

THE SOCIAL VIEW OF THE ROMA PEOPLE IN SPAIN



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CREDITS

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OTROS FINES DE INTERÉS SOCIAL



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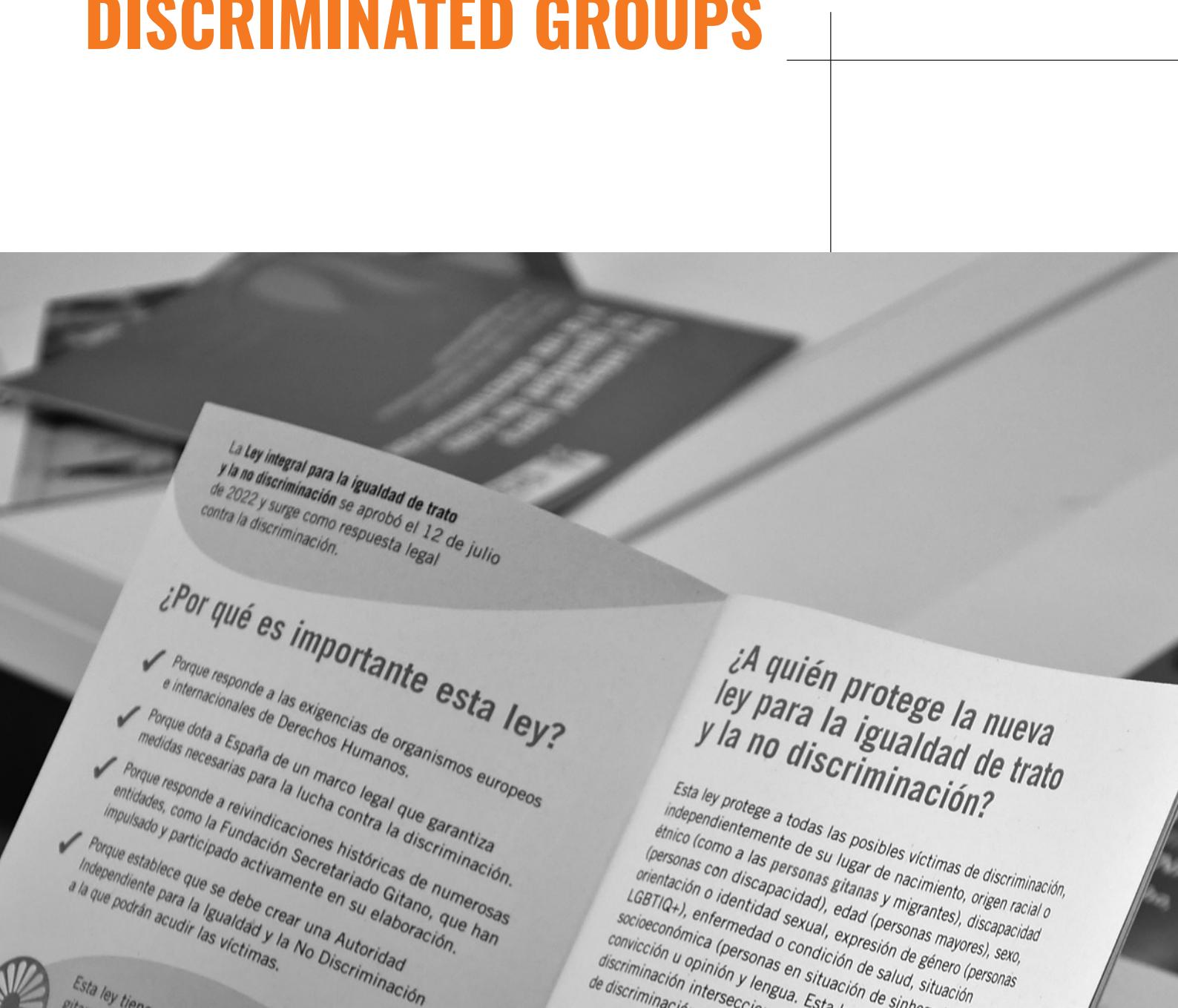
INTRODUCTION

In this year 2025, so special for our community and for the Roma people in Spain, because it celebrates the 600th anniversary of their arrival in the peninsula Iberian, from the Fundación Secretariado Gitano we wanted to propose this study focused on *the social view of the Roma people* with a double purpose: generate objective information on how Roma are still perceived today and make visible, through the dissemination of the results obtained, a more real image of the diversity and current situation of the Roma people in Spain, as well as the mismatches that still exist between this reality and the perception by the majority society. These misalignments are sometimes influenced by stereotypes, prejudices and false beliefs about the Roma people that are deeply rooted in the majority population.

Through this study carried out in collaboration with the company 40dB, with a sample of 1000 people from all over Spain, we have been able to review the main areas of social life (employment, housing, education, culture, discrimination, gender differences, etc.) and we have found that the Roma people remain a great unknown to a large part of the Spanish non-Roma population. This translates, among other aspects, into the persistence of certain stereotypes about the Roma that continue to weigh and that are at the origin of discriminatory situations faced by Roma people in their day to day. In short, with this study, the first done in Spain with this approach, it is intended to put on the table (and also in the debate) one of the most important barriers that continue to affect many Roma people in Spain on a daily basis. We are talking about the **negative social image and ignorance** of the Roma people, which have been maintained throughout history and which still today continue to limit the free exercise and access to human rights on an equal basis.

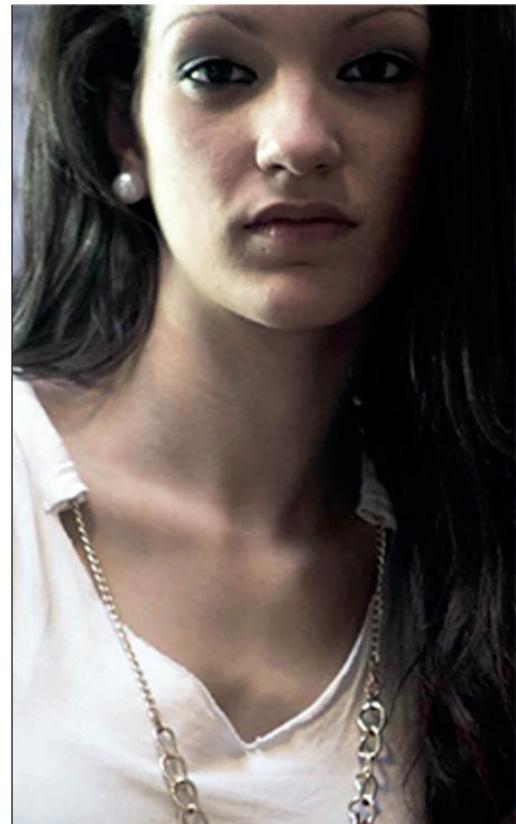
This study has been carried out within the framework of the *IgualTrato Programme (Equal Treatment), for the Non-Discrimination of Roma*, financed by the European Social Plus Fund and co-financed by the 0.7 grants of the Spanish Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and Agenda 2030, and developed in the period 2024-2029. It is the first barometer planned over the duration of this programme, with the next planned to be carried out in 2029. In addition, these studies can complement the Special Eurobarometers on Discrimination that are carried out every four years in all the countries of the European Union.

1. ATTITUDES TOWARDS TRADITIONALLY DISCRIMINATED GROUPS

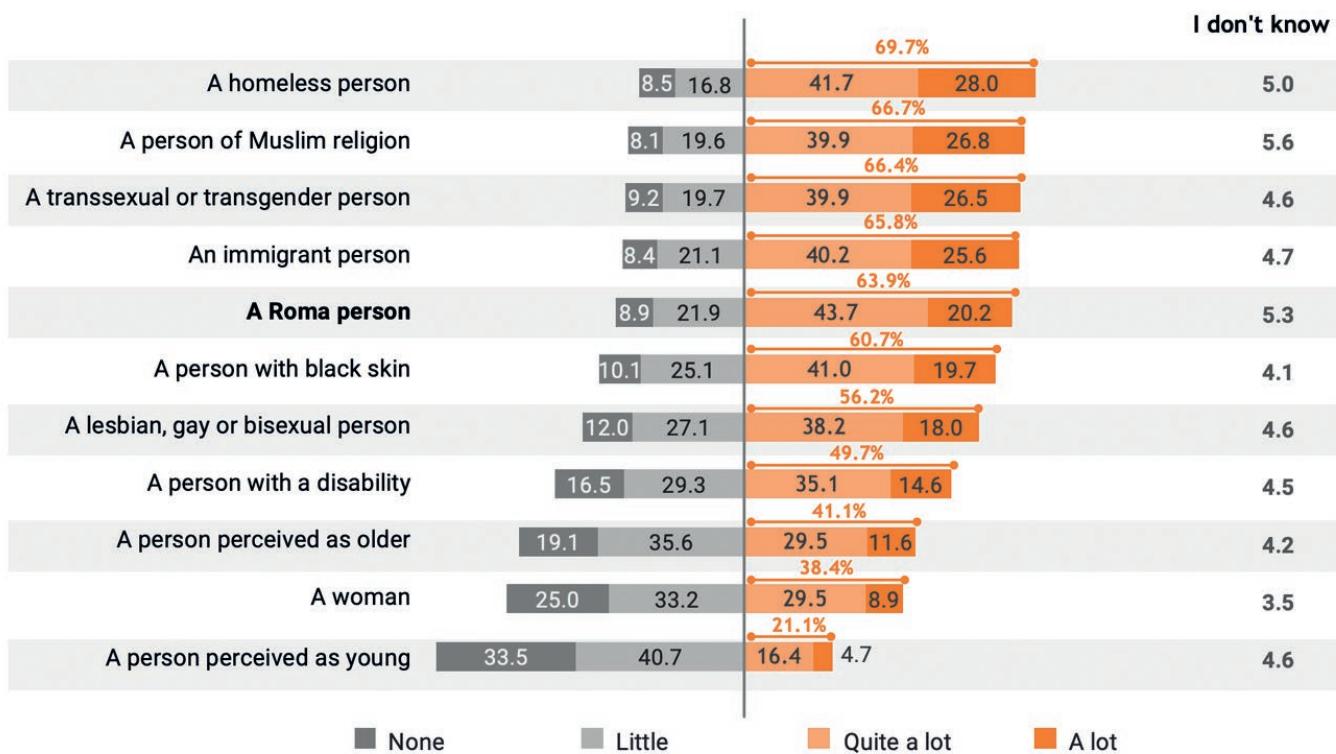


DISCRIMINATION PERCEIVED TO TRADITIONALLY DISCRIMINATED COLLECTIVES

Roma are ranked fifth among the population groups currently considered to be most discriminated against.



Thinking about each of the following people, how much discrimination would you say currently exists toward them? (% of total)

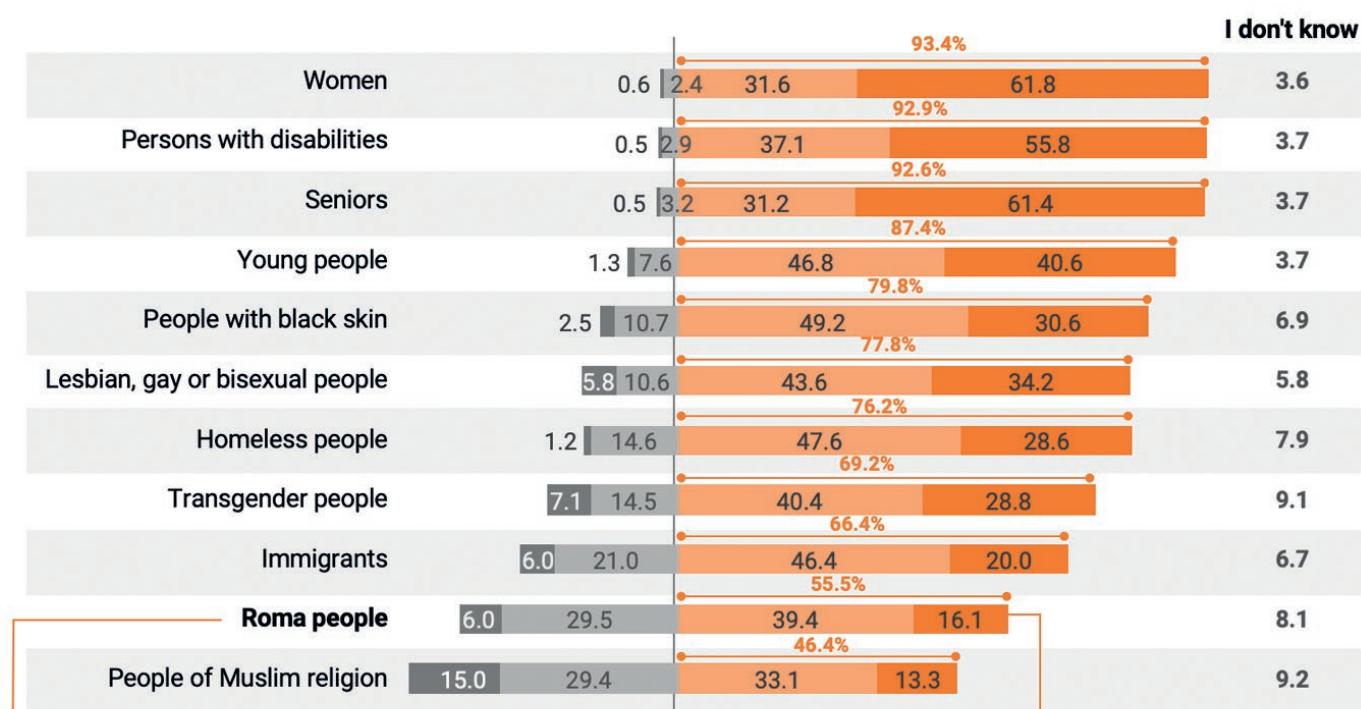


SYMPATHY TOWARDS TRADITIONALLY DISCRIMINATED COLLECTIVES

However, in terms of personal sympathy, Roma people -along with Muslim people- are the groups that arouse the least sympathy.



Personally, would you say that you have a lot, quite a lot, a little or no sympathy for each of these groups of people? (% of total)



Similar in all ideologies.

None

Little

Quite a lot

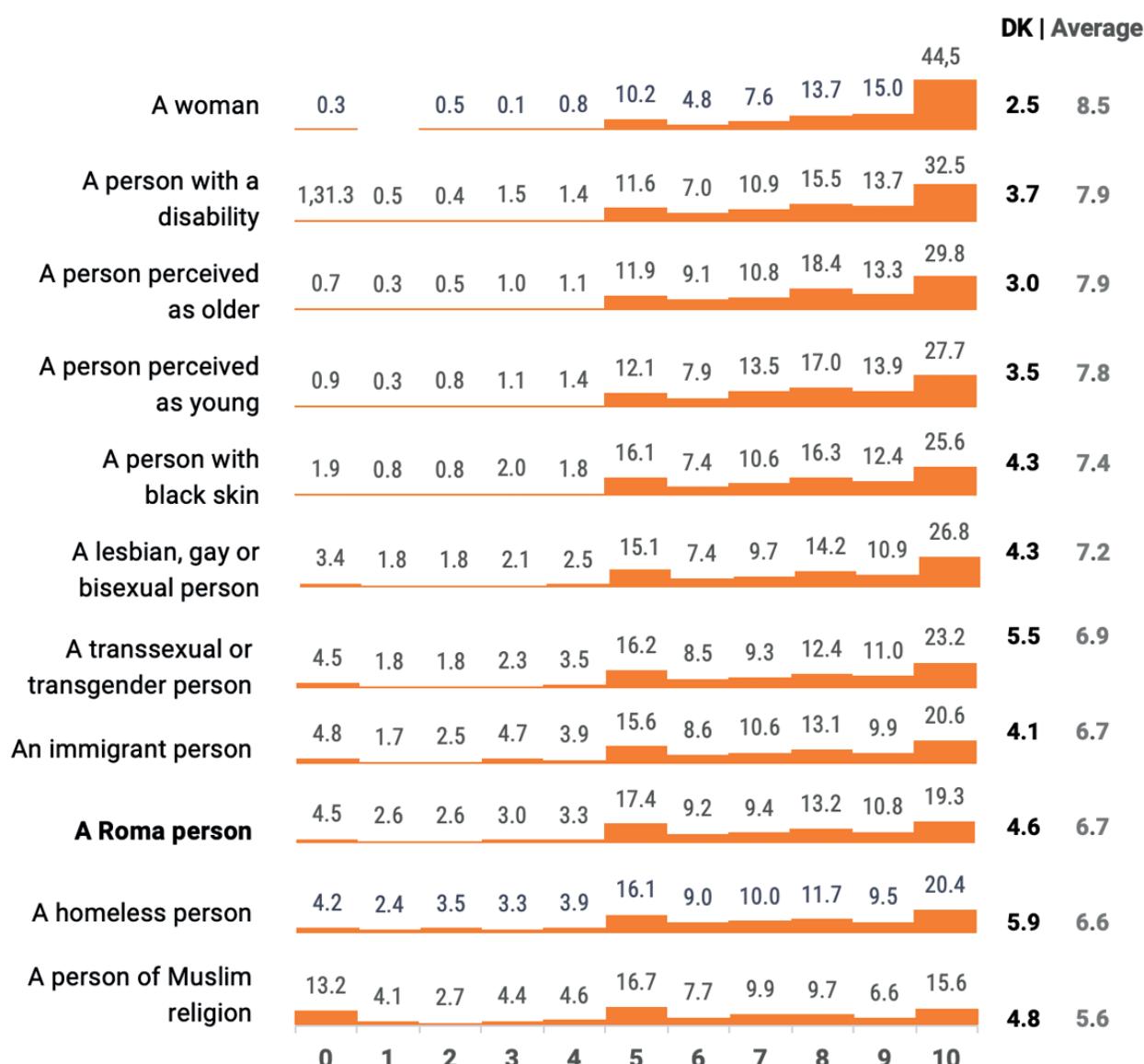
A lot

They live in an area with quite a lot of Roma people: 67.2%

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION BY TRADITIONALLY DISCRIMINATED GROUPS

The affinity towards certain population groups is also reflected in the policy: there is less acceptance of Muslim people, homeless people, Roma and immigrants as representatives, and greater sympathy for women, people with disabilities and the elderly.

↗ In general terms, do you find it rather positive or rather negative that there are people from each of the following groups as representatives of political parties? (% of total)

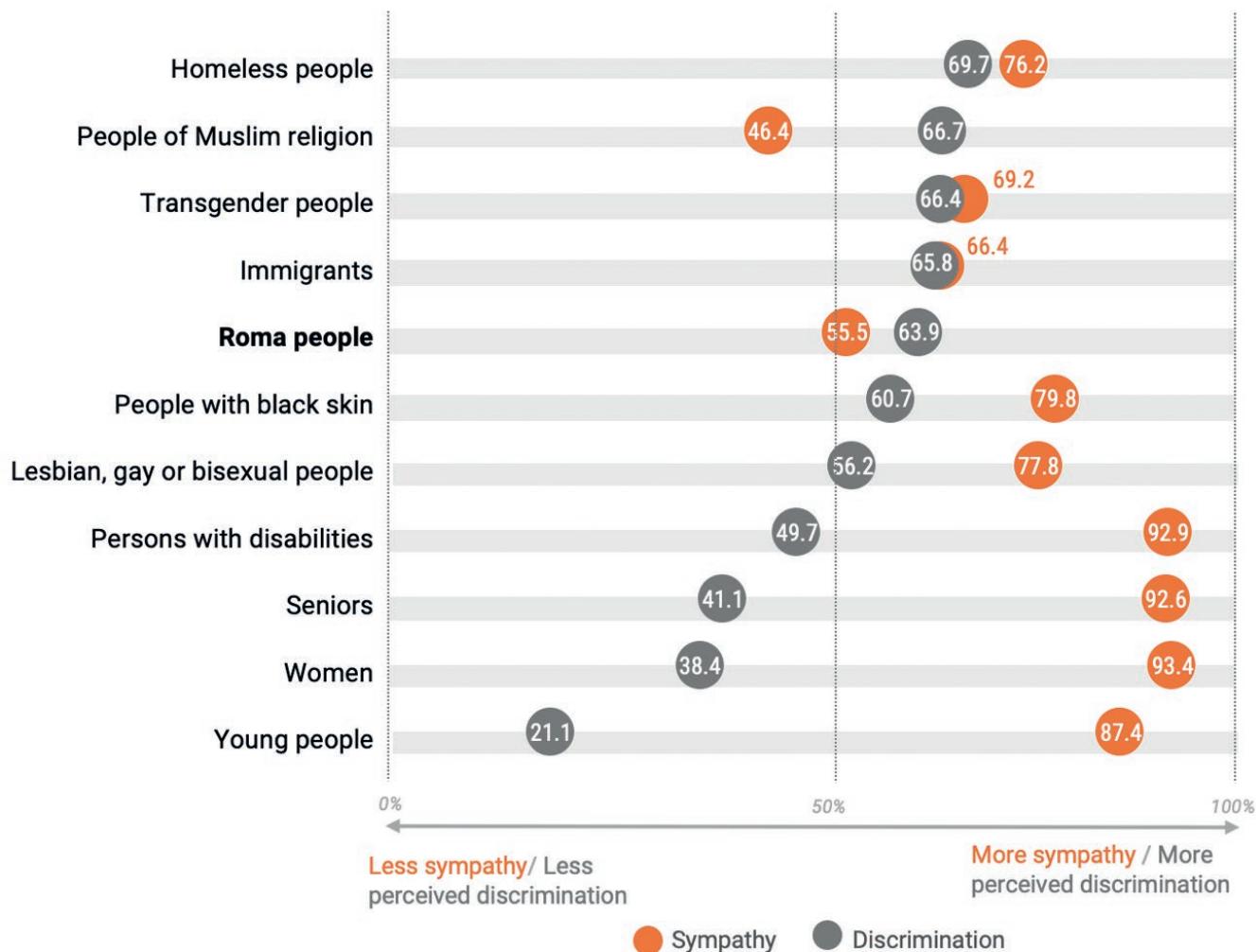




DISCRIMINATION AND SYMPATHY TOWARDS TRADITIONALLY MARGINALISED SOCIAL GROUPS

The Roma population, along with the Muslim population, is the only one with a higher level of perceived discrimination than sympathy on the part of citizens.

Thinking about each of the following people, how much discrimination would you say currently exists towards them? (% answering "a lot" and "quite a lot" out of the total) Personally, would you say that you have a lot, quite a lot, a little or no sympathy for each of these groups of people? (% answering "a lot" and "quite a lot" out of the total)



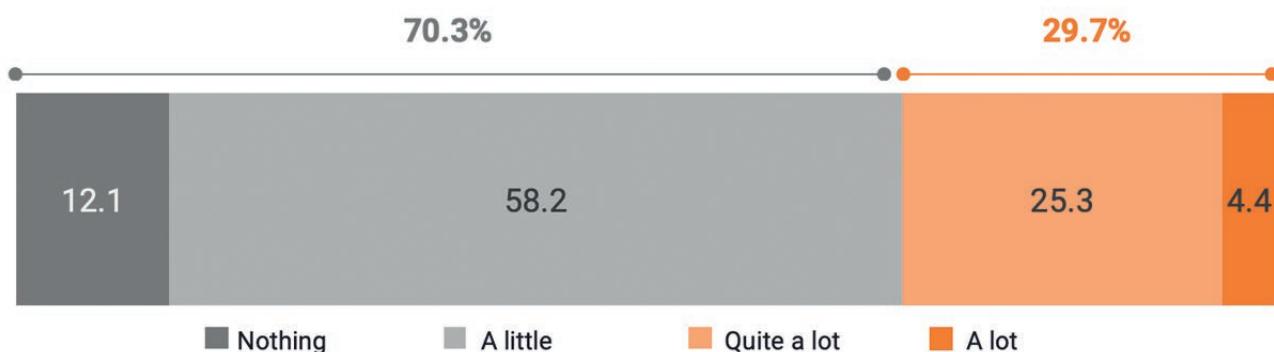
2. SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROMA PEOPLE



ROMA HISTORY AND CULTURE

Seven out of ten people say they have little or no knowledge of the Roma history and culture.

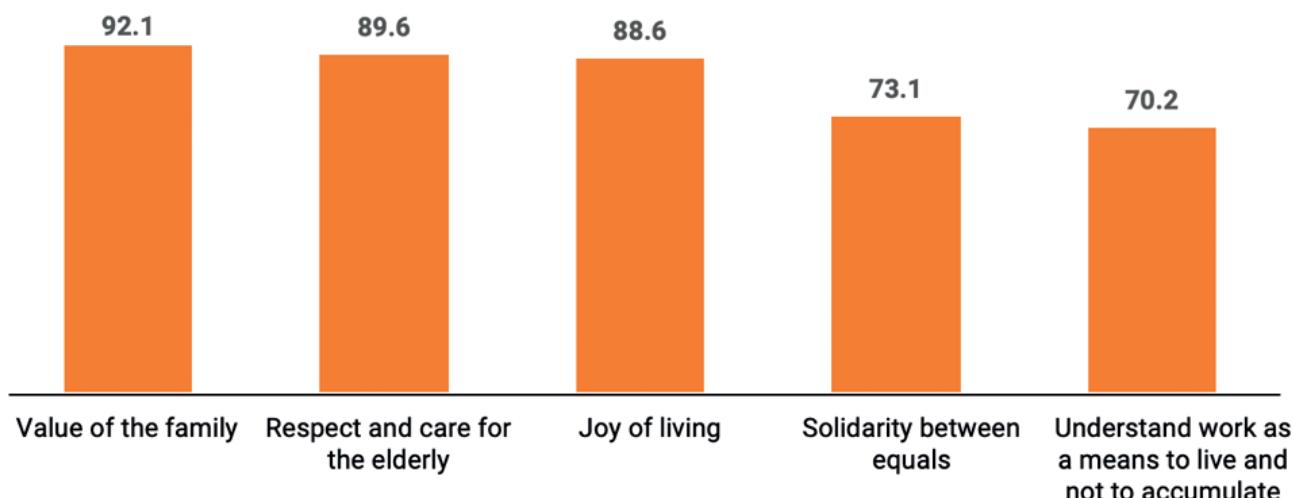
↗ In your particular case, how much would you say you know about the history and culture of the Roma people in Spain? (% of total)



IDENTIFICATION OF VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROMA PEOPLE

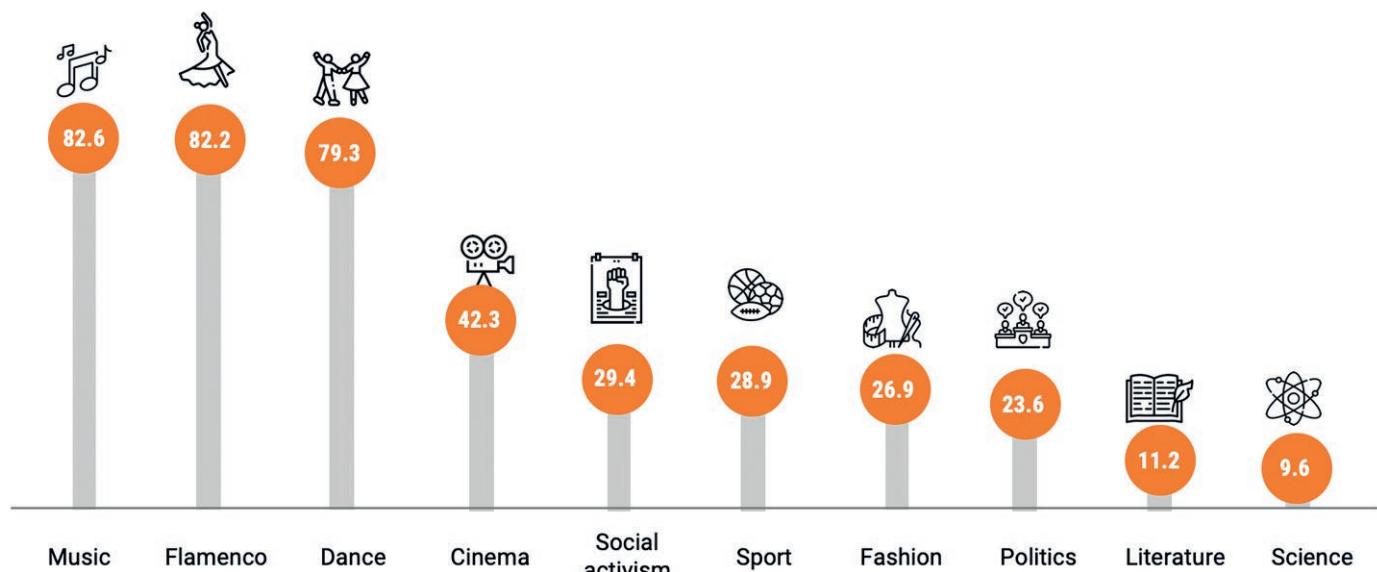
The family and respect for the elderly stand out as the values most linked to the Roma people, followed by the joy of living. Solidarity between equals and understanding work as a means to live and not to accumulate are values that are also identified with the Roma people.

↗ For each of the following values, please indicate whether or not you identify it with the Roma people (% saying "Yes")



PERCEPTION OF THE PRESENCE OF THE ROMA POPULATION IN DIFFERENT AREAS

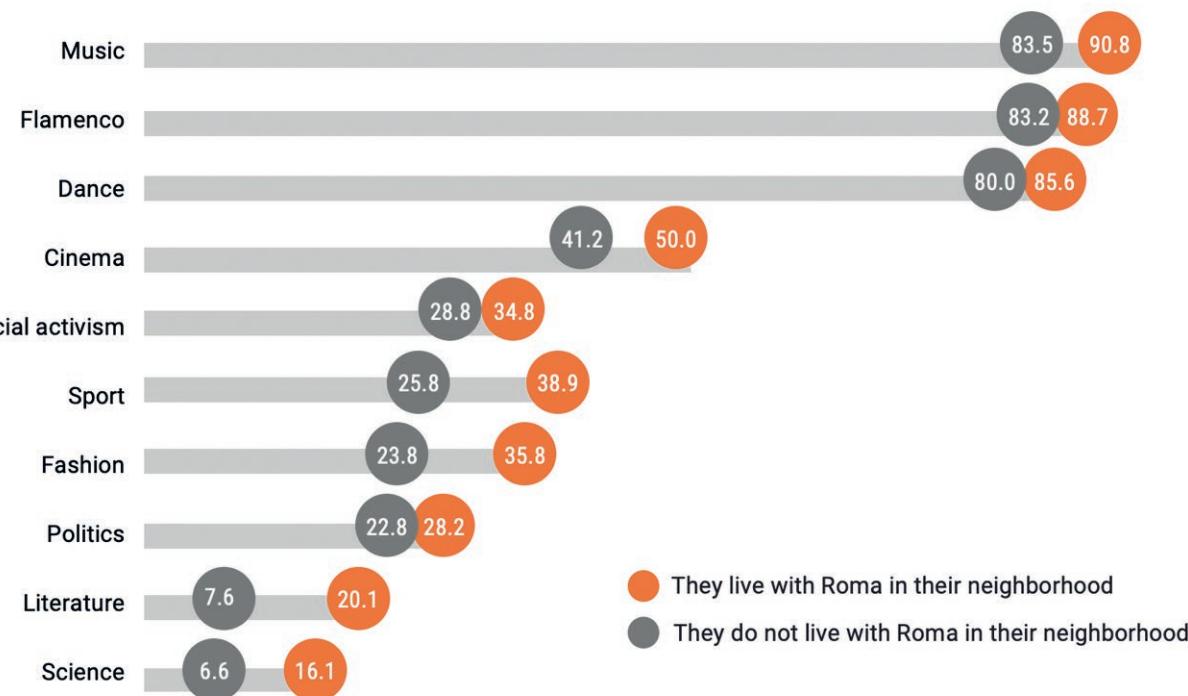
The vast majority know Roma people in areas such as music, flamenco and dance; on the other hand, its presence in spaces such as science, literature or politics is much less recognised.



However, knowledge about the presence of Roma people in different areas is greater among those who live with them.

↗ And, thinking about the public sphere, do you know Roma people in each of these areas? (% saying "Yes")

↗ And, thinking about the public sphere, do you know Roma people in each of these areas? (% saying "Yes")



3. BETWEEN REALITIES AND MYTHS: PERCEPTIONS MORE OR LESS ADJUSTED TO REAL DATA



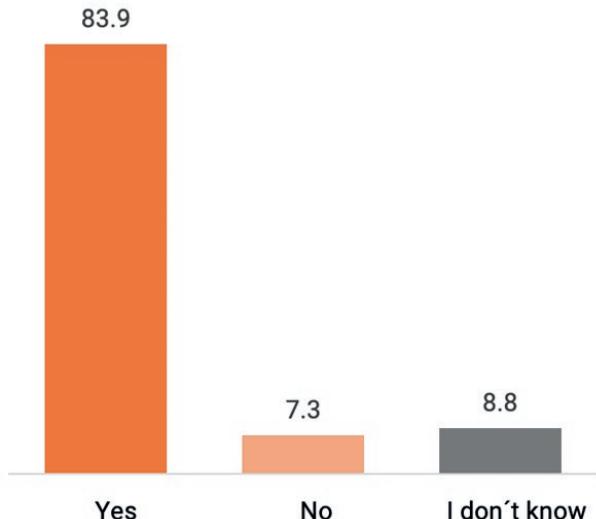


SOCIAL PERCEPTION ADJUSTED TO REALITY

PERCEPTION OF THE NATIONALITY OF THE ROMA POPULATION

Eight out of ten people know that, when it comes to our country, Roma people are Spanish.

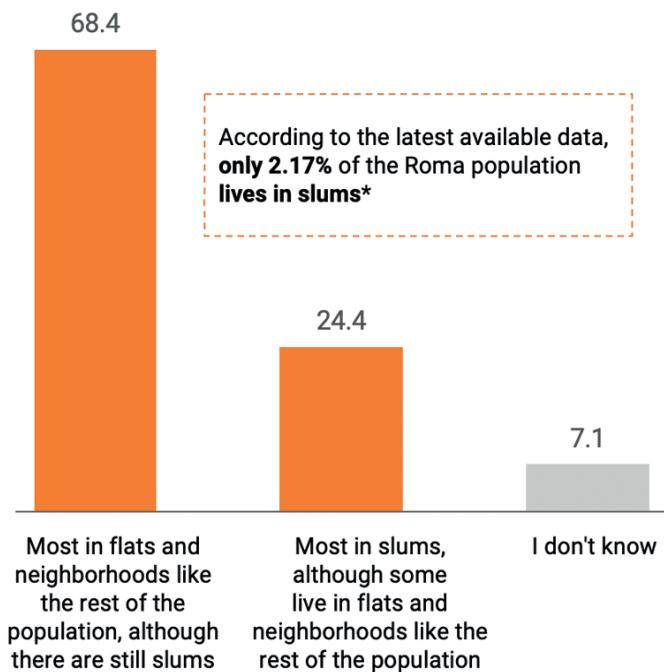
Thinking about our country, would you say that Roma people are Spanish? (% of total)



WHERE ROMA PEOPLE ARE THOUGHT TO LIVE

Almost 70% are correct to consider that the Roma population lives mostly in flats and conventional neighborhoods, compared to 24% who think that they live mainly in slums.

Where do you think the Roma live? (% of total)



* Fundación Secretariado Gitano and Daleph (2016). Study-Map on Housing and Roma Population, 2015. Madrid, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality.

DISCRIMINATION IN THE HOUSING

Perceptions reflect strong discrimination in access to rental housing, a reality confirmed by many Roma: three out of four have been discriminated against in this area.

↗ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

Roma people are discriminated against when renting a home



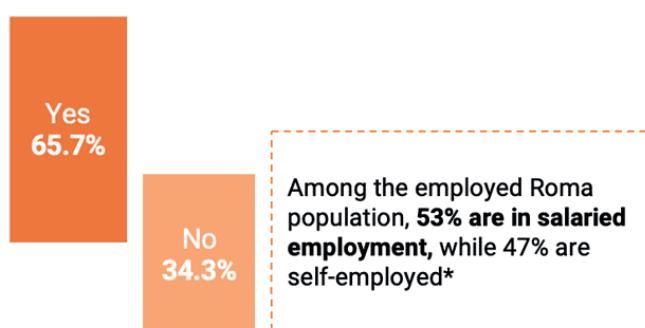
* Council for the Elimination of Racial or Ethnic Discrimination (2025). *The impact of racism in Spain. Perception of racial or ethnic origin discrimination by potential victims in 2024*.

SALARIED EMPLOYMENT

The perception that there is an increase in salaried employment among the Roma population is highlighted, which is also reflected in actual employment data.

↗ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

More and more Roma are working in salaried employment



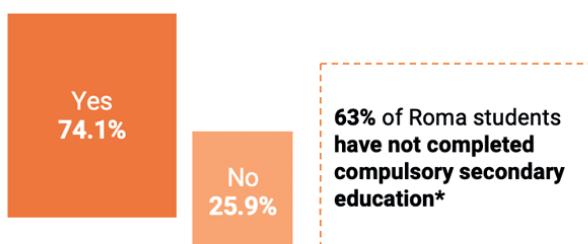
*Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2018). *Comparative study on the situation of the Roma population in Spain in terms of employment and poverty*.

COMPLETION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Three out of four people believe that the majority of Roma students do not finish compulsory secondary education, a perception that fits reality: 63% have not completed compulsory secondary education.

↗ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

Most Roma students do not complete compulsory secondary education and leave school early



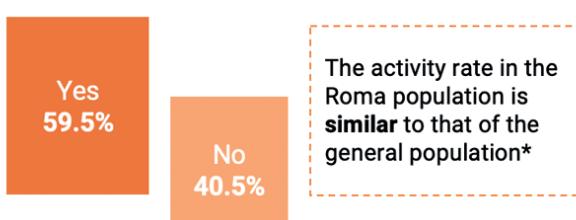
*Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2023). *The educational situation of the Roma students in Spain*.

MAKING A LIVING FROM WORK

Six out of ten people rightly believe that the majority of the Roma population makes a living from their work.

↗ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

The majority of the Roma population makes a living from their work



*Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2018). *Comparative study on the situation of the Roma population in Spain in terms of employment and poverty*.

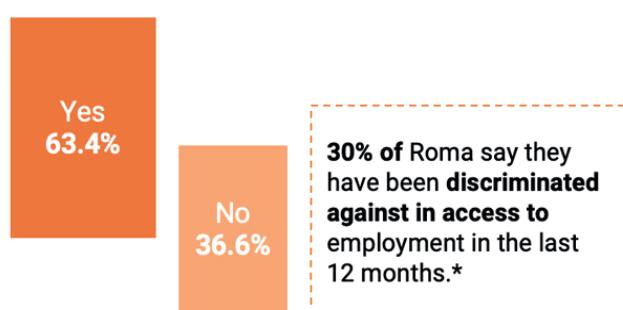


DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

63.4% of the population considers that Roma people suffer discrimination in access to employment. This perception is confirmed by the population group itself: 7 out of 10 Roma people say they have experienced discrimination in this area.

↗ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

Roma people are discriminated against when entering employment



*Spanish State Employment Public Service (2025). *Action Plan for improving the employability of Roma 2025-2028*.



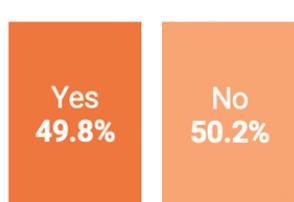
SOCIAL PERCEPTION LESS ADJUSTED TO REALITY

SCHOOLING IN COMPULSORY STAGES

Although half of the population doubts that all Roma children are enrolled in compulsory education, the data show that the school enrolment rate of Roma pupils at these levels is almost total.

↗ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

All Roma children are enrolled in the compulsory stages



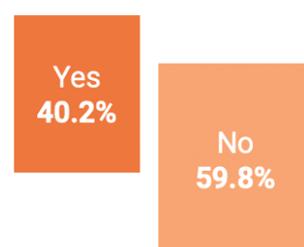
In the compulsory educational stages, the schooling of Roma pupils reaches universal levels*

POVERTY IN THE ROMA POPULATION

Despite the fact that four out of ten people believe that the majority of Roma families are poor, the reality is that about 86% of the Roma population lives below the poverty line.

↗ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

Most Roma families are poor

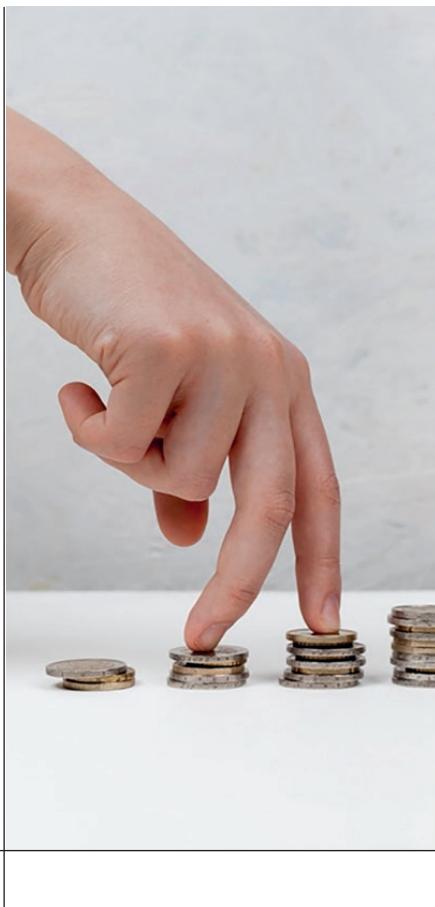


85.9% of Roma families are in poverty or social exclusion and 46.4% of the Roma population is extremely poor.

The child poverty rate is 89%, compared with 30.7% for children in the general population*

*Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2023). *The educational situation of the Roma students in Spain*.

*Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2018). *Comparative study on the situation of the Roma population in Spain in terms of employment and poverty*.

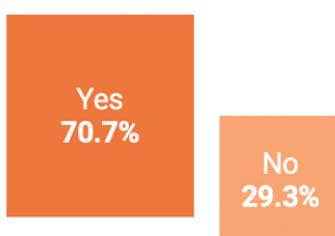


RECEIVING SOCIAL BENEFITS

Although 70.7% think that the majority of Roma families receive benefits such as the Minimum Income, in reality only two out of ten finally receive this social benefit.

➤ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

Most Roma families receive social benefits, such as Minimum Income



Despite high poverty rates among the Roma population, only 20% receive the Minimum Living Income*

WORKING IN STREET MARKETS AND STREET TRADING

There is an exaggerated perception about the presence of street trade among the Roma population, when in fact more than half of the Roma people who work do so as salaried employees.

➤ Of the following statements related to Roma people, could you say which, in your opinion, represent the current reality in Spain? (% of total)

The majority of the Roma population who work do so in street markets and street trading



*Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2018). Comparative study on the situation of the Roma population in Spain in terms of employment and poverty.



* Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2023). Study on the impact of the Minimum Income on poverty among the Roma in Spain.

4. THE ROMA WOMEN



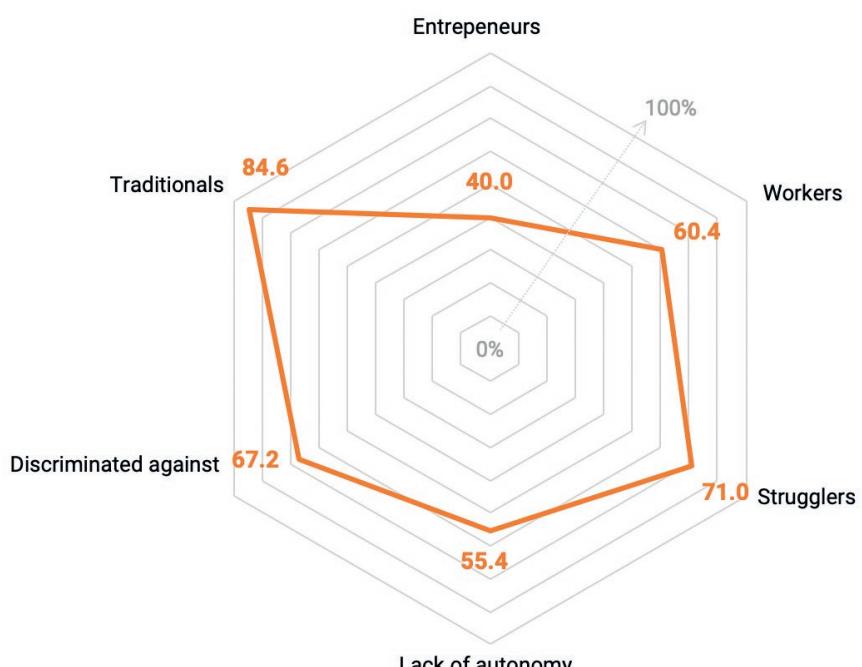
ATTRIBUTES OF ROMA WOMEN

Roma women are mostly seen as 'traditional' and 'strugglers', while they are hardly associated with the profile of 'entrepreneurs'.

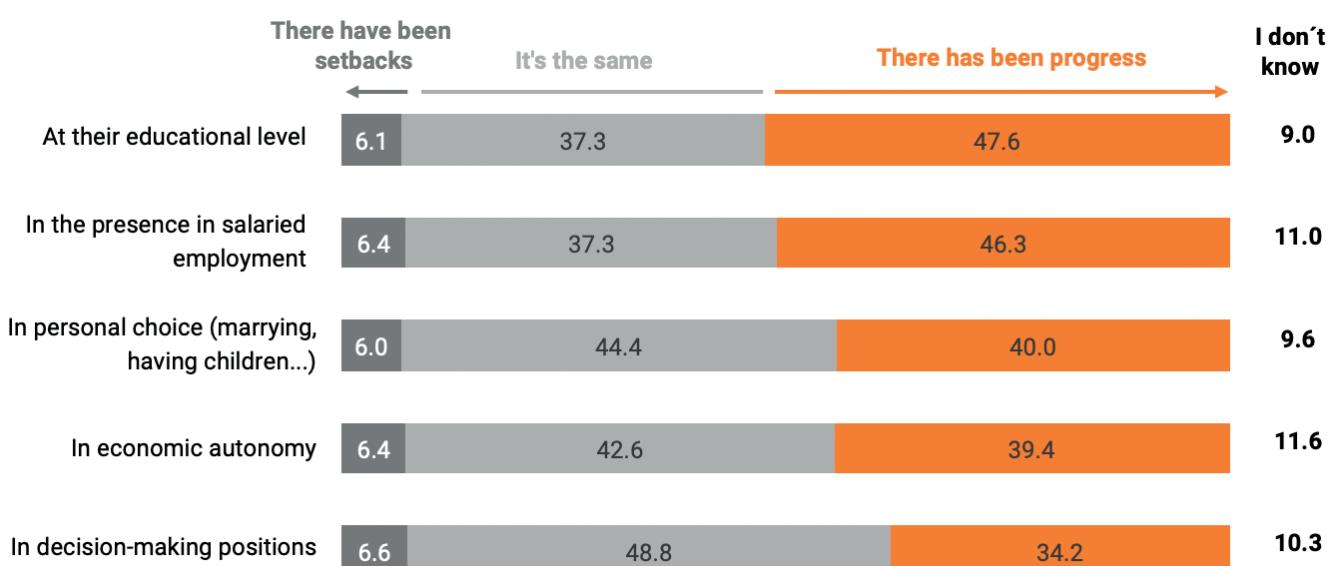
PERCEPTION OF PROGRESS IN THE SITUATION OF ROMA WOMEN

The educational field is where most progress is perceived in Roma women, followed by their incorporation into salaried employment. However, their presence in decision-making positions remains the area where fewer changes are detected.

➤ Of each of the following attributes, to what extent would you say they are characteristic of Roma women? (% saying "a lot" or "quite a lot")



➤ Compared to 20 years ago, do you think there have been advances or setbacks in Roma women in each of the following areas? (% of total)

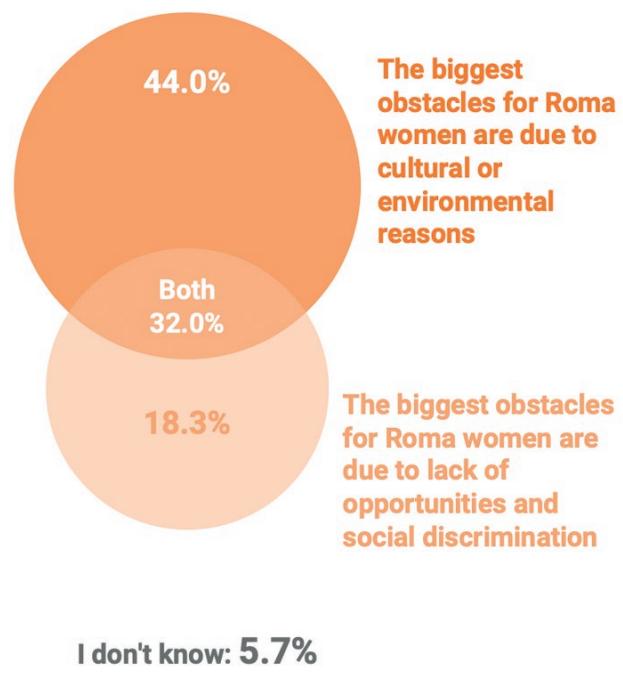




OBSTACLES FOR ROMA WOMEN

44% attribute the greatest obstacles for Roma women to cultural or environmental reasons, while 18.3% point to discrimination and lack of opportunities. 32% point to both.

↗ Which of these two visions best represents your way of thinking? (% of total)



5. CONTACT WITH ROMA PEOPLE



CONTACT WITH THE ROMA POPULATION IN THE SURROUNDING AREA

The majority of the population has little or no contact with the Roma, compared to 31% who do live with them in their closest surrounding area.

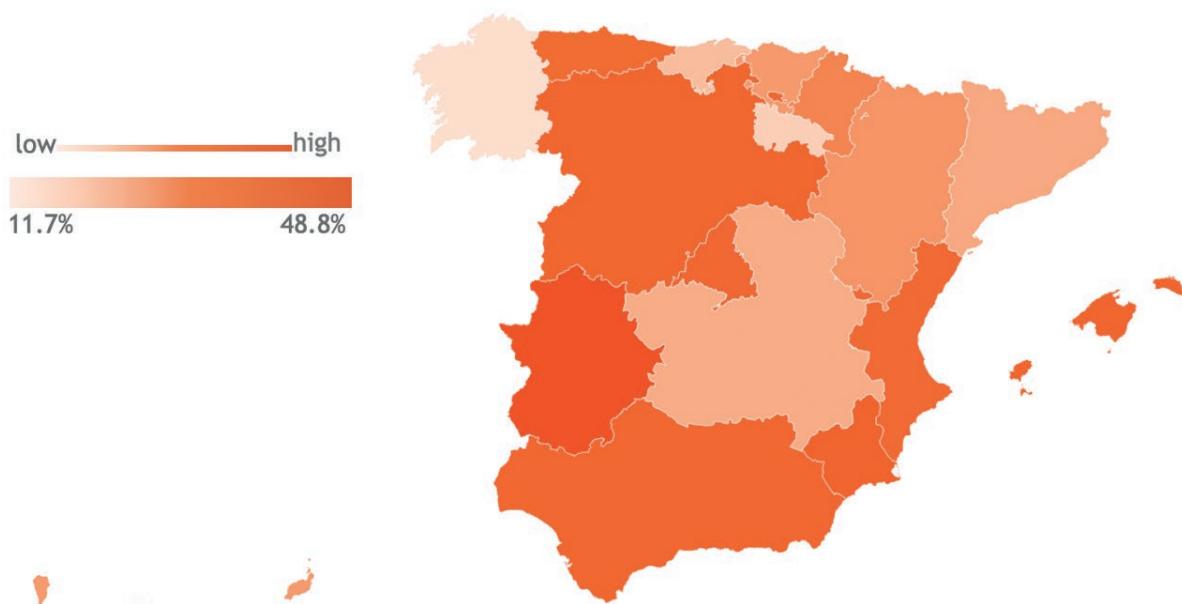
↗ In your neighborhood or nearest area, how many Roma people would you say there are? (% of total)



CONTACT WITH THE ROMA POPULATION IN THE ENVIRONMENT BY REGION

Extremadura and Asturias are the Spanish regions where the presence of Roma people is most perceived in the nearby surrounding area, followed by Andalusia and Castile and Leon.

↗ In your neighborhood or nearest surrounding area, how many Roma people would you say there are? (% answering "a lot" or "quite a lot" out of the total) *

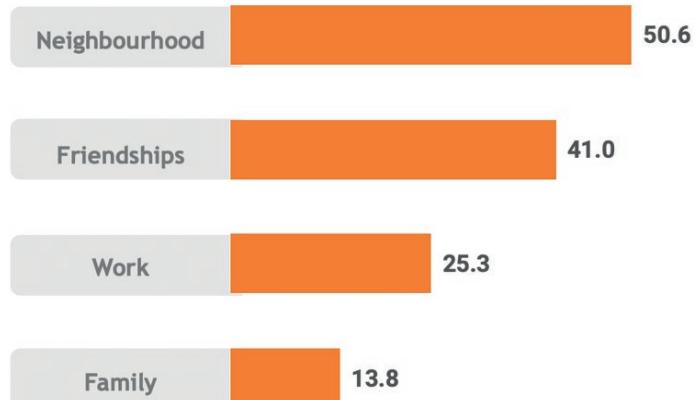


*The sample size (N) for each region is as follows: Andalusia (185), Aragon (28), Asturias (28), Balearic Islands (26), Canary Islands (48), Cantabria (12), Castile-Leon (54), Castile-La Mancha (51), Catalonia (132), Comunitat Valenciana (105), Extremadura (23), Galicia (52), Madrid (152), Murcia (30), Navarra (11), Basque Country (56) and La Rioja (7).

CONTACT WITH THE ROMA POPULATION IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Neighborhood environment is the most frequent contact space with Roma people: half the population knows someone. In addition, four out of ten people say they have friendships with Roma people.

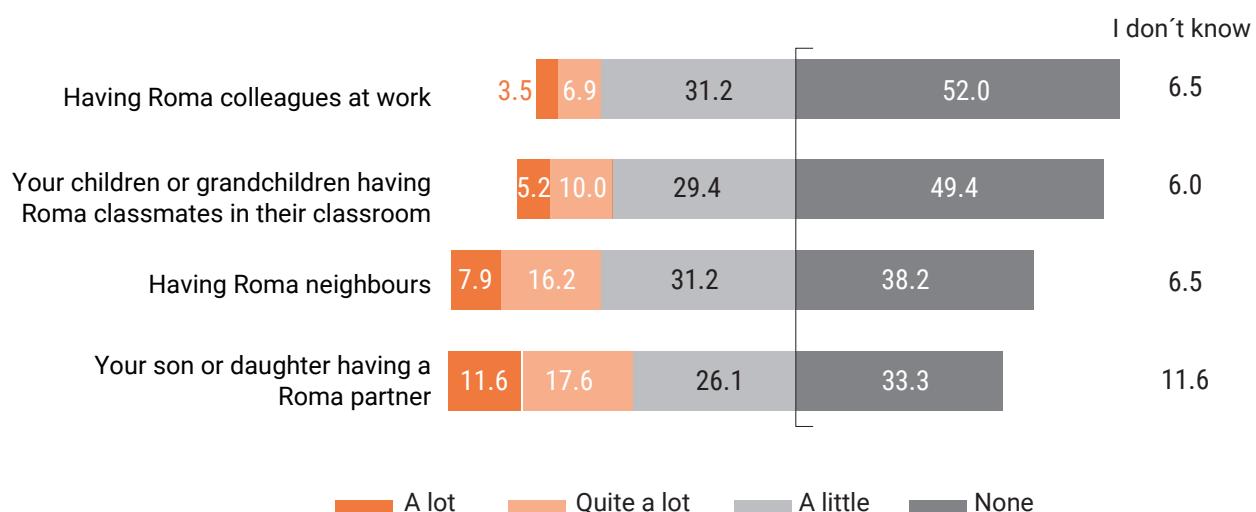
➤ In your particular case, do you know a Roma person in each of these contexts? (% of total)



FEELINGS THAT AWAKE THE POSSIBILITY OF CONTACT WITH ROMA PEOPLE

The possibility of contact with Roma people arouses discomfort in almost all areas. In most cases, the percentage of respondents who do not feel any discomfort is less than 50%.

➤ Would you feel or not discomfort in each of the following situations? (% of total)



6. PROGRESS OF ROMA PEOPLE AND THE COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

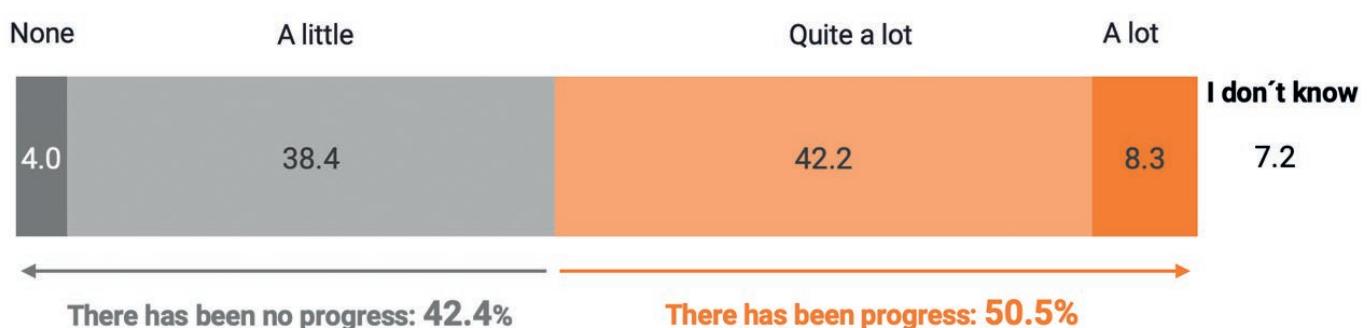


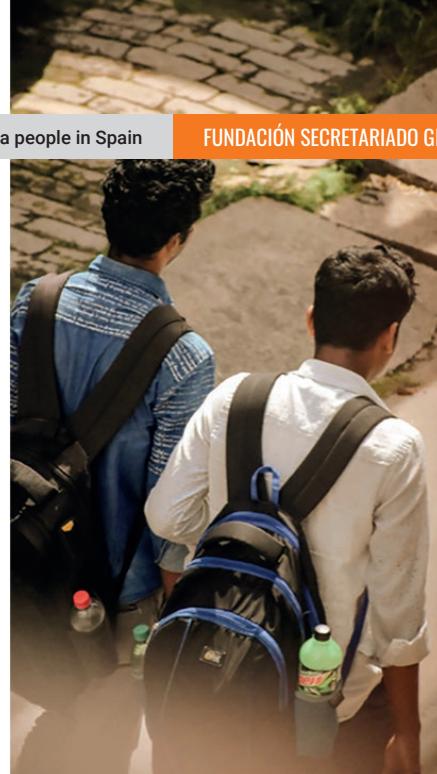


LIVING CONDITIONS FOR ROMA PEOPLE

More than 50% believe that the situation of the Roma population has improved in the last 20 years. In addition, those who live alongside the Roma people are more likely to consider that the living conditions of this community have improved.

↗ Compared to 20 years ago, how much progress do you think there has been in the living conditions of Roma people? (% of total)





LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE ROMA PEOPLE

However, both those who perceive progress and those who do not, identify the Roma population as the main responsible.

➤ Compared to 20 years ago, how much progress do you think there has been in the living conditions of Roma people? (% of total)

There has been no progress: 42.4%



There has been progress: 50.5%

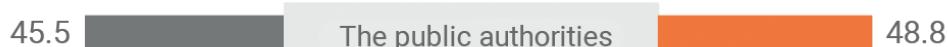
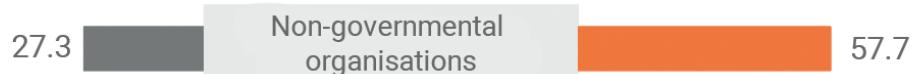
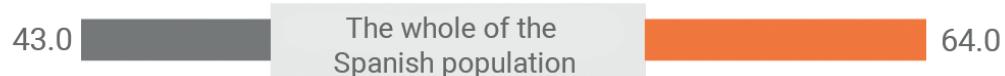


➤ And, in your opinion, is the deterioration in the living conditions of the Roma people due or not to the lack of effort...

(% answering "Yes" on those who consider that there has been "none" or "little" progress)

➤ And, in your opinion, is the **progress** in the living conditions of the Roma people due or not to the **effort** of...

(% answering "Yes" on those who consider that there has been "**quite a lot**" or "**a lot**" progress)



PROGRESS OF THE ROMA POPULATION IN DIFFERENT AREAS

The educational field is where the greatest advances are perceived, followed by that of housing. However, equality between men and women is the area where less change is felt to have occurred.

↗ In any case, compared to 20 years ago, do you think there have been advances or setbacks in the Roma population in each of the following areas? (% of total)

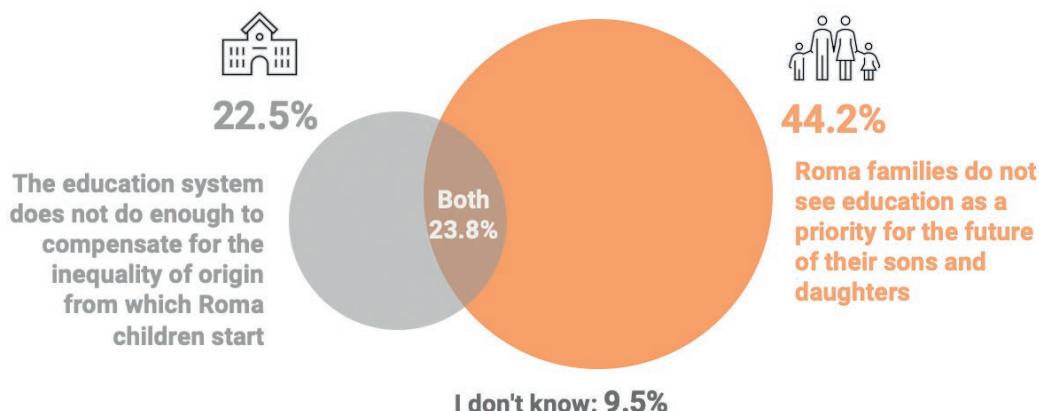


PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL FAILURE

Four out of ten people attribute the school failure of the Roma population to the families themselves. However, 20% point to the limited involvement of the education system in addressing inequalities of origin. 23.8% point to both visions equally.

Education statistics show that school leaving and failure are higher among the Roma population. Some people think this happens because Roma families do not want to send their children to school. Other people think that not enough is done in school to include and accompany the children of Roma families and that the education system does not do enough to compensate for the inequality of origin that Roma children have.

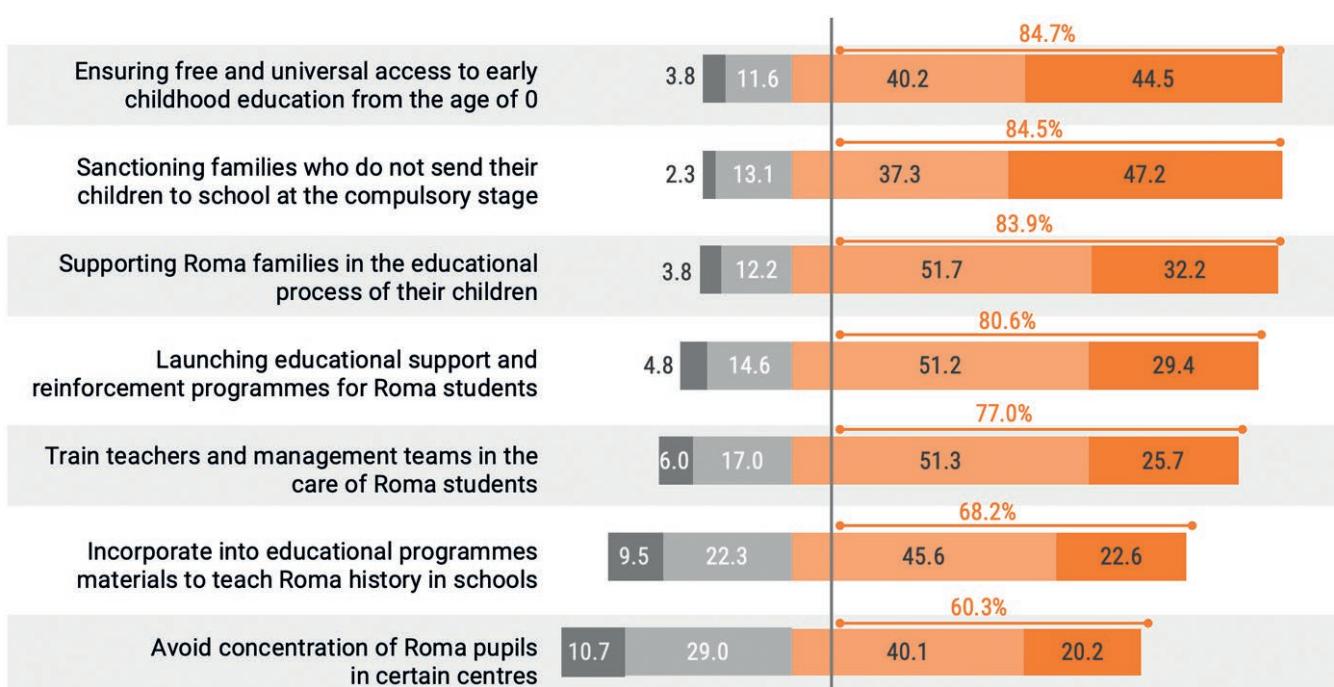
➤ Which of these two visions best represents your way of thinking? (% of total)



POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR THE EDUCATIONAL REALITY OF THE ROMA POPULATION

Ensuring access to early childhood education and sanctioning families who do not attend school is the main solution for 84%. However, six out of ten also support avoiding the concentration of Roma pupils in certain schools.

➤ And to what extent do you agree with each of the following possible actions or solutions to improve the educational reality of Roma children? (% of total)



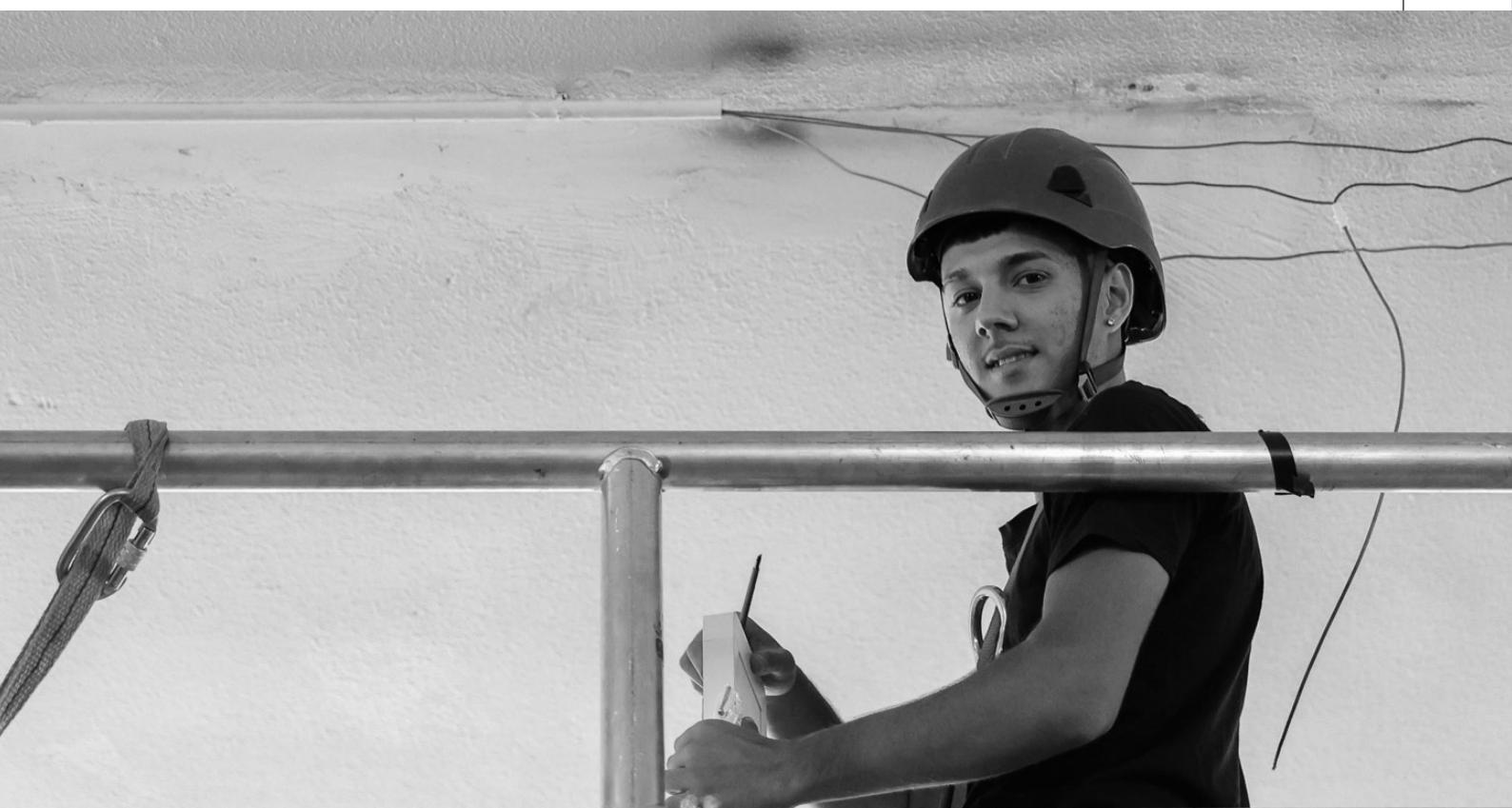
■ Not at all agree

■ Little agree

■ Quite agree

■ Very much agree

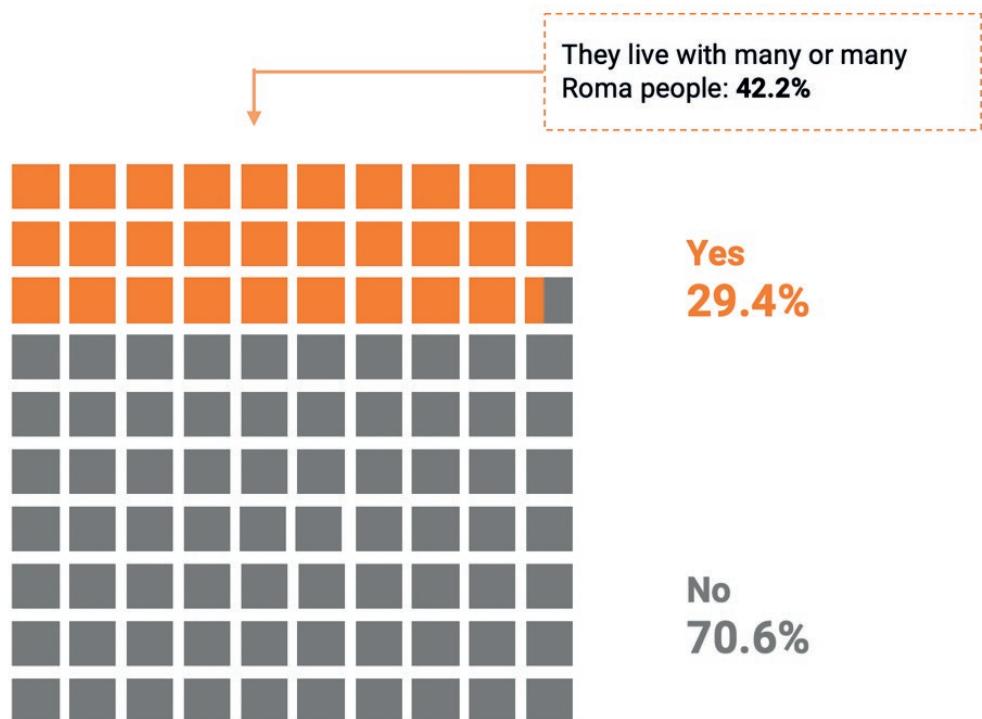
7. WORKING FOR THE ROMA PEOPLE



ASSOCIATIONS

Almost three out of ten people say they know of a Spanish association that defends the rights of the Roma population.

☞ Finally, do you know or have you heard of any organisation working in Spain to promote social inclusion, equal opportunities and the defense of the Roma rights? (% of total)



8. CONCLUSIONS



1. TRANSVERSALITY OF THE NEGATIVE IMAGE OF THE ROMA PEOPLE IN ALL IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM

According to the information obtained in relation to attitudes towards traditionally discriminated groups, it is perceived that the Roma population continues to be one of the most discriminated population groups. The opinion of the people surveyed is correct regarding this issue, but there is the paradox that, for those same people, the Roma population is the group that arouses less personal sympathy, along with Muslim people. It has been found that the percentage of people who say they have little or no sympathy for Roma people is similar between those surveyed on the political left and those on the political right. This indicates that antigypsyism, or at least rejection or hostility towards the Roma, is something transversal, independent of ideology, which crosses the entire majority society.

This result indicates something concerning: socially, the situation of discrimination and social rejection suffered by Roma people are very normalised by the social majority. This social rejection is largely behind the situation of daily ethnic discrimination that Fundación Secretariado Gitano has been recording and denouncing for more than 20 years.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROMA HISTORY AND CULTURE

As for the Roma history and culture, it is noted that this remains a great unknown to a large majority: 70.3% of the people surveyed know little about it, despite 600 years of shared history.

Values such as family, respect for the elderly or solidarity are certainly associated with the Roma, an identification that is correct. On the other hand, Roma people continue to be identified with areas more related to music and flamenco, but not with science or with management positions. This can be due not only to the stereotyped social image that still remains, but to ignorance and the low visibility in the media of these other profiles of Roma people working in different fields of culture, science or business.

3. ASPECTS WITH A HIGHER COINCIDENCE BETWEEN SOCIAL PERCEPTION AND THE REALITY OF ROMA PEOPLE

There is a high identification by respondents with Spanish nationality of Roma people: 84% consider this to be the case. Sixteen per cent think that Roma are not Spanish, or who say that they are not sure about it. This is not necessarily due to ignorance alone, but it may also be due to a confusion in relation to Roma from Central or Eastern Europe who also reside in Spain.

With regard to the type of housing in which the vast majority of Roma currently live, the response of 70% is in line with reality, i.e. that they live in normal dwellings (not in slums or substandard housing). The majority of the surveyed population (3 out of 4 people) believes that there are few Roma people still living in slums. This fits reality, given that only 2.17% of Roma live in slums.

However, there are still 24% of the surveyed population who believe that the majority of Roma families live in slums, according to some stereotyped image of the Roma people.

On the other hand, and coinciding with official data, a large majority of people surveyed believe that the Roma population continues to be discriminated against in the area of access to housing and employment. This opinion is in line with reality, as 75% of Roma people say they have been discriminated against in some aspect of housing, and 30% of Roma people surveyed say they have been discriminated against in access to employment in the last 12 months.

A majority of respondents are of the opinion that there has been an increase in employment among the Roma population, which is in line with reality. Among the employed Roma population, 53% are in salaried employment, while 47% are self-employed.

With regard to the completion of compulsory education, the majority view is also correct, regarding the large proportion of Roma students who do not complete secondary education (63% of Roma students have not completed compulsory secondary education).

In terms of work activity, 59.5% of respondents think that Roma people live from their work, which is in line with reality. According to official data, more than half of Roma of working age are actively involved in the labour market. The activity rate in the Roma population is 56.5%. In this sense, we can say that a social majority perceives this reality properly, although another important part (40%) does not know that the Roma population is very active in the world of work.

These results indicate progress in the perception of the reality of the Roma people pointing to some awareness on the part of the people surveyed of the social problems that affect a large number of Roma people in areas as important as discrimination, education or access to housing or access to decent work.

4. ASPECTS IN WHICH THERE IS NOT MUCH COINCIDENCE BETWEEN SOCIAL PERCEPTION AND THE REALITY OF ROMA PEOPLE

In the area of poverty, four out of ten people surveyed believe that the majority of Roma families are poor (according to official data, 86% of the Roma population lives below the poverty line). This means that a significant part of the surveyed population does not know this reality (6 out of 10 do not know it). As for the image of Roma as recipients of social benefits, there is also a perception far from reality: Although only 20% of Roma people perceive the Minimum Income scheme, 70.7% of people surveyed believe that the majority of Roma families receive this benefit.

Regarding school enrolment rates, half of the population doubts that all Roma children are enrolled in compulsory education (50.2%). In fact, official data show that the enrolment rate of Roma students at these levels is almost total. This shows a great divergence between reality and social perception.

There is an exaggerated perception of the presence of street trade among the Roma population. 74% of the people surveyed believe that the vast majority of the Roma population work in markets or street trading, when in fact more than half of the people who work do so in salaried employment (53%).

5. THE SOCIAL IMAGE OF ROMA WOMEN

According to the opinions of the people surveyed in relation to Roma women, there is still an important identification of Roma women as traditional. Undoubtedly, this perception limits the recognition and acceptance of the divergence and heterogeneity of Roma women.

today, as is the case with other non-Roma women. The people surveyed hardly see Roma women as enterprising women, so we again recognise the need for this type of role models to be visible in the media.

On the other hand, we can see that in this identification of Roma women as traditional, 44% of the people surveyed also identify cultural reasons. This result shows how the impact of obstacles that specifically affect Roma women is either acknowledged or downplayed, as they may be victims of intersectional discrimination or lack equal opportunities. Only 18.3% point to discrimination or lack of opportunities as real obstacles for Roma women.

There is a perception of an important advance of Roma women in the field of education and in the incorporation into salaried employment. This perception is accurate since, according to official data, the activity rate of Roma women and their educational progress have improved in recent years.

6. CONTACT WITH ROMA PEOPLE AND COEXISTENCE IN VARIOUS AREAS OF LIFE

In general, respondents have reported little or no contact with Roma. According to the data, only 31% of the people surveyed claim to live or have close treatment with Roma people. This lack of contact continues to directly influence the maintenance of stereotypes and prejudices, with what it entails regarding the exercise of and access to Roma rights. The majority of respondents said that they would not be uncomfortable having Roma colleagues at work (83.2%) or in the classroom (78.8%), or as neighbors (69.4%) and, finally, 59.3% would not be uncomfortable that their son or daughter had a Roma partner. These are responses that we consider positive, compared to what happens in other European countries, although

at the same time they indicate that there is still some distrust towards Roma people on the part of the non-Roma population, as seen in the data on the feeling in the event that your son or daughter had a Roma partner (40% would feel uncomfortable).

7. THE PROGRESS OF ROMA AND THE COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

More than 50% of respondents believe that the situation of the Roma population has improved in the last 20 years especially in the areas of employment and housing. However, the reality remains very worrying in areas such as education. 44.2% of respondents believe that Roma families do not see education as a priority for the future of their sons and daughters. And 84% believe that the main solution is to sanction those Roma families who do not school their sons and daughters. Only 20% point to the limited involvement of the education system in addressing existing inequalities. Regarding the concentration of Roma students in schools, only 6 out of 10 people surveyed believe that it is a good solution to avoid concentration of Roma students in certain centers, which we understand to be a very low percentage given the seriousness of this situation.

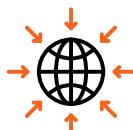
8. AWARENESS OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Almost three out of ten people say they know of a Spanish association or social entity that defends the Roma rights. This percentage increases to 42% in the case of people surveyed who live with Roma people.

9. TECHNICAL SHEET



SCOPE:
Spain (except Ceuta and Melilla)



UNIVERSE:
Population aged 18 and over residing in Spain



SAMPLE SIZE:
1000 interviews, with quotas by sex and age



PROCEDURE:
Online Interview (CAWI)



FIELD DATE:
From 02/06/2025 to 09/06/2025



SAMPLE ERROR:
The sample error is ± 3.1 percentage points,
considering that $p=q=50\%$ and a confidence level
of 95% under the assumption of simple random
sampling.





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