

# Acceder programme



• ESF  
• ERDF

Structural Funds

The *Acceder* Programme, whose principal aim is to promote the Roma population's access to quality employment, is implemented throughout the whole of Spain by the Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG) within the framework of the Structural Fund's Multi-Regional Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination. This Programme was implemented during the 2000-2006 period of the Structural Funds thus making 2007 a key time to publicly account for programme management and to distribute the results and lessons learned from the *Acceder* initiative to the administrations which provided funding, those responsible for inclusion policies, companies, organisations working with Roma and the society at large.

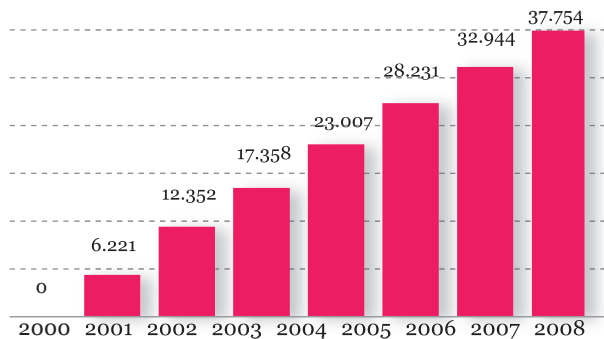
For this purpose a national edition of the **2000-2006 *Acceder* results report** and 13 further editions corresponding to each of the Autonomous Communities where the programme was implemented were compiled and publicly presented. The national report contains the results of the programme for the entire country and reflects some of the experiences of *Acceder* participants.

The Regional reports (Andalusia, Aragon, Castile-Leon, Castile-La Mancha, Catalonia, Valencia, Madrid, Galicia, Extremadura, Navarre, Murcia and the Basque Country) reflect what happened between 2000 and 2007 in these Autonomous Communities, the progress made by the Roma

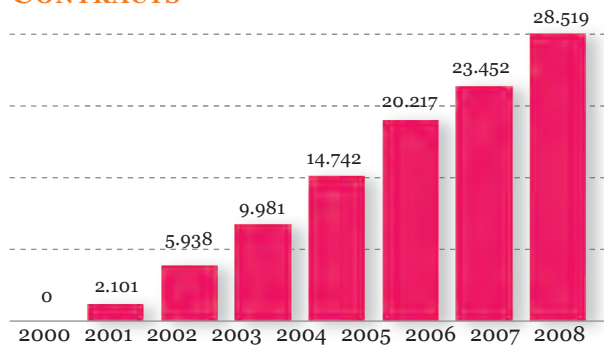


METAL WORK AND PAINTING TRAINING COURSE IN GRANADA

## USERS



## CONTRACTS



## USERS AND CONTRACTS OF THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME 2007





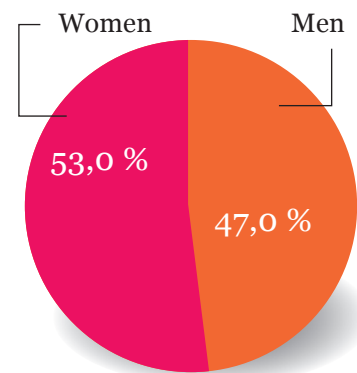
BULLETIN BOARD FOR THE ACTIVE JOB SEEKERS PROCESS

population, improvements in working conditions and also highlight the resources and teams which the programme had in each of these Communities. The regional reports are a key tool for programme dissemination and allow for comparisons with the overall results. The report also comes with a 13 minute video which summarises the main results and, more importantly, attaches a face to those jobs attained by programme participants. This marks the close of one period and the commencement of the new 2008-2013 *Acceder* period<sup>1</sup>.

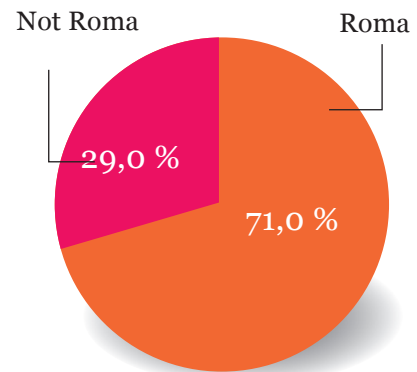
This opportunity was also used to present the **new corporate image of the *Acceder* Programme** which has similarities with the previous period but does represent a before and after for the programme. For example, from 2000-2007 the Programme's logo used the slogan "Operational Programme" which reinforced the idea of a European programme. The new logo substitutes this inscription with a more visual and explanatory one: "For the employment of the Roma population". The new logo also

<sup>1</sup> All of these products (video, national and regional reports) can be downloaded from the FSG website ([www.gitanos.org/Acceder](http://www.gitanos.org/Acceder)).

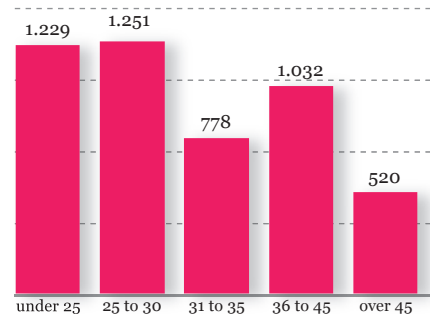
**ACCEDER PROGRAMME  
USERS 2007: GENRE**



**ACCEDER PROGRAMME  
USERS 2007: ETHNICITY**



**ACCEDER PROGRAMME  
USERS 2007: AGE**





WELDING TRAINING COURSE IN VITORIA

uses the reflection of the “a” from the *Acceder* Programme which becomes a “g” in reference to the *gitana* (Roma) population. The colour of the logo is light blue replacing the red.

The Programme has 45 employment centres distributed throughout Spain. These centres are situated in places which are accessible to the Roma population and are fully equipped with the needed resources. Each centre is comprised of an intercultural team entrusted with the execution of the Programme at local level (1 coordinator, 2 labour counsellors, in some teams 1 self-employment technician, 1 labour prospector and 1 intercultural mediator).

The *Acceder* Programme’s priority is to give the Roma population access to the labour market thus fostering equal opportunity. This access is promoted through labour market integration actions such as individual employment pathways and the development and enhancement of human resources.

The Programme’s general **objectives** are:

- › **to find jobs for Roma in the mainstream labour market;**
- › **to adapt vocational training to the demands of the labour market;** This

“The main added value of the *Acceder* programme is the impact it is having on changing the mindset of many Roma families towards salaried employment and also the change of mentality on the part of many government administrations towards the Roma community.

objective has focused on enhancing the professional skills of programme users so that the Roma population may gain access to remunerated employment and meet the demands for labour from private companies.

- › **to establish a direct link between Roma job-seekers and employment service providers;** The programme has proven that it is possible to close the gap between employment services and the unemployed Roma population enabling the latter to gain access on an equal footing with the rest of the population.



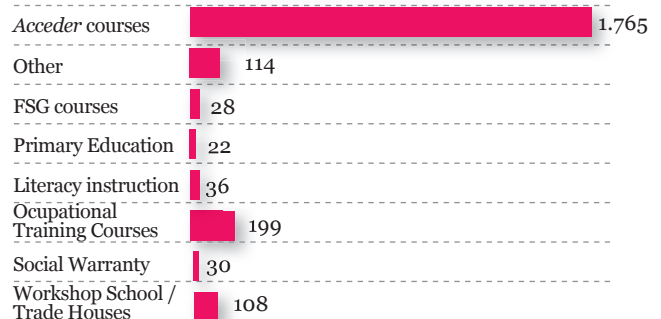
AWARDING OF DIPLOMAS UPON COMPLETION OF THE APARTMENT HOSTESS COURSE IN SEVILLE

to improve the social image of the Roma community through awareness-raising initiatives and by fighting against stereotypes and prejudices;

to standardise more pro-active policies targeting the Roma population with a view to improving living standards and guaranteeing equal opportunities in gaining access to public goods and services.

Achievement of these objectives is contingent upon an **integrated, multi-dimensional and individualised approach** in which individual attention is an essential methodological tool beginning with an initial diagnosis of the employability status of each person followed by the design of suitable measures and the

**ROMA TAKING PART IN TRAINING COURSES (YEAR 2007)**



necessary steps to bring about improvements in employability. These actions mainly but not exclusively target the Roma population, meaning that a maximum of 30% non-Roma population is accepted on the Programme.

The initial objective of the Programme was to work with 15,000 people from 2000-2006 and achieve at least 2,500 employment contracts. However, **after 8 years of work in the Acceder Programme** and as a summary of this first period of the Multi-Regional Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination, the results continue to outpace initial forecasts both in terms of the number of people served at our centres and the number of employment contracts signed. According to aggregate data as of the end of 2007, a total of **37,754 people have been served** at our

*Acceder* centres, representing growth of 15% vis-à-vis the figures at the close of 2006.

The main results of the Programme can be summarised as follows:

- › At 31 December 2007, **37,754 people** had called at one of the *Acceder* offices which the FSG has throughout Spain. Of these, **53% are women** bearing clear witness to the work done by the services encouraging the social-labour market integration of women.

- › **71%** of those following labour market integration pathways are **Roma**, a rise over the 2006 figure (69%).

- › Most of the participants are young, approximately 52% under the age of 30, with no significant gender differences except for a higher presence of men in the under 25 age bracket.

**TRAINING COURSES AND HOURS  
TOTAL 2000- 2007**

Total Courses	852
Total Trainees	7.132
Total Hours of Training	700.470



USER OF THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME WORKING AT THE EROSKI SUPERMARKET AT THE PAMPLONA CENTRE.

One of the key components of the programme throughout the different stages of the labour market integration pathway is the **drive towards training** viewed as a priority measure especially as far as young people are concerned. Training is very much focused on the job post, knowledge and technical skill acquisition and on instrumental skills as well (social, habits, competencies, etc.). To this end **more than 850 training actions** have been implemented (over 200 in 2007) involving over **7,300 people**. A higher percentage of Roma take part in this training (approximately 85% of the total) and there are more women than men (67%) especially between the ages of 16 and 24.

These training initiatives are mostly conducted in the services sector with over 35,000 hours of training and a broad range of specialities including industrial cleaning, store clerk, congress hostess, masonry, building maintenance and everything relating to access to new technologies. Within the sphere of actions designed to promote the labour market integration of Roma women, we would highlight the *CAM Romí* Programme carried out within the framework of the *Acceder* Programme in collaboration with the *Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo* (a savings bank, Spanish acronym CAM). Through 16 vocational training courses, it was instrumental in helping 166 of the 256 Roma women participating to get a work contract.

Further mention should be made of the mixed training and employment programmes in the form of workshop schools and trade and employment workshops. This



WORKERS INVOLVED IN THE UZIPEN TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE IN ALICANTE

training (and employment) model and its implementation by the FSG is supported by:

- › *Complementarity between training and employment* making for a very practical training process.
- › Considering the starting point of the students, the duration of the training (minimum one year) provides a *solid basis in basic training and in specific vocational training*.
- › *Monetary stipend for students* allowing them to meet the economic needs of their families and hence gaining the support of families when initiating training of this nature.
- › *Need to rehabilitate under-used spaces and those in a poor state of repair* to convert them into social centres to provide services to the population in general and

specifically to the Roma population and thus contribute to an enhanced standard of living in the city.

The value added of these projects lies in the fact that they form part of a wider training and employment programme where the labour market integration of student-workers is one of the fundamental initiatives within the framework of the aforementioned individualised pathways, collaborations with companies and integration into working life and on-the job monitoring. In this connection, in 2007 we implemented Workshop Schools having to do with building maintenance, the installation of solar panels (Madrid), the empowerment of information and citizen hotline services (Malaga), intercultural and socio-labour mediation (Almeria) and an employment workshop and personal autonomy training (Leon) with the participation of more than 100 people.

Furthermore, referrals are made to external training resources. The *Acceder* teams analyse the resources best suited to the characteristics and

requirements of each person, referring him/her to the resource deemed most appropriate. Especially during the initial phases of the training, accompaniment also forms part of the process when deemed necessary to assure that candidates follow through.

Another of the main objectives addressed was to actually sign a certain number of salaried job contracts estimated at 2,500 for the period 2000-2006. As of December 2007, **28,519 jobs** had been acquired by 11,995 people which comes out to more than two contracts per person. Breaking these results down by gender we find that **for the first time** in the life of the programme, **more women** (51%) were engaged than men coinciding with the greater number of women (53%) participating in the programme. If we look at the results focusing exclusively on the Roma population we find that Roma women continue to be underrepresented; the engagement rate for women is 47% while they account for 51% of the Roma participants. Although the figure is below what we would like to see, it does show that progress has been made during the course of the programme and this is a trend which needs to continue, i.e. enhance the results obtained for Roma women.

The percentage of contracts awarded to people seeking employment for the first time through the Programme (33% of the total number of persons engaged through the *Acceder* centres) points to the importance and repercussion that the Programme is having in facilitating the labour market integration of those with no previous work experience, their participation in labour and training resources and their willingness to improve their socio-labour skills. It is also important to underscore other figures which provide more information than just labour market integration data having to do with the



STUDENTS DOING PRACTICAL STUDIES AS PART OF THE INDUSTRIAL CLEANING COURSE IN BURGOS



HOSTESS TRAINED BY THE ECOTUR PROFESSIONAL CONGRESS HOSTESS SERVICE

quality of the employment gained. Of the temporary contracts, **20% have a duration of over 6 months** while permanent contracts account for 4.5% of the total. Full-time contracts (71% of the total) have been rising year on year but with major gender differences: 80% of the part time contracts are awarded to women.

The push towards self-employment which began in 2006 was another of the lines of action implemented in 2007, incorporating self-employment as another alternative into the labour market integration pathway methodology. Hence, aside from the consolidation of projects already up and running, **9 business projects were launched** focusing on different activities such as ice-cream vendors, textile outlets and waste collection.

It is also important to draw attention to the publication of the fifth edition of the *Roma Community Employment Observatory*

corresponding to 2006 which includes the different variations since the year 2000 as well as the variation rates for the entire 2000-2006 period thus offering a point of comparison between the Roma population's socio-labour situation at the beginning and at the end of the Programme. This has entailed a series of methodological changes which clearly illustrate the evolution of some of the parameters throughout the period. In this regard, the most important change vis-à-vis previous observatories is the inclusion of progression graphics and comparison tables between the initial and final situation which provide a global overview of the advances made during the Programme. This Observatory is a tool for ongoing analysis and reflection regarding the socio-labour reality faced by Spain's Roma population and facilitates thorough analyses through which to gain greater



EMPLOYMENT AND ROMA COMMUNITY OBSERVATORY 2000-2006



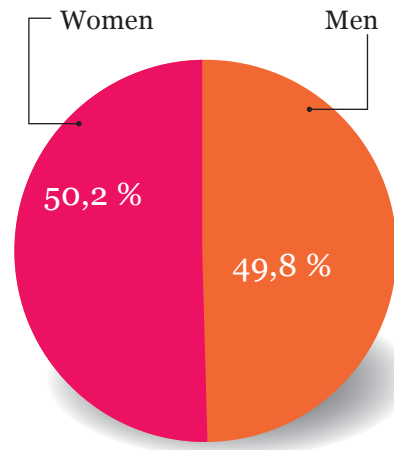
insight into the current situation characterising the Roma community thanks to its copious and relevant information on the educational and employment situation of many Roma people who, in one way or another, have come into contact with one of the 45 *Acceder* employment centres distributed throughout the different regions of Spain.

This year has seen the celebration of **49 seminars and debate and reflection fora** in which more than **6,200 professionals** working with the Roma population in different administrations and social entities took part. They addressed intervention models, methodologies and relevant tools for the social inclusion of the Roma population such as the fight on discrimination, the importance of education in labour market integration, reconciling family and professional life and employment and training.

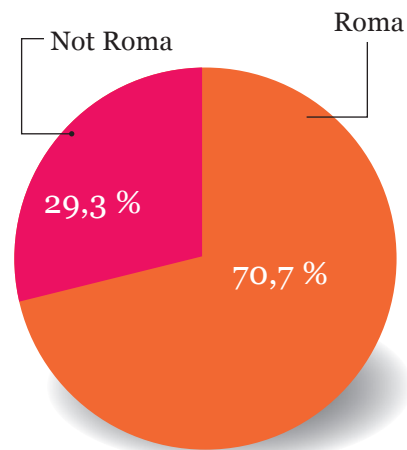
Now as we near the close of this period of the Programme and are on the threshold of the next (2008-2013), it is safe to say that the initial objectives have been more than met from a quantitative point of view. Moreover, a qualitative assessment leads to the conclusion that the actions we are implementing represent a clear step forward (although still scant) towards accomplishing our major objective which is none other than making equal opportunity for the Roma population a reality when it comes to their access to training and employment, enabling them to become fully integrated into society.

In this connection we feel it is important to list **some of the programme's key success stories** which we have summarised in 10 points:

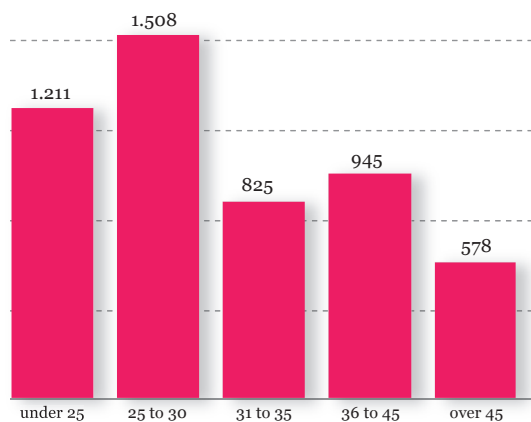
**ACCEDER PROGRAMME  
CONTRACTS 2007: GENRE**



**ACCEDER PROGRAMME  
CONTRACTS 2007: ETHNICITY**



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CONTRACTS 2007: AGE**



**1. The creation of individualised integration pathways within the framework of a holistic and community approach.** A wide range of actions has been designed to increase the employability of programme users. The overarching objective is to foster autonomy in the labour world intervening not only with beneficiaries but also with their family environment.

**2. Balance of the social and economic perspective.** A dual policy has been devised; holistic social intervention bearing the Roma socio-cultural perspective in mind and tailoring of the Programme to suit the needs of the labour market.

3. Implementation of **intercultural and multi-disciplinary teams**. All of the teams are comprised of Roma and non-Roma with diverse and complementary professional backgrounds.

**4. Sights set on gradual “mainstreaming”.** This policy has been adopted with the ultimate objective of providing the Roma population with access to resources on an equal footing with the rest of the citizenry.

5. Implementation of **adapted but not segregated services**. Interculturality has been fostered and actions have been carried out preferably but not exclusively focused on the Roma population.

**6. Long-term planning.** Managing a 7-year programme has provided welcome stability which has been a key factor in obtaining positive results.

**7. Capacity for adaptation.** The *Acceder* programme has been flexible so as to be able to adapt to each individual user. According to the *Acceder* results report “prior social work was vital

in removing obstacles and without it access to employment would not have been feasible”.

**8. Capacity for innovation.** Innovation has been an integral part of the creation of working tools and tailored training systems.

**9. A strong sense of partnership.** A tight link has been created with the business sector as has a suitable public-private sector relations scheme.

**10. National dimensions for local actions.** Intervention has been more effective when it combined a generic state-wide approach adapted to local peculiarities.

In short and by way of conclusion, through this programme we are trying to stress the idea that the fight against discrimination should not be limited to defence against a phenomenon infringing the fundamental rights of individuals, but should also envisage a pro-active approach clearly including the Roma population’s active exercise of their right to training and employment as a gateway paving the way to other rights and full citizenship.

The European Union has extended the Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination to the year 2013 and therefore the *Acceder* programme will continue for the next seven years. But it will now face new challenges, i.e. enhance the quality of the employment offered to the Roma population, focus part of its actions on preventing early school leaving and reinforce training and foster the social and labour market integration of Roma immigrants.

The Fundación Secretariado Gitano is aware that despite the milestone of having incorporated part of the Roma population into the labour market,

many of the jobs found under the umbrella of the *Acceder* programme have been low-skilled. Therefore, one of the objectives of *Acceder* is to improve the quality of employment and achieve a greater degree of stability for workers. The second major challenge, education, will require the implementation of pro-active measures involving schools, students and Roma families with a view to improving the qualifications and entry conditions of the Roma population as they move into the labour market. The Foundation also want to meet the needs of the Roma population from Eastern European countries that arrives with virtually no education, is unaware of the host culture and has scant economic resources.

Another of the important future challenges facing the *Acceder* Programme is the exchange of information, know-how and mutual learning regarding the inclusion of the Roma population in the countries of the European Union through the European Network on Roma and Social Inclusion in which all of the countries with a significant Roma population participate. The Foundation is also encouraging the transfer of the *Acceder* programme's best practices model to the European context mostly working in the areas of training and access to employment together with educational measures during the last few years of compulsory education.

## ACCEDER CENTERS

