

▶▶ *Acceder* Programme



- ESF
- ERDF

Structural Funds

The *Acceder* Programme, whose principal aim is to promote the Roma population's access to employment, is implemented throughout the whole of Spain by the Fundación Secretariado Gitano as the intermediate body within the framework of the Structural Fund's Multi-Regional Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination. This Programme has been in operation since the year 2000 and in 2008 the new 2008-2013 period of the *Acceder* programme commenced during which we expect to continue improving, reach more people and provide even better training and quality employment. We are also faced with new challenges to tackle related to improving the educational level and meeting the needs of the Roma immigrants from Central and Eastern European countries.

For a decade now, a series of elements have come together favouring *Acceder* Programme initiatives; elements such as new demands coming from the Roma population, the socio-economic situation generating higher levels of employment, the opportunity presented by labour market integration policies supported by the European Social Fund, co-financing received from more than 70 public administrations and private entities and, together with all of that and no less important, the design and development of guidelines for the implementation of methodologies and tools

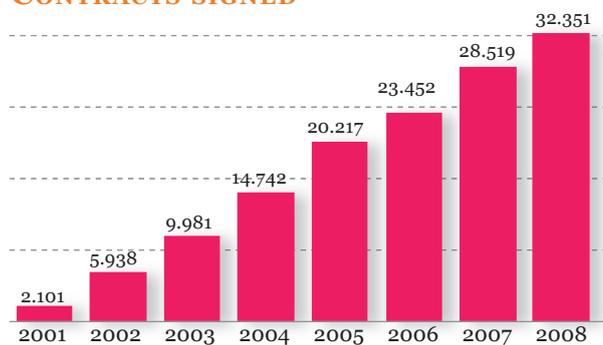


ECOTUR HOSTESSES DOING AN INTERNSHIP AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE CAMPAIGN "EMPLOYMENT MAKES US EQUAL" IN CASTILE-LEON.

PERSONS SERVED



CONTRACTS SIGNED



PERSONS AND CONTRACTS FROM THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME IN 2008





BEAUTY SALON TRAINING COURSE IN MURCIA.

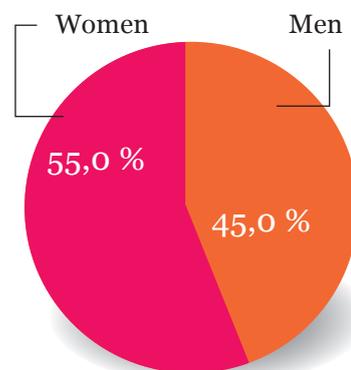
adapted to and targeting the labour-market integration of the Roma population.

Our work has been instrumental in putting over 44,500 people through individualised employment pathways and the signing of **32,300 work contracts**. At the end of the day, it is the qualitative results which reflect the true impact of the ACCEDER programme. Of these, special mention should be made of the mindset changes which can be observed among the Roma population and among employers and the society at large.

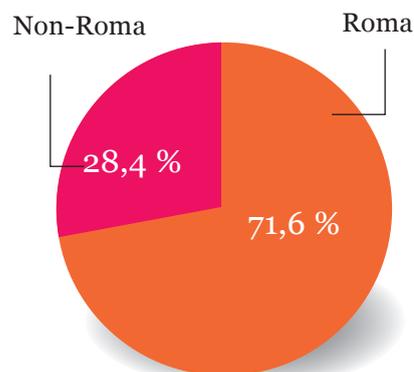
Coinciding with the kickoff of the new programme in 2008, some of those elements have changed, namely the fact that the labour market in all of the Autonomous Communities is in recession giving rise to a significant increase in the number of unemployed persons. This situation poses lost opportunity meaning that many of the people who would have found employment remain jobless. Mobile trading is suffering as well to the same degree as the rest of the commercial sector.

In short, today there are greater difficulties, higher levels of poverty and dependence on social benefits

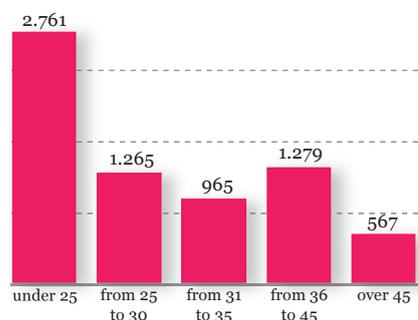
PERSONS SERVED THROUGH THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME 2008: GENDER



PERSONS SERVED THROUGH THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME 2008: ETHNIC BACKGROUND



PERSONS SERVED THROUGH THE ACCEDER PROGRAMME 2008: AGE



and an increased risk of losing some of the progress which the *Acceder* Programme has made.

Execution of the Programme, more important today than ever, requires 48 employment centres distributed throughout Spain. These centres are situated in places which are accessible to the Roma population and are fully equipped with the necessary resources. Each centre has 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 job hunter 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.



STUDENT DOING AN INTERNSHIP AS PART OF A FORK-LIFT OPERATOR COURSE IN BARCELONA.

“Despite the current situation of rising unemployment, the *Acceder* Programme succeeded in securing 3,832 jobs in 2008.

- 】 To adapt vocational training to the demands of the labour market. This 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.
- 】 To improve the social image of the Roma community through awareness-raising initiatives and by combating 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



STUDENTS TAKING PART IN A CHEF'S ASSISTANT COURSE IN MADRID.

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 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.

At the close of 2008 the Programme implemented **new guidelines** turning these actions into helpful tools to deal with the new situation which Roma now has to face in the cities where we work. This entails:

Reinforcing the Programme's social accompaniment capacity with a view to facilitating access to resources to which beneficiaries are entitled (minimum income, emergency assistance, etc.) acting as a safety net for beneficiaries whose basic difficulties are getting worse.



INTERNSHIP AS PART OF A WAITER'S COURSE IN PALENCIA.

There is less employment but there is indeed employment and the *Acceder* Programme is **fostering labour market intermediation processes** (mobilising enterprise at local, regional and national level) and is also seeking formulae to reinforce and sustain self-employment.

PARTICIPANTS IN TRAINING ACTIONS BY SPECIALITY

IT	189
Food handler	221
Shop clerk	171
Literacy / primary school	168
Social skills	135
Fork-lift operators	103
Driving license	86
Supermarket cashiers	98
Shelf stockers	54
Hostesses	96
Chamber maids	69
Cleaning	47
Beauty salon	50
Warehouse helper	49
Kitchen assistant	31
Home refurbishment	38
Customer service	25
Electrician-solar panels	30
Welder-mechanic	25
Ironing	9
Gardener	15
Domestic help-childcare	31

TRAINING ACTIONS BY SPECIALTY

IT	16
Food handler	13
Shop clerk	13
Literacy / primary school	13
Social skills	12
Fork-lift operators	10
Driving license	10
Supermarket cashiers	10
Shelf stockers	7
Hostesses	7
Chamber maids	6
Cleaning	6
Beauty salon	6
Warehouse helper	5
Kitchen assistant	5
Home refurbishment	4
Customer service	3
Electrician-solar panels	3
Welder-mechanic	3
Ironing	2
Gardener	2
Domestic help-childcare	2



INTERNSHIP AS PART OF THE CHAMBER MAID COURSE IN SEVILLE.

Investing in training and improving the qualifications of young Roma based on the likelihood of real employment, implementing training generally short training sessions in collaboration with companies. This internship-type training leading to a short

or middle term work contract is contingent upon the acquisition of specific skills needed for the job post.

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

- At 31 December 2008, 44,591 people** had called at one of the *Acceder* offices which the FSG has all throughout Spain. Of these **55% are women** bearing clear witness to the work done by the services encouraging the social-labour market integration of Roma women.
- 71.6%** of those following labour market integration pathways are **Roma**, a rise over the 2006 (69%) and 2007 (71%) figures.
- The programme has been particularly successful among young people. The under 30 group is the largest accounting for 52% of the total number of service users. At the



AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY THE VEDELAR START-UP FIRM IN ASTURIAS.

“One of the main ways of tackling the labour market crisis is to prioritise actions related to training and enhancing the qualifications of the Roma population.

other extreme we have the over 45 group which barely accounts of 11% of the total.

- | Gender breakdown is relatively the same in all age brackets with a greater number of women. These figures show that young Roma are seeking new labour alternatives because they realise that the traditional economic activities undertaken by their parents offer scant present or future opportunity.
- | Moreover, in collaboration with the Directorate-General for Immigrant Integration (Ministry of Labour and Immigration), 1,538 Eastern European Roma were beneficiaries of individual social integration pathways, 94% of whom were from Romania and 6% from Bulgaria. This intervention was carried out in the cities of Cordoba, Malaga, Oviedo, Aviles, Badalona, Sabadell, Alicante, Valencia and the southeast fringe of Madrid.

In addition to the integration pathways, programme actions included **training**. In



AUTOMOTIVE ELECTRICITY COURSE IN LA RODA.

2008 a total of 158 vocational training courses were given consisting of 57,700 hours of theory and 21,000 hours of practical training benefitting a total of **1,740 people in all of the different courses**. Training is very much focused on the job post, knowledge and technical skill acquisition and on instrumental skills as well (social, habits, competencies, etc.).

The aim of this **training carried out through agreements with companies is subsequent engagement** which, in some cases, is agreed beforehand with a hiring percentage usually between 20% and 50%.

These training actions are usually in the services sector featuring a wide array of courses focusing on IT, store clerk, congress hostess, industrial cleaning, fork-lift operators or cashiers. 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 vocational training courses in the Autonomous Communities of Catalonia, Madrid, Murcia and Valencia.

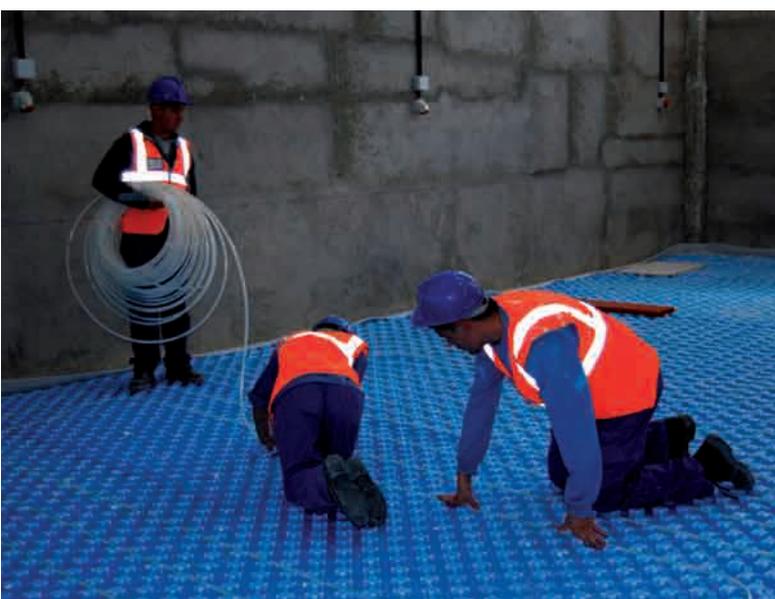
One of the main ways of tackling the labour market crisis is to prioritise actions related to training and enhancing the qualifications of the Roma population.

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.

The main objective of the programme is to find jobs for Roma in the ordinary labour market. Despite the situation of rising unemployment, the *Acceder* Programme

managed to secure **3,832 jobs in 2008** bringing the total as of December 2008 to 32,351 jobs for 13,508 people which is a ratio of more than two contracts per person. A breakdown of these results by gender sheds light on a very relevant piece of information – women (as in 2007) continue to be awarded the greatest number of contracts (**51%**) and also participate in the programme to a greater degree (55%). 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** (30% 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 in encouraging their participation in labour and training resources and bears witness to 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 **permanent contracts accounting for 5%** of the total. Full-time contracts (72% of the total) have been rising year on year but with major gender differences: 78% of the part time contracts are awarded to women.



STUDENTS AT MADRID'S AMARO TEGARÁ WORKSHOP SCHOOL SPECIALISING IN BUILDING MAINTENANCE DOING A SOLAR ENERGY INTERNSHIP.

The push towards self-employment which began in 2006 was another of the lines of action implemented in 2008, incorporating self-employment as another alternative into the labour market integration pathway methodology. Hence, in addition to consolidating projects already implemented, two new entrepreneurial projects and six new people have been added whose main activity is as self-employed workers.

Another of the priorities to tackle rising unemployment are the mixed training and employment programmes in the form of workshop schools and trade and employment workshops. This training (and employment) model and its implementation by the FSG is supported by:

- 1 Complementary between training and employment with a very practical approach.
- 2 The duration (minimum one year) allows for a solid basis both in terms of basic training and specific professional training.
- 3 Salary for students so that they can contribute to family income.

Thus, in 2008 we implemented Workshop Schools having to do with building maintenance, the installation of solar panels (Madrid), building maintenance (Puertollano), the empowerment of information and citizen hotline services (Malaga), Intercultural Mediation Trade Schools (Sestao) and intercultural and socio-labour mediation (Almeria) with the participation of more than 100 people.

As concerns programme awareness-raising actions, **42 seminars and debate and**



STUDENTS DOING IT STUDIES IN GRANADA.



INAUGURAL SESSION OF THE I SEMINAR ON ROMA FROM EASTERN EUROPE HELD IN BARCELONA.



SIGNING OF THE COLLABORATION AGREEMENT WITH THE COMISIONES OBRERAS TRADE UNION.

reflection fora were organised for **5,100 participants**. Of these, 19 territorial presentations of the social awareness-raising campaign entitled “employment makes us equal” were made in addition to presentations such as the fight on discrimination, the importance of education in labour market integration, the reconciliation of family and professional life and the link between

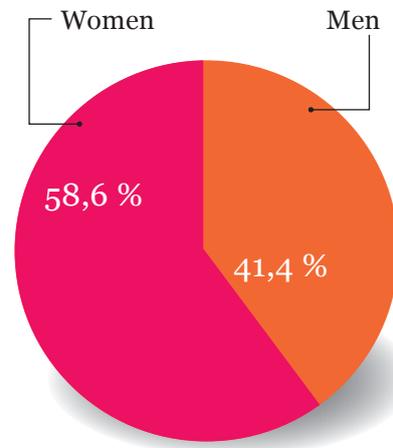
employment and training. Special mention should be made of the employment seminar given in Vigo in September involving large companies with a view to reaching specific agreements to facilitate the training and hiring of *Acceder* Programme participants. We would also highlight the Collaboration Agreement signed in October 2008 between the FSG and the *Comisiones Obreras* Trade Union to combat labour discrimination and support equal treatment of the Roma population.

Despite the current status of the labour market, a qualitative assessment of Programme action in 2008 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.

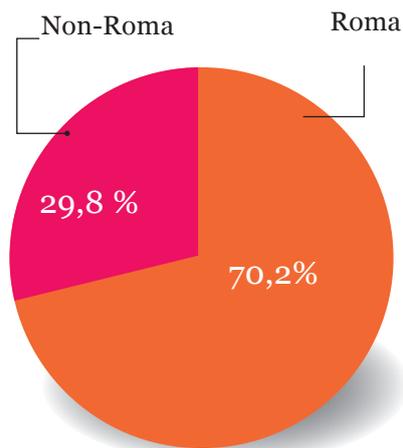
In this connection, we feel it is important to list some lessons learned from the Programme:

- 1 **Actions should be implemented at national and local level:** establish Multi-regional Anti-Discrimination Programmes which include actions targeting those groups suffering discrimination and social exclusion. When dealing with certain issues, the national dimension favours greater cohesion and territorial balance.
- 1 **NGOs should become actively involved** in national and regional Operational Programmes (from the planning and design phase through to the execution phase) and play a new role as public service providers. This leadership role should be played by mature organisations with proven experience.

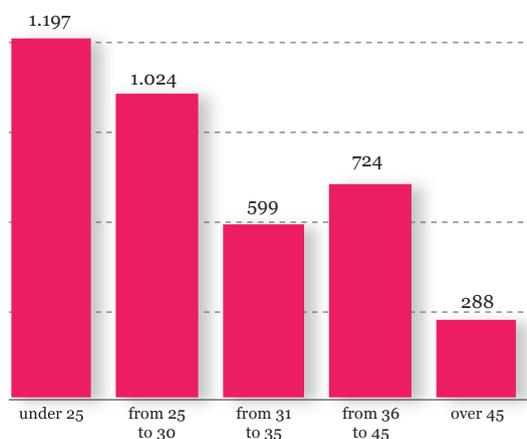
**ACCEDER PROGRAMME
CONTRACTS 2008: GENDER**



**ACCEDER PROGRAMME CONTRACTS
2008: ETHNIC GROUP**



**ACCEDER PROGRAMME
CONTRACTS 2008: AGE**





SEMINAR WITH MAJOR UNDERTAKINGS IN VIGO.

Solutions adapted to target groups guarantee and increase action impact.

The aim is to build bridges linking the needs of the Roma community to active employment policies, ultimately striking a balance between the development of affirmative action measures for target groups and closing the gap between the latter and mainstream services and the adaptation of these services to the characteristics of the Roma population.

A strong partnership between public and private organisations favours the improvement of management systems, mutual learning, experience sharing and the creation of resource synergy.

A proper coordination and management system is key to Programme success.

Supplementary actions: Awareness-raising and involvement of the business sector, the media, other entities and the society at large is essential if we are to renew the social perception of the Roma population and their labour market integration. Studies shedding light on

the objective situation of this community is vital for the planning of actions and monitoring of change.

Widespread dissemination and visibility of Programme action and results. Establish Monitoring Committees to ensure transparency. Visibility and open communication facilitate awareness-raising regarding the topic of discrimination and social exclusion. Transparency and the constant flow of information through Monitoring Committees are essential to the Programme's credibility.

Mobilisation of local and regional resources. All resources are aligned to achieve the same objective and synergies are created among all available resources.

Structural Funds used appropriately can have a major impact on socially excluded groups while also favouring social cohesion. The new objective of *European Territorial Cooperation* is the most ideal framework for the implementation of transnational actions based on themes such as the social inclusion of the Roma community and their labour market integration.

In short and by way of conclusion, and considering that the current economic crisis and labour market situation will take some time to remedy, we feel that the *Acceder* Programme must reinforce the idea that combating discrimination must take more than a purely defensive approach to this phenomenon which violates the fundamental rights of individuals, it must be proactive. Moreover, the challenge facing the *Acceder* Programme in this new scenario is that of having the capacity to adapt and be effective

in a context of rising unemployment. Our focus is on labour market intermediation and striking collaboration agreements with companies.

The last several years have borne witness to especially important and deep changes within the Roma population in Spain and the rest of Europe. Generally speaking, **greater attention and awareness on the part of public authorities** can be perceived as concerns the social situation of Europe's number one minority. Therefore there are opportunities for the social inclusion of the Roma population throughout all of Europe and the approaches and know-how which this Programme employs must play a relevant role.

“The challenge facing the *Acceder* Programme in this new scenario is that of having the capacity to adapt and be effective in a context of rising unemployment by focusing efforts on labour market intermediation and by striking collaboration agreements with companies.

ACCEDER CENTRES

