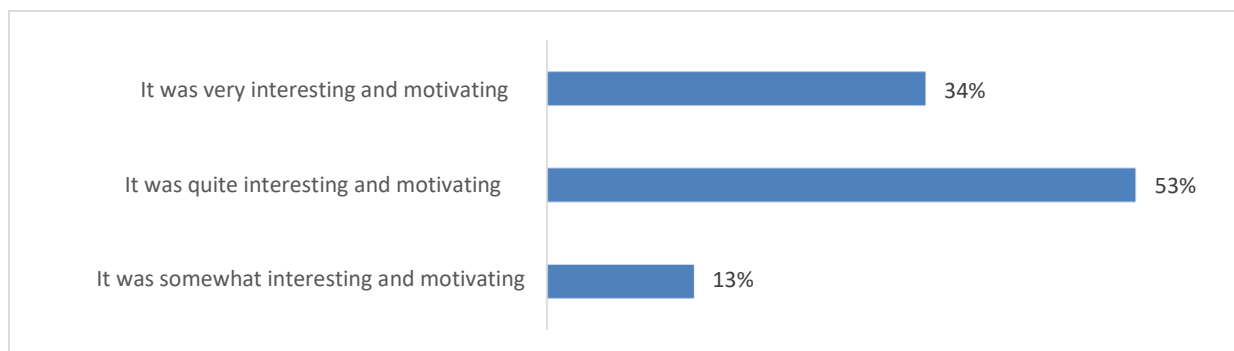
I will be able to apply the topics addressed in my job

Category	Percentage
To a large degree	15%
To a reasonable degree	50%
Somewhat	28%
To a small degree	6%
No	2%
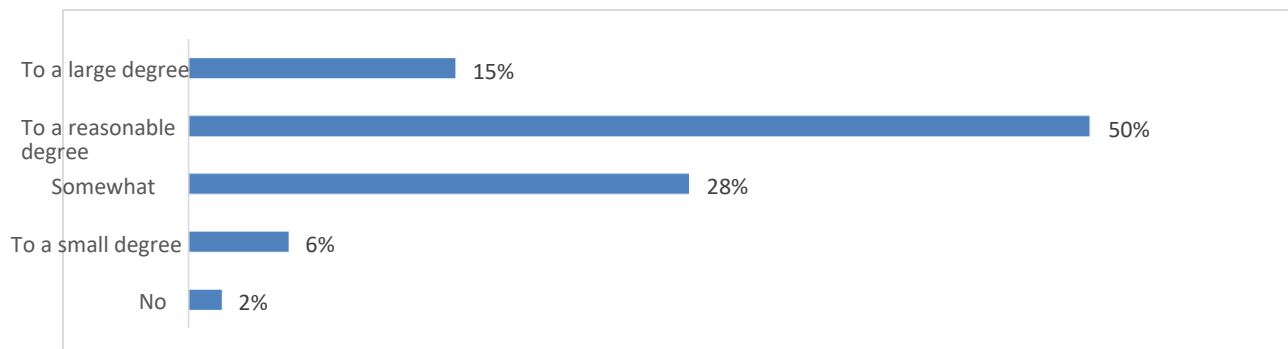
The choice of speakers was tailored to the objectives of the event

To a large degree	38%
To a reasonable degree	40%
Somewhat	23%

The moderators were able to maintain interest and encourage participation and discussion

To a large degree	44%
To a reasonable degree	29%
Somewhat	21%
To a small degree	6%
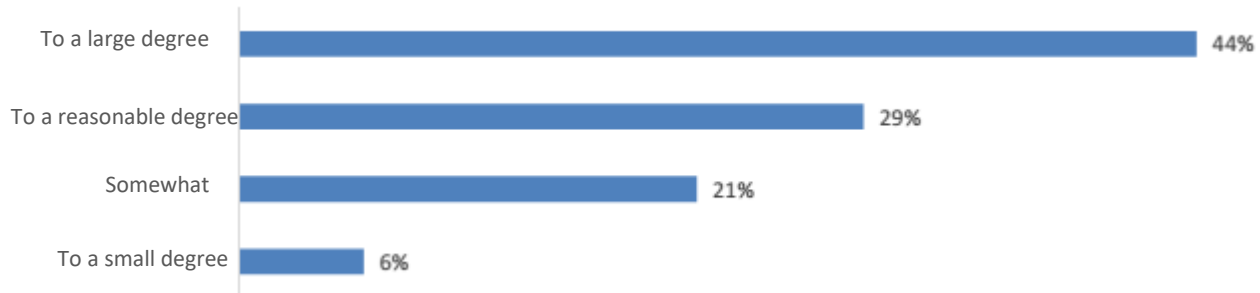
The duration of the various work groups was appropriate

To a large degree	30%
To a reasonable degree	40%
Somewhat	15%
To a small degree	11%
No	4%
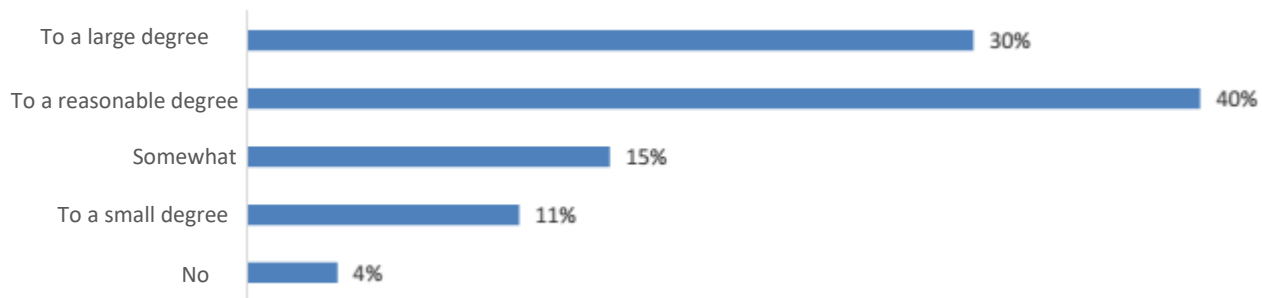
In general, the event was properly organised

To a large degree	41%
To a reasonable degree	46%
Somewhat	11%
To a small degree	2%
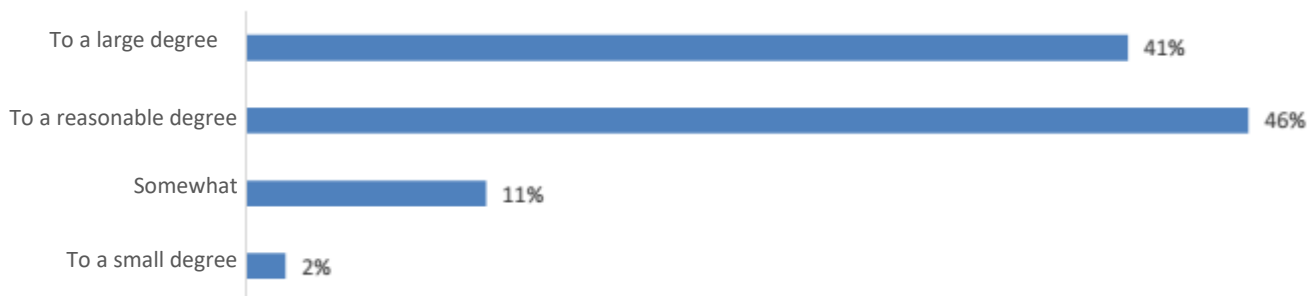
Other observations and comments received

The variety of participants was very enriching. Very good participation.

Make the conference morning and afternoon.

Congratulations. I could have enjoyed it more, but the content/time ratio was excellent. It would be good and positive to report back on the conclusions of the different groups.

Try to focus presentations on innovative projects. Keep talking about the same projects 20 years later.

There wasn't enough time to explore.

In my view, it was a little thin. There were many other unshared experiences among the people.

It wasn't possible to fully grasp the local experiences and I would have liked to have had all the relevant documentation to read more about them.

It's hard to explore the content in such little time. I would have liked to have thoroughly analysed a number of the topics. Thank you and congratulations!

I hope there will be more seminars like this one.

There should be more events like this one. It has been very useful to put myself in the position of the Roma population.

Let's have more seminars.

I would have liked more Roma people to participate in the conference.

It would have been good if these very technical sessions also had a part on understanding the Roma culture.

The "suggestions" objective requires more time. The facilitation of the participation was excellent.

It would be beneficial to organise the discussion sessions more frequently. I was pleased with the event; I think it was very positive for the success of the policies developed directed towards the Roma people.

The presentation on the political areas was too long, repetitive and boring. The talks were improvised in some cases.

Conference: Working strategies to promote Roma social inclusion at a local level