



Spain

## Tackling child poverty and promoting the social inclusion of children

### A Study of National Policies

**Elizabeth Villagomez**

Almenara Estudios Económicos y Sociales, S. L.

This report was also prepared by Domingo Carbonell and Emma Oteo of Almenara Estudios Económicos y Sociales, S. L.

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## Executive summary

This report on the situation of poverty and well-being of children in Spain draws on existing reports and data from government and independent sources and also analyses the current policy efforts. Children are considered as persons between 0 to 17 years of age. Income poverty is defined as children living in households under the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, but the different studies used here have different thresholds (60 or 50 % of median equivalised income).

Although the existing studies reviewed in this report point very clearly to specific groups of children who are at higher risk of income poverty (those in single-parent, working poor and households with parents with lower education), there are less studies focusing on well-being. In this regard, the Childhood Observatory set up by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MTAS) is making efforts to provide data and analysis, but more is needed using the gender perspective (not simply offering statistics by sex), on the situation of immigrant and ethnic minority children, children in institutions and disabled children (including those with orphan illnesses).

The studies using quantitative analysis and the brief analysis of the data in this report point to a number of trends in Spain with regard to children.

### Trends:

- increasing or steady child poverty rate in spite of economic growth;
- high incidence of poverty and reduced well-being in monoparental households;
- much lower incidence in nuclear households, but a large proportion of children in poverty remain in these households;
- entries into poverty higher and exits lower;
- large regional differences that could be explained by better employment indicators, but also by the presence of specific policies;
- although there are proportionately more nuclear households, other types of households are increasing due to changing lifestyles, but also due to immigration and the difficulty to access adequate housing (market situation shaping household composition for immigrants);
- public transfers are not reducing child poverty in Spain and seem to actually widen differences;
- direct relation between low educational attainment and poverty point to the need to strengthen efforts on early school leavers and school failure.

### Underlying causes:

- unemployment;
- inactivity;
- fixed-term employment;
- weak redistribution impact of tax-benefit system and lack of specific benefits aimed at children (most benefits are income support for adults);

- although there are a number of benefits for large households — one of the groups at most risk, whether or not the adults are a couple or not — there is no available information on the impact of the benefits on children.

With regard to the policy approach, in Spain the existing trend at central level (tax-benefit system) is towards a universalist approach which has, however, weaknesses in preventing situations of child poverty (more geared towards adults) and which is less centred on targeted approaches. At regional level, the targeted approach (given the decentralisation of social services) is more developed, albeit unevenly across the Spanish territory. Very recently (2006), the 'National strategic plan for childhood and adolescence 2006-09' (NSPCA) has been presented and a number of measures are being implemented. However, these measures have no specific targets or quantitative objectives. The NSPCA is a tool for the promotion and protection of children's rights and represents a first effort for planning and coordinating child policies between different levels of government (national, regional and local). It was developed within the Childhood Observatory and approved by the Council of Ministers. All of the NSPCA objectives are aimed at improving child well-being, and therefore are deemed to contribute to the fight against child poverty and exclusion. However, only one of its strategic objectives is clearly and explicitly aimed at fighting and preventing child poverty and exclusion. Strategic objective 6 aims to foster social intervention and care of children and adolescents in a situation of risk, with lack of protection, disabled, and/or in a situation of social exclusion <sup>1</sup>. This strategic objective contains a series of specific measures against the poverty and social exclusion of children, but lacks any specific quantified targets. Throughout the rest of the plan, there are measures within other strategic objectives that target children at risk of poverty, such as measure 4.16 that promotes actions with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that target socially excluded children, or measure 8.12 aimed at promoting care and support for school children from socially deprived backgrounds and at-risk situations. However, given the worrisome situation of child poverty in Spain discussed in the first section of this report, the NSPCA clearly does not sufficiently address, in our view, the issue of child poverty and well-being for the most at-risk groups.

## 1. Overview of child poverty and well-being in Spain

This overview aims to answer the specific items posed to the network of independent experts and will address the nature and extent of the problem, main trends and underlying causes. This section is based mainly on existing studies in Spain about the issue and uses available statistics that have been collected recently by the MTAS <sup>2</sup>. It does not reflect original research by the authors, but it does take a critical view of some of the documents in order to identify research gaps while serving as the basis for some of the recommendations and suggestions made throughout the following section where the policy framework is assessed. The section will also present, mainly through data and existing studies, the many dimensions of child poverty and well-being in Spain. In Annex 6 we have included a synthetic table with figures trying to capture trends and providing the most recent data available to which mention will be made throughout this section. It is based on the publication by the Childhood Observatory (Observatorio de la Infancia), created in 1999 which has an informative web page <sup>3</sup> on issues affecting children, as well as all relevant policy documents.

<sup>1</sup> Napsec, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> The full document can be browsed at:  
<http://www.mtas.es/SGAS/FamiliaInfanc/infancia/AcuerdosConvenios/InfanciaCifras.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.mtas.es/inicioas/observatoriodeinfancia/index.html>

Growing interest in developed nations on child poverty issues has led to a better understanding of the complex and multidimensional nature of poverty, including child poverty and well-being. As this report will focus primarily on income poverty, it is necessary to provide a definition of the concept of child income poverty. This report uses the EU agreed definition where at-risk-of-poverty rates refer to individuals (children in this case) living in households where the income is below the threshold of 60 % of the national median income. This is a measure of relative poverty and accommodates the notion that poverty may worsen despite the improvement of absolute living standards. However, some of the studies reviewed in this report use other thresholds.

For the purpose of this report and as recommended in the EU methodological framework, a child is considered an individual ranging from the ages of 0 to 17. Despite the efforts to link national data available with the EU indicators and framework, several specificities of the Spanish data sources should be taken into consideration. Firstly, some of the data included in this report considers children under 16; in particular, this is the case for most of the studies provided by the National Statistics Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, INE). In second place, although most of the child policy documents reviewed meet the standard definition of a child, some policy documents reviewed expand from the under 18 to the under 26 age range. This is the case of the 'National youth plan' (NYP), for which an effort has been made to consider the policy aspects that mostly affect those under 18. Finally, due to the variety of national and sub-national data sources, the segregation of different child age groups (under 3, under 5, 6-11, 12-17) has been included only when available.

### 1.1. Nature and extent of income poverty

There have been only two specific studies, analysing available statistics on income poverty dynamics affecting children and adolescents over a long period of time, that point to a remarkably stable situation of the child poverty rate in Spain for one period, followed by a period of significant increase and then drop (Cantó and Mercader-Prats, 2002; Ayala, et al., 2006)<sup>4</sup>.

The first study looks at the evolution from 1973 to 1995 and finds that over this 20-plus year period, the poverty rates measured both by income or consumption remained remarkably stable (from around 13 to 14 % at the end of the period). However, this same study pointed to specific subgroups to whom this stability could not be applied. The main reason for the variation in specific subgroups in this piece of research is explained mainly by the demographic and socioeconomic changes that took place during the period analysed. Regarding demographic characteristics, the number of household members, the household composition and the number of other children under 18 years of age were taken into account. Deep changes in these three aspects took place over the period analysed (see more on these changes below). Regarding the socioeconomic characteristics of the household, this was a period of profound changes in the Spanish economy that created masses of unemployed persons and also introduced more flexible arrangements which in the case of Spain led to higher job insecurity. The period also experienced a large entry of women into the labour force and, although this is not considered in the research, a notable increase in school attainment by the population (especially women).

Taking these characteristics into account (except level of education by parents), the research points to a marked difference between the stability for the whole of the population and the significant rise in the following groups: in two-member and larger households (four or more members, different from

<sup>4</sup> The first piece of work takes the *Household Budgets Survey* (*Encuesta de Presupuestos Familiares*, EPF) as the main data source for the analysis. It applies the OECD scale and uses as the poverty threshold a measure of 50 % median equivalent income. The second one analyses the *European Community Household Panel* (ECHP) and takes different thresholds into account.

households with two adults and two children where the rates are much lower and experienced little change); in single-parent households (including single parents with other adults in the household); and in households with the head of household inactive or unemployed. These groups all had a clear increase and the poverty rate was much higher than in nuclear families with three or less children, one or both parents working, and those in families with three or four members. Children living in nuclear households with only one parent working had a much lower rate, but much higher when compared to households where both parents worked (a 4 to 5 % difference). Finally, in analysing the dynamics of entry and exit into poverty, due to the possibility of using panel data within the survey the study found that children had higher rates of entry and lower rates of exit overall. This, of course, also changes if the characteristics mentioned above are taken into account. Thus, with regard to household composition, children in larger households and single-parent households (including those with the presence of another adult) have much higher entry rates into poverty (more than 6 % compared to 3.6 % average). The exit rates showed however, a more mixed pattern: while single-parent households with no other adults present had an exit rate of only 33.8 % (compared to the average of 51.6 %) and nuclear families with three children 49.5 %, all other categories had rates above the average. The highest exit rates were for children in single-parent homes with the presence of other adults (63.9 %) which also had the highest entry rate. By socioeconomic situation, the highest entry rates were for children living in household where the head of household is unemployed (16 %!), which also had the lowest exit rate (46.9 %). The lowest entry rate was for children living in households where both parents work (1.3 %), which also had the highest exit rate (63.8 %). This study did not make differences between boys and girls.

This study also shows the distribution of the population of poor children by the characteristics mentioned and it shows that there was a much higher concentration of poor children in households of four or more members which increased throughout the period only for those with four and five members — while the proportion of poor children dropped for households with six or more members (from 54.5 % in 1973 to 32.1 % by 1990). Regarding household composition, the bulk of poor children concentrated in nuclear households with two or more children, although from 1980 to 1990 the proportion of only those nuclear households with two or three children grew while those with four or more children diminished. Although a much lower proportion of poor children were in single-parent households (6.9 % in 1980), the proportion doubled by 1990 (11.2 %). Finally, regarding the economic activity of household members, the largest proportion of poor children were concentrated among households where the head of household was employed. However, child poverty rates for this type of household decreased significantly throughout the period (85 % in 1973, 60 % in 1980 and 55 % by 1990) and increased considerably for those households with an unemployed head of household (4.7, 21.17 and 24.70 % for the same years respectively). In the case of inactive heads of household (namely retired persons), the proportion of poor children was a little higher at the beginning of the period (almost 7 % in 1973), rose to 11.7 % in 1980 and then dropped to 9.47 % by 1990). The lowest proportion of poor children (3.64 % in 1980) was found in households with both parents working, but they also experienced a significant increase (to 5.1 % by 1990).

The study by Ayala et al. (2006) using the *European Community Household Panel* (ECHP) from 1994 to 2001 found that — measured by the 60 % median equivalised income for children threshold — the child poverty rate went from 20.9 to 22.4 % by 1997 and that by 2001 the rate had dropped to 16.7 %. The same rates adjusting for inflation over the period went from 23.3 to 26.2 % and then dropped to 14.6 %. However, in 2001 measured by the 60 % equivalised income threshold for the whole of the population, the child poverty rate remained at 25 % by 2001. The study also points to the improvement of the situation of children at the bottom of the income distribution during the same period. However, the rates for children in different age groups did not show the same overall improvement over the period. Poor children between 6 and 11 actually experienced a strong rise from 21.6 to almost 27 % by the end of the period; no explanation for this is offered, but we believe that this can be very much linked to the fact that

the majority of poor children were in households with an unemployment ratio <sup>5</sup> more than 0.5 (in this case 58.6 %). However, 17 % of extremely poor children were found to be living in working family households where one of the main characteristics is that the main breadwinner has a fixed-term contract, and that this type of contract grew in Spain over this period.

Unfortunately, this research has neither offered an analysis of the proportion of poor children by other household member characteristics to compare with the previous study (instead it indicates the proportions of the whole of the child population), nor did it differentiate between boys and girls. However, it does give detailed rates of poverty using different household characteristics. Thus, using the year 2000 when the ECHP had an amplified sample, high rates of child poverty are found among very young and very old main breadwinners (52 % among women over 64, 38 % among men over 64, and 35 % among women and men under 30) compared to the rate of households where most children (not only poor children) actually live: 22 % rate in households where the main breadwinner is between 30 and 49 years of age (66.5 % of all children). The child poverty rate among households where a woman is the main breadwinner (17.7 % of all children live in such households) is 24 % compared to 23 % where the main breadwinner is a man. Regarding household size, the highest child poverty rate was for households of two members (33 %), followed by those of six or more members (32 %) and five-member households (31 %) <sup>6</sup>. The proportion of children living in these households is, respectively, 22.1, 1.3 and 16.6 %. By household composition, the highest poverty rates are for children living in households with three or more children, independently of parental composition (couples, single and other) stood at 43 % on average, although in single-parent households with three or more children (0.6 % of the total population of children) the rate goes up to 73 % (!). All the other households, including single-parent households with two or less children have child poverty rates between 16 and 19 %.

The analysis in this second study on poverty dynamics shows that between 1995 and 2001 the entry rate of children grew from 10.5 to 11.2 % while the adult rate remained practically stable (from 8.8 to 8.7 %), although the increase in the entry rate of older people (older than 64) was much more marked (from 6.8 to 11.1 %). Likewise, taking the type of household as the unit of observation, households with children experienced a rise from 10.3 to 10.8 % (with a drop in 1998 to 9.8 %) and those without children from 7.2 to 8.6 % (with a drop also to 6.5 % in 1998). Regarding the exit rates, children have experienced different situations with respect to adults and older people throughout the period where the highest rate was in 1998, at 38.3 % (which also coincided with the highest rate in the series for the whole of the population at 42.2 %) and the lowest rate at 30.4 % in 1999 which did not, in this case, coincide with the lowest rate for the whole of the population. At the beginning of the period in 1994, the exit rate for children stood at 37.6 % compared to 44.2 % for adults and 39.8 % for older persons. It would be interesting to analyse if the 1998 drops correspond to fiscal reforms or other shocks that might have benefited poorer families. By the end of the period in the year 2000, the exit rate for children stood at 34.2 % compared to 40.9 % for adults and 22.9 % for older persons. Regarding persistence of poverty, the ECHP enabled the percentage of children who were poor at the beginning and end of the period to be calculated. Thus the percentage of children who were at least one year in poverty included in the first wave and in the last wave (those who are no longer children are taken out) stood at practically the same proportion (around 52 %) compared to 46.5 % of the total population. Although significant differences between the two sub-samples of children were not found, the higher persistence among children than among the total population is striking. Compared to the other first 15 EU Member States, Spain was in one of the worst situations between 1994 and 2001: it had the lowest proportion of children who had never been poor over the period (a little less than 50 %, very similar to the United Kingdom, but lower than Portugal or Italy), and the highest persistence measured at five years in

<sup>5</sup> Number of household members inactive or unemployed as a proportion of all adults in the household.

<sup>6</sup> These rates are much higher than those for households with three members (16 %) and four members (19 %). The proportion of children in these households is 60.1 % of all children.

poverty or more (a little less than 20 % and similar to Italy) only surpassed by the United Kingdom and Portugal (closer to the 20 % mark).

Finally, although policy and instrument issues are investigated more closely below, the analysis by Ayala et al. (2006, pp. 133-143) also used the ECHP to look at the impact of social benefits between 1994 and 2001 in the reduction of child poverty. The results showed that in addition to having little impact overall on the reduction of poverty among the general population in Spain <sup>7</sup>, the position of children is inverted. When taking market income as the reference indicator <sup>8</sup>, the child poverty rate is lower for children than for adults (33.3 % compared to 43.9 % in 1994, and 32.5 % compared to 37.2 % in 2001). However, after all transfers are included (including retirement and elderly pensions) the rate is higher for children than for adults (23 % compared to 19 % in 1994 and 25.5 % compared to 17.6 % in 2001) — although these figures clearly show that the poverty rate for children is in fact reduced. The authors point to the uneven intensity of the different types of benefits that target more precisely the reduction or lack of work income for adults. Pensions, for example, reduced poverty for adults from 43.9 to 27.5 % in 1994 and from 32.4 to 22.5 % in 2001, while the impact of this same benefit on children was from 33.3 to 30.6 % in 1994 and from 32.5 to 29.3 % in 2001. Comparing 1994 with 2001, it is striking to note how market income was reduced much more in 1994 than in 2001 by the transfers. The total reduction in 1994 was of 22 % while in 2001 this amounted to only 17 percentage points. Although it is true that the poverty rate taking market income as an indicator was reduced, the impact of the transfers was weakened. The worrying trend is in fact that the poverty rate of children actually increased in some of the cases and overall after all transfers were accounted for (from 23.3 to 25.5 %). However, the situation improved in the case of children living under extreme poverty (under 25 % of the median equivalised income threshold) where the rate dropped from 5 % in 1994 to 3 % in 2001. For this group of the population transfers have a much more marked impact, but the difference between children and adults — although the same pattern is found where adults are better off after transfers — is in most cases smaller.

Using again the ECHP between 1998 and 2001, and a rate calculated on the 60 % of median equivalised income threshold, the poverty rate for children under 16 was 25 % according to a study published by the INE. Moreover, despite strong and constant economic growth in Spain during the previous decade (since 1994) according to this same data source and study, there has been little reduction in overall poverty levels up to 2001 (from 19.6 to 18.8 %) and the rate for children under 16 years of age in the same period actually rose from 23.4 to 25.5 %. Figures segregated by sex for the same period show that a gender gap appeared, where in 1994 the poverty rate was practically the same (23.4 % boys and 23.5 % girls) and by 2001 there was an almost 2 percentage point difference (24.7 % boys and 26.5 % girls). The study looks at persistent poverty <sup>9</sup> and finds that while in 1997 (no data for 1994 which was the year of the beginning of the data collection) 11.4 % of the total population continued to find themselves in poverty (compared to 1994), children under 16 had a higher (the highest) rate of persistence at almost 16 %. By 2001 this situation had worsened slightly for children (16.3 % persistence rate) compared to an improvement for the overall population (10.5 %), and it continued to be the highest rate with the consequent widening of the gap with all the other groups considered (the gap widened from 2 to 3 percentage points with the other groups). In comparison to the other studies, this INE study does include differences by educational level, albeit not by age. However, it is important here to highlight that those with the lowest levels of educational attainment have, as expected, the

<sup>7</sup> The *Statistics in focus* publication on the Laeken indicators (*Population and Social Conditions* 3/2003) showed that while in the first 15 EU Member States, the average reduction of poverty through transfers before excluding pensions was 25 percentage points, in Spain the difference was only 20 percentage points, surpassed only in smaller impact by Ireland (19), Portugal (18) and Greece (17).

<sup>8</sup> The authors acknowledge that it is not possible to adjust for the impact of taxes on income. The base income or market income is the total income from private sources from paid work, capital and transferences from other households.

<sup>9</sup> This was measured as the proportion of persons over four consecutive years.

highest poverty rates and the highest persistence in poverty rates. It is also for this group for which the largest increase in poverty over the period was recorded (from 25.5 to 28.5 %, even larger for women from 25.5 to 29.8 %), although the rate of persistence dropped slightly from 17 % in 1997 to 16 % by 2001, and even better for women from 17.6 to 15.9 %.

This study also contains analysis of data on persistence of poverty among the first 15 EU Member States. While in Spain the persistence of poverty in 2001 was calculated at 16 % for children under 16, the average for the first 15 EU Member States stood at 12 %, with the United Kingdom at the same level as Spain and only Italy (18 %) and Portugal (22 %) with higher rates. Other comparative indicators on general and child poverty are offered for the first 15 EU Member States.

According to yet another source (*Living Conditions Survey, ECV*) in another study by the INE, in 2004 one fifth of the Spanish population (19.6 %) were classified as poor <sup>10</sup>, using a measure of 60 % of the median equivalised income and using the OECD modified equivalence scale for households. In the same study, child poverty was higher in the same year, reaching 24.3 % of the total population under 16. This same source shows that in 1995 Spain was among the countries with the highest child poverty rates in the EU only surpassed by Italy and the United Kingdom; the poverty rate for children was calculated at 24.3 %. This study also points to households with more than three children and monoparental households as the most vulnerable to poverty (39 and 40.3 % poverty rate respectively), but much lower than the poverty rate affecting single person households of 65 years of age and over (51.8 %). This study also gives information on poverty rates by educational level (although not by age) and shows clearly that a lower educational level increases the probabilities of being poor (32 % poverty rate among those with primary education or less), followed by those with first phase of secondary education (21.1 %) which are clearly distinguishable from those with second phase of secondary education (15 %) and university studies (7 %). This study also measures the impact of public transfers to households and, as in the previous study by Ayala et al. summarised above, finds that indeed children are the least benefited from public transfers as the poverty rate before and after transfers shows in the table below.

<b>Poverty rates before and after transfers , 2004</b>			
	<b>Before all transfers</b>	<b>After pensions</b>	<b>After all transfers</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>41,3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19,9</b>
<b>Under 16</b>	32,2	29	24,3
<b>16-24</b>	32,4	22,3	16,5
<b>65+</b>	84,9	32,3	29,6
Source: INE, Estudio descriptivo de la pobreza en España, 2004			

<sup>10</sup> INE, *Estudio descriptivo de la pobreza en España. Resultados basados en la encuesta de Condiciones de Vida 2004*. Available online at: <http://www.ine.es/daco/daco42/sociales/estudiodesc.pdf>.

## 1.2. Nature and extent of well-being

The analysis by Ayala et al., (2006) also includes data from the ECHP to measure well-being. The study includes a discussion on the selection of indicators and the pros and cons of objective and subjective poverty indicators. It also includes some of the subjectivity to which some of the answers to objective indicators in the ECHP are exposed to. In any case, the indicators chosen in this case are as follows.

- The household cannot afford the following goods/services: heating; holidays; renewal of furniture; new clothes; meat, chicken or fish every second day; and have friends over at least once a month.
- The household does not own one of the following goods because it cannot afford it: car, colour TV, video, microwave/oven, dishwasher, telephone, second home, home computer.
- Absence of one of the following in the home: separate kitchen; bath or shower; indoor flushing toilet; hot running water; heating; place to sit outside (terrace, patio).
- Environmental problems: lack of space; noise from neighbours/outside; lack of light; inadequate heating facilities; leaking roof/ceilings; damp walls/floors/foundations; rotting floors/doors; pollution, grime or other environmental problems; crime/vandalism.
- Financial difficulties: inability to pay rent; inability to pay mortgage; inability to pay utility bills; inability to pay hire purchase instalments or other loan repayments; inability to save money; difficulty to make ends meet; housing costs are a financial burden.

The methodology followed was to take income poverty and the type of household into account. It also took into consideration the presence of one or more children in couple, monoparental and non-couple households (see Annex 5 for tables with full details). Although this is not strictly comparable to the categories used in the analysis of income poverty in the same study, it does give a good idea of the well-being of children within households which have different compositions. In the section below on particular groups at risk the situation of Roma and immigrant children is discussed with respect to both income poverty and well-being (in particular access to health and education) which are not addressed in the study being reviewed here.

With respect to goods/services, compared to non-poor households with children, poor households with children have a higher proportion who cannot afford them. However, there are very marked distinctions between the goods themselves. While the proportions for renewing furniture, adequate heating and holidays are 70, 72 and 76 % respectively in poor households, the proportion for not being able to invite friends over or buying new clothes drops to 15 and 14% respectively. By type of family, the monoparental households have some of the highest proportions with 80 % not able to afford new furniture, 81 % not able to afford adequate heating, and 85 % not being able to afford holidays away from home, as well as not being able to invite friends (30 %) or buying new clothes (26 %). Also, poor households with three or more children present have much higher figures: 74 % cannot renew furniture, 88 % cannot afford adequate heating, 89 % cannot take holidays away from home, 15 % cannot invite friends over and 22 % cannot afford new clothing. The same figures for non-poor households of monoparental families are also higher than the average for households with children, but the percentages are much higher for households with non-couple families with three or more children, but still much lower than the poor monoparental households (see Annex 5 for full table).

Regarding access of households to durable goods, poor households with children again show much higher percentages of those not having access due to lack of resources. Thus, 61 % cannot afford

second homes <sup>11</sup>, 43 % cannot afford a dishwasher, 38 % a personal computer, 29 % a microwave, 11 % a video, 12 % a car, 6 % a fixed telephone line, and only 1 % a colour television. These figures are, respectively, for non-poor households 45, 21, 20, 20, 10, 4, 2, 1 and 0 %. In this case, monoparental households seem to fare better than the average in some of the cases and worse in others, while non-couple households with three or more children have a worse situation in all cases. Curiously, monoparental families in non-poor households do seem to have a worse situation than the average of non-poor households and this is repeated for non-couple families with three or more children. But, again, these are lower percentages than those for the poorer households (see Annex 5 for the full table).

Regarding the characteristics of accommodation, the differences for lack of heating are very marked, even more so than for the other goods and services summarised here so far. Thus, while in poor households with children 80 % do not have adequate heating, only 51 % of non-poor households have this problem (which is still relatively high). This figure rises to 100 % of poor non-couple households with three or more children and to 87 % in the case of monoparental households. In all the other cases (couples and other households with one or two children) the percentage is lower (between 74 and 76 %). In the case of all the other characteristics, the differences and percentages are much lower (see the full table in Annex 5).

Regarding problems in accommodation, lack of space is the largest problem affecting both poor and non-poor households, but the percentages affected are low: 37 and 21 % respectively. In this case poor monoparental households also do better than the average, where both couple and non-couple households with three or more children have a much worse situation: 52 and 67 % respectively who claim to have inadequate space. The incidence of all other problems, such as dampness, insufficient light, leaks, rotting and adequate heating are much lower for both poor and non-poor households. But again, a much higher incidence among poor couple and non-couple households with three or more children and non-poor non-couple households with three or more children is evident (see Annex 5 for table).

Environmental problems affecting accommodation also affect poorer households more negatively than non-poor households, but the differences here are smaller than in the previous cases. Thus, while 25 % of poor households are affected by noise produced by neighbours and other external noises, 22 % of non-poor households are also affected. Couple households with three or more children and monoparental families in poor households have a higher incidence at 10 and 38 % respectively. In the case of crime and vandalism, 18 % of poor households are affected compared to only 10 % in the case of non-poor households. In this case, monoparental households (22 %) and non-couple households with three or more children (47 %!) are affected by this problem. Finally, in the case of environmental pollution/grime or other environmental problems, the averages are the same for poor and non-poor households (9 %), but higher for couple households with three or more children and monoparental families in poor households (13 and 10 % respectively) (see Annex 5 for the full table).

Finally, regarding financial difficulties, the percentages of both poor and non-poor households affected are really very small in most cases except for the questions of making ends meet (monthly) and the financial burden of various debts and mortgages (excluding credit cards). In the latter case, the percentages are relatively important for both poor and non-poor households (40 and 26 % respectively). The figure for poor households in monoparental and couple families with three or more children rises to 55 and 50 % respectively. Among non-poor households, in monoparental homes the situation is worse (36 %) and a little worse for non-couple families with three or more children (38 %) (see full table in

<sup>11</sup> We remind the reader that in Spain, because of very recent rural-urban migration, there are still a fair number of persons who have a 'second' home in their original birth place. However, the housing boom figures indicate that much of the most environmentally unfriendly housing built on the coastal cities were second homes.

Annex 5). This issue of how the financial burden of mortgages can be distorting income poverty is discussed further when looking at the policies by areas.

### 1.2.1. Unicef study and other comparisons within the EU

We would like to mention here the study by Unicef on well-being comparing it to the studies we have just summarised and where Spain fares very well in comparison to other countries such as France, Austria, the United Kingdom or the United States. This is in fact not surprising, given that for the past two decades, Spain has been increasing its ranking in the human development index (HDI) compared to the GDP per capita ranking. In fact, over the past six years Spain has risen from ranking 21 to 19. The three strongest points that Spain has with respect to child well-being, according to the Unicef report card are health and safety (rank 6), behaviours and risks (rank 5), and the top rank only after the Netherlands in subjective well-being (rank 2).

These three strong positions allow Spain to be ranked among the top seven countries, placing it ahead of Switzerland and Norway and only behind the other Nordic countries and the Netherlands. On the downside, one of the lowest scores in the ranking (15) is educational well-being. In this sense, the *PISA report* by the OECD has been used every year to fuel the debate on the need to improve educational quality. As mentioned in our policy analysis below, this is one of the few quantified objectives in the policy plans and really needs to become a main priority as it is both central in increasing the well-being of children and in preventing future poverty. Although, as summarised in the previous analysis, there is no link to the educational attainment of parents, it should be pointed out that those with lower educational achievement have lower activity, lower employment and higher unemployment and/or fixed-term contracts — all elements that directly affect poverty risks. Also, the school-to-work transitions survey (*Efetil*) shows that those with basic education or unfinished secondary school have much lower probabilities of being employed in open-ended contracts and much higher fixed-term contract work.

The other lower rankings in the Unicef study were in material well-being (12), which coincides with the ranking of Spain among EU Member States with the highest national poverty rates (along with Italy, Portugal, Greece and Ireland according to ECHP data for 2001) and also among the highest countries with severe poverty (25 % of the median equivalised income but with a big drop between 1994 and 2001) along with the United Kingdom, Portugal, Italy and Greece, and among those with the highest poverty gaps alongside the United Kingdom, Italy, Portugal and Greece.

### 1.2.2. Health

The Ministry of Health in cooperation with INE carries out a triennial survey on health (*Encuesta Nacional de Salud*, ENE) which includes a child questionnaire. Looking at data from the national survey on health (last available data for 2006) and the survey on disabilities (1999), it was not possible to draw any statistically significant conclusions as both of these surveys seem to have severe problems with the under-representation of children and some other biases. The results, for example, on the question of assessment of health (same as in the ECHP) were radically different and the age groups were also non-comparable. It would be advisable to address this problem in future versions of both surveys. In any case, in the following table some of the main results from the ENE of 2003 and 2006 are captured. The available tables give results for children aged 0-15 and the next available age group, 16-24. The jumps in the data are very obvious, but overall most of the children have a good to very good health status.

Results from the ENE for children aged 0-15, distribution among different self-reported health situations					
	Very good	Good	Regular	Bad	Very bad
2003	50.04	12.58	32.10	4.80	0.48
2006	39.86	48.89	9.71	1.1	0.45
Results from the ENE for youth aged 16-24, distribution among different self-reported health situations					
2003	33.06	54.8	10.51	1.04	0.59
2006	18.7	67.88	11.78	1.2	0.44

Also regarding health we would like to point out that only one study could be found specifically related to infant or child health (Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo, 2004). The report used public health and paediatric approaches as an approximation to the situation and social problems faced by children as well as their health problems. It used a rights-based approach in that it responded to the Concluding Observations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/15/Add.185) of 2002 which pointed to the need by the Spanish state of strengthening coordination among the different public administration bodies in charge of the well-being of children, of promoting a global strategy based on the UN Convention principles and of preparing and applying intersectorial policies aimed at children. It was carried out by a committee of experts which in turn consulted with a wider group of experts and institutions and also included a review of existing studies and research.

The main conclusions of this report point to various factors, similar to the ones already highlighted in the studies that we have previously reviewed, that affect the well-being of children (directly or indirectly) in the area of health. These are mainly changes in family structure, demographic changes (including the arrival of immigrants and vulnerabilities of children in that group), increasing child abuse (from adults to children but also among children), a high level of school failure and the diverse roots explaining the situation. Special attention was given in the report to children suffering from chronic illnesses or disabilities, 'orphan' or rare diseases, unwanted pregnancies and abortions, mental health cases and children with cancer diseases. The illnesses that affect children the most by age group are included in the tables in Annex 6 which coincide with the ones covered by this study. The study points to a number of causes affecting child health that have been listed based on a survey to health professionals (N=144). The demographic changes (including ageing and immigration) were seen by the professionals surveyed as the most important factors that will be affecting the health services for children (in total 64 %). On the other hand, the health and social factors that would be affecting child health were: the improvement of the service due to an improvement of etiopathogenic (cause of disease) knowledge but at the same time problems in saturated services and institutional communication, changes in family relations, immigration, nutrition and lack of exercise, and improvement of overall economic conditions but growing inequality which together make up 49 % of all answers. As to the pathologies and health problems that will be affecting children and adolescents the health professionals have pointed to mental health, infectious diseases and lowering of vaccinated children, chronic illnesses, disabled and rare diseases, emergence of a new morbidity (incidence of new diseases), psycho-social problems and those related to marginal and exclusion situations, obesity and other cardiovascular risk factors which together make up 62 % of all answers. It is important to note that no mention has been made explicitly of Roma children, but that they are implicitly included as part of those suffering marginal and exclusion situations.

Finally, based on the survey and the analysis of the research reviewed, the study points to a number of measures that should be taken into account in order to address the changes and trends it highlighted. In the first place, more research on new morbidity in paediatrics as well as improvement in the quality of services, on family relations and conflicts (separations and divorces), promotion of health and prevention, foreign children, child mental health, infectious diseases and their preventions, disability, chronic illness and rare diseases, community participation, psycho-social aspects of paediatric attention and child abuse. In the second place, an adaptation of the health system to the health needs and

problems of childhood and adolescence. In this case the recommendations by the health professionals are centred on: health education; quality of the health service backed by sufficient resources including changes that facilitate the decision-making process by all stakeholders in the child's health and a rational use of the health services by both families and professionals. Paediatricians should be implicated in the child's health, taking into account the biological and social aspects and diminishing programmes for healthy children and increasing those for children in greater vulnerability which include greater resources for disability, rare diseases and chronic illnesses; prevention of illnesses, malformations and accidents during childhood, specifically for vulnerable children in urban, suburban and rural areas.

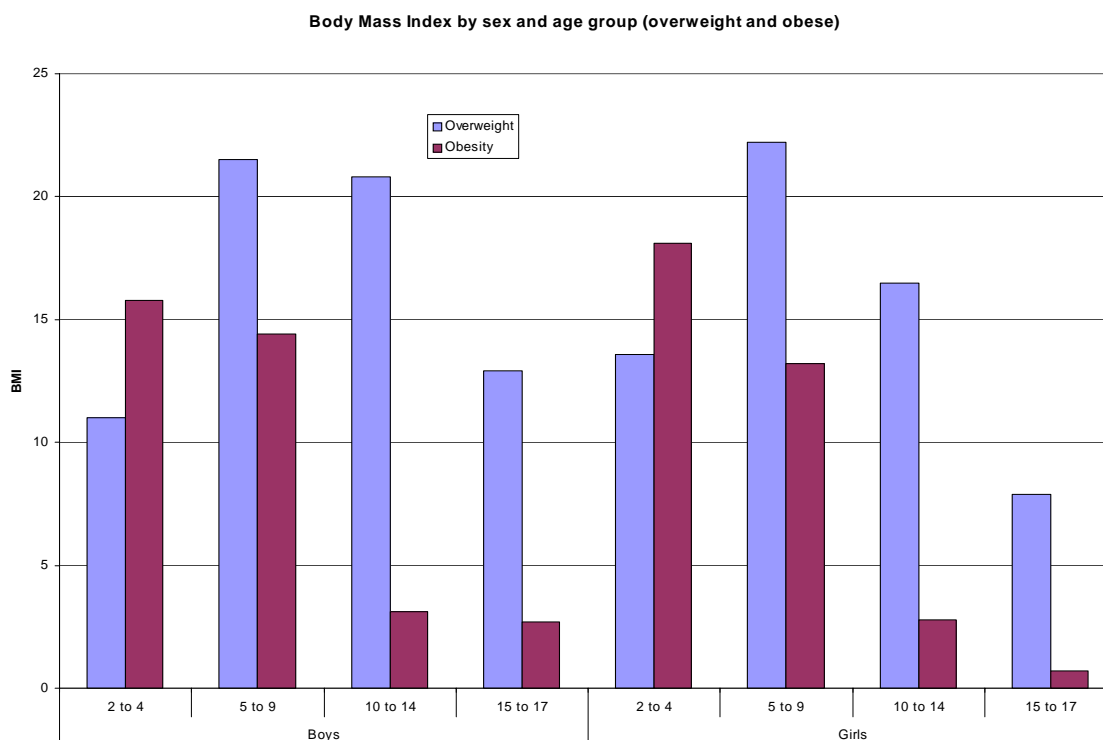
The Roma population has a number of socioeconomic problems which directly affect the health of children. In a publication by the Ministry of Health and the Fundación Secretariado Gitano (2005)<sup>12</sup>, some figures and analysis of the situation were made. There was no specific focus on childhood, but the most important points highlighted here have an obvious link to improving Roma children health outcomes.

- There is a lack of preventive culture among the Roma population. Only when persons are very ill, is action taken. Tendency to use emergency rather than family doctor services.
- Therapeutic treatments are abandoned as soon as visible signs of improvement are manifested.
- Infant mortality is 1.4 times higher than the national average and life expectancy is four to eight years shorter. Among the most excluded Roma the figure rises to 10 years.
- Higher incidence of infectious diseases, especially Hepatitis B and C, as well as higher incidence of HIV/AIDS (mainly due to intravenous drug use).
- Deficient infant vaccination and lack of monitoring of programmes to promote health among Roma children.
- Deficient nutrition and hygiene leading in particular to dental problems.
- Higher incidence of accidents (burns, cuts, traffic, fractures, intoxications, etc.).
- High fertility with pregnancies and deliveries at very young and very old age.
- Stereotypes going both ways from doctors to Roma and from Roma to doctors, which can be especially dangerous for children's health.
- High drug and alcohol intake increases the probability of traffic accidents and is also linked to higher incidence of violence against women and children.
- The health system does not accommodate for cultural differences and is centred on biological rather than social approaches.
- Some of the social aspects ruling Roma society could be used to strengthen health outcomes, such as their strong sense of community and family. However, work on how to communicate health prevention and care is still needed.

Finally, the Observatory for Childhood (Observatorio de la Infancia) has produced a statistical compendium on childhood that offers data, although not an in-depth analysis, of the situation of children in Spain drawing from various data sources. In Annex 6, the information has been summarised by area. Concerning health, these figures point to strong regional differences in perinatal and neonatal deaths. In the former case (after the 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy and seven days after birth), the incidence in 2002 was 5.4 ‰ children born on average, but reached 12 ‰ in the north African city of Ceuta and was the lowest in Cantabria at 3.5 deaths per 1 000 births. With respect to post neonatal deaths (after 28 days from birth and up to one year of life), the rate stood at 1.4 ‰, whereby the highest rates in this case were in Murcia (2 ‰) and in the Canary Islands at 1.9 ‰ (births) and the lowest in Navarra at 0.3 ‰. The infant mortality rate thus stands at 3.99 per 1000 live births, which is below the 4.8 death per 1 000 births for the EU. Moreover, in the period from 1997 to 2004 foetal deaths (stillbirths weighing more than 500 g)

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/SaludyCGitana/Salud\\_y\\_comunidad\\_gitana.pdf](http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/SaludyCGitana/Salud_y_comunidad_gitana.pdf)

were reduced by 23.7 % and the death in the first hours of life by 18 %. However, the rate of these deaths for children of immigrant women is 37 to 40 % higher, respectively by type of death. On the other hand, overweight and obesity are affecting a significant proportion of children in different age groups, as shown in the following graph. The main reasons are inadequate food intake and lack of exercise.



Source: *La Infancia en Cifras* of the Childhood Observatory

Some of the more worrisome trends affecting the health of children are the low ages at which first cigarettes, alcohol and drugs are consumed. In the case of drugs and alcohol the average age is 15, while tobacco is lower at 13. Tobacco, alcohol and cannabis consumption among both boys and girls aged 14 to 18 is alarmingly high according to a survey in secondary schools in 2004 (*Encuesta estatal sobre uso de drogas en enseñanzas secundarias (Estudes)*). When asked about consumption in the past 30 days, alcohol consumption among boys and girls was practically the same at around 65 %, tobacco consumption was higher for girls (40 %) than boys (32 %) and cannabis was higher for boys (almost 30 %) than girls (around 20 %). As to other drugs, although the percentages are much lower (less than 5 %) these are higher for boys than girls, and the highest percentage is for cocaine (around 5 % for boys and 3 % for girls). Another worrying trend is the fact that between 1996 and 2004 (dates of the survey on secondary school children, *Estudes*) boys and girls have increased the consumption of tobacco measured by number of cigarettes smoked per day. Moreover, 40 % of deaths among people aged 15 and 24 are due to traffic accidents while this group makes up 11 % of all drivers. And 30 % of all deaths of persons aged 0 to 14 were as pedestrians involved in traffic accidents. Most of the accidents involve drugs or alcohol. Finally, the number of abortions among those under 19 has increased from 4.5 % of all abortions to 10.6 % by 2004. Among the reasons cited are the decrease in birth control methods and a decrease in preventive attitudes towards HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). We also point to the lack of sexual education among the immigrant population.

### 1.2.3. Education

As pointed out in our previous reports, Spain has one of the highest proportions of school failure of the EU: 30.8 % compared to 14.9 % in the EU. In our previous report on immigration and Roma we have already pointed to the situation in this field. In sum, the proportion of Roma with low levels of education reflects their situation of social exclusion, which also explains the patterns of employment described in our October report of 2006. According to the study on labour market outcomes of Roma in Spain <sup>13</sup>, 85 % of economically active Roma have completed only primary studies or less. The percentage rises to 92 % if those who have begun secondary schooling but have left are accounted for. This stands in contrast with 80 % of the Spanish population who have obtained at least secondary education. The Roma children, as the immigrant children, are concentrated in public schools (89.9 %) whereas only 10.1 % attend publicly funded private schools <sup>14</sup>. The number of Roma girls by the time secondary legal age is reached is only 39.9 %, however, girls have a much higher chance of actually finishing (64.3 % or the very few Roma in the last year of secondary education are girls). Specific support in schools for Roma children is thus crucial to increase the chances of continuing in school and compensating for the lack of support at home due to the low level of education of the parents.

On the other hand, there are two issues with respect to the educational level of immigrants that are important in the case of Spain: the level of education of working-age immigrants and that of their children in the Spanish educational system. Very briefly, in the first case, as regards the influx from new and future EU Member States, especially in the case of women, the educational levels are higher than the Spanish average. On the other hand, immigrants from Africa and Latin America might have lower educational levels on average. As to the second issue, there is a marked concern by various members of Spanish society about the concentration of immigrant children in the public school system and the fact that it is in these schools where the highest school failure and early school leaver rates are found. As in the case of the Roma, specific support is crucial to compensate for the cases where the parents themselves have low educational levels <sup>15</sup>. The concentration of immigrant children in public schools sometimes reaches 50 % or more in individual schools. The total concentration of immigrant children in public schools according to data from the Ministry of Education in 2005 was 81 % while the proportion of immigrant children in the whole of the primary and secondary school system was 6 % <sup>16</sup>. In some CCAA (*Comunidades Autónomas*), such as Catalonia, the reserved places not only include immigrant children but children with 'special needs'. In Madrid, 38 % of immigrant children attend publicly supported private schools and 62 % are concentrated in public schools. There is also a need to publish the distribution by nationalities of the children accepted into these private schools in order to avoid 'profiling'. In the following table the proportion of immigrant children in each level of the school system by CCAA is shown, as well as the proportion of immigrant children in the public school system.

<sup>13</sup> *Población Gitana y Empleo*, 2005, Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG).

<sup>14</sup> These data come from another study by the FSG, available at [http://www.gitanos.org/upload/48/86/34\\_35Dossier.pdf](http://www.gitanos.org/upload/48/86/34_35Dossier.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> A recent OECD study has found that 'there is no significant association between the size of the immigrant student populations in the case countries and the size of the performance differences between immigrant and native students' (p. 1, summary). Spain was, however, not included among the case countries. See: [http://www.oecd.org/document/7/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_33931\\_36703111\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/7/0,2340,en_2649_33931_36703111_1_1_1_1,00.html).

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Education, statistics for 2005: <http://www.mec.es/mecd/jsp/plantilla.jsp?id=3112&area=estadisticas>.

**SPAIN**

<b>Proportion of immigrant children in the school systems in each CCAA and proportion of children in public schools</b>										
	% in the school system	% in the public schools								
		TOTAL	Pre-School	Primary School	Special educatio	Obligatory secondary school	Bachilleratos (1)	Vocational training(2)	Social Guarantee programmes	Artistic Education
TOTAL	6,64	81,4	81,1	82,2	61,0	79,3	85,0	77,8	69,8	95,5
ANDALUCIA	3,65	82,9	86,6	82,4	42,0	80,3	91,7	78,5	76,8	96,7
ARAGON	7,52	77,6	75,2	77,5	51,9	77,7	89,7	69,9	78,2	95,2
ASTURIAS (Principado de)	2,94	80,7	77,4	81,5	75,0	76,8	96,6	74,4	80,0	96,4
BALEARS (Illes)	11,62	81,8	80,6	82,8	13,6	77,2	85,3	85,7	87,8	100,0
CANARIAS	7,63	86,7	87,3	86,2	73,5	84,1	80,0	95,4	96,4	0,0
CANTABRIA	4,00	70,1	65,2	69,7	16,7	67,4	85,3	74,1	70,6	0,0
CASTILLA Y LEÓN	4,37	75,9	78,5	76,9	87,5	72,5	72,0	67,0	40,7	98,0
CASTILLA-LA MANCHA	5,36	89,5	90,4	88,7	64,7	89,2	96,0	87,3	78,6	100,0
CATALUNA	8,70	83,4	83,2	86,1	56,2	80,5	86,7	74,5	0,0	89,7
COMUNIDAD VALENCIANA	8,77	85,9	87,1	86,2	0,0	84,6	91,9	79,1	0,0	77,3
EXTREMADURA	1,87	91,4	91,3	91,2	77,8	90,3	93,9	95,5	90,0	100,0
GALICIA	1,87	84,1	80,0	82,1	88,9	85,7	95,8	86,1	86,2	0,0
MADRID (Comunidad de)	10,98	74,6	71,5	75,1	71,1	72,7	76,4	79,1	69,3	98,6
MURCIA (Región de)	9,06	89,0	87,2	90,1	76,5	88,4	92,5	86,4	75,1	100,0
NAVARRA (Comunidad Foral de)	8,79	80,7	83,3	82,2	77,8	73,3	70,5	70,8	86,4	97,5
PAÍS VASCO	3,53	68,4	71,2	67,3	55,3	62,7	75,9	54,7	59,9	36,4
RIOJA (La)	9,75	77,0	77,4	72,8	84,6	81,2	89,4	84,6	73,0	100,0
CEUTA	1,48	86,8	100,0	97,6	100,0	86,1	100,0	100,0	30,3	0,0
MELILLA	5,08	92,4	96,4	85,1	0,0	99,5	97,4	100,0	100,0	0,0

(1) Includes on-site and distance students  
(2) Includes on-site and distance students  
(3) Includes visual arts and design, music, dance and theatre  
Source: Ministry of Education statistics for 2005 <http://www.mec.es/mecd/jsp/plantilla.jsp?id=3112&area=estadisticas>

### 1.3. Main trends and underlying causes

As already captured in the studies cited in the previous subsection, there are a number of trends and underlying causes captured that can be synthesised as follows.

#### Trends:

- increasing or steady child poverty rate in spite of economic growth;
- high incidence of poverty and reduced well-being in monoparental households;
- much lower incidence in nuclear households, but a large proportion of children in poverty remains in these households;
- entries into poverty higher and exits lower;
- large regional differences that could be explained by better employment indicators, but also by the presence of specific policies;
- although there are proportionately more nuclear households, other types of households are increasing due to changing lifestyles, but also due to immigration and the difficulty to access adequate housing (market situation shaping household composition);
- public transfers are not reducing child poverty in Spain and seem to actually widen differences;
- direct relation between low educational attainment and poverty point to the need to strengthen efforts on early school leavers and school failure.

#### Underlying causes:

- unemployment;
- inactivity;
- fixed-term employment;
- weak redistribution impact of tax-benefit system and lack of specific benefits aimed at children (most benefits are income support for adults);
- although there are a number of benefits for large households — one of the groups at most risk, whether or not the adults are a couple — there is no available information on the impact of the benefits on children.

#### 1.4. Groups at particular risk

Based on the studies summarised above, one can clearly state that monoparental households and households (both couple or nuclear and non-nuclear) with three or more children have much higher risks of poverty and deprivation. Also children living in households with unemployed or inactive persons or persons with low-quality jobs (namely fixed-term employment) are at particular risk. These groups are different from the other households as well as among themselves as the analysis has shown. However, we would like to stress that as regards the proportion of affected children, the majority are in nuclear households where at least one of the parents work (more than half the children population) and also that the percentage of households with children is slowly rising again due to the influx of immigrants. In many cases these are not nuclear households and the probability of the presence of three or more children is high (see our report on immigration in 2006<sup>17</sup>) and is highly driven by lack of access to adequate and affordable housing. On the other hand, no mention of Roma children and how they would stand in this analysis is made in the reports summarised. However, judging from the indicators used in the reports and the links to poverty, Roma children would also be more likely to be in households with characteristics that increase the risk of poverty (higher number of children, higher rate of inactivity, higher unemployment and higher rate of fixed-term contracts and parents with low educational levels). In sum:

- ethnic minority children, namely the Roma population, are not covered by recent research on poverty;
- immigrant families and children are not covered by recent research on poverty;
- disabled children are not covered by recent research on poverty.

On this last group we can offer some information on the number of titles of 'numerous families' which receive a number of specific benefits in Spain <sup>18</sup>. However, as discussed below, it is not possible to know if such support measures actually do improve child poverty levels and well-being. The table below summarises the situation for the most recent data for 2005. It is worth noting that the data are not complete because some CCAA have not submitted the statistics for compilation in the yearbook of the Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales (MTAS), namely Andalusia, Asturias, Badajoz, the Balearic Islands and the Basque Country. The table shows that there are 246 000 families currently receiving the entitlement, and although there are no available numbers on the sex and age of the children we have calculated that there are around 822 000 children affected. However, since in some cases adults can be counted if one of the children is over 18 (as long as they live in the same house) this estimation would need to be adjusted.

<sup>17</sup> Spain. "Feeding in" and "Feeding out", and Integrating Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities A Study of National Policies pp. 35-37 Available at

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/spsi/docs/social\\_inclusion/experts\\_reports/spain\\_2\\_2006\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/docs/social_inclusion/experts_reports/spain_2_2006_en.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> These are: waiving of fees related to education, discounts in transport, preferential access to protected housing, special access to commercial credit, fiscal reductions, payment of social security contributions for carers and all those other benefits dictated by each CCAA which have the competency on social services, minors and family.

Titles of "numerous families" by family composition, type of title and category							
	TOTAL	Family type			Nationality of beneficiary		
		With two ascendants	With one ascendant		Without ascendants	Spanish	Immigrant
			Men	Women			
<b>TOTAL</b>							
2 to 4 children	246.997	210.632	7.141	14.736	96	214.680	17.925
5 or more children	17.256	14.255	603	1.166	82	12.654	3.452
<b>Families with children without disabilities</b>							
2 to 4 children	218.396	186.413	6.052	12.958	85	188.258	17.250
5 or more children	14.744	12.311	519	905	79	10.623	3.191
<b>Families with children with disabilities</b>							
2 to 4 children	28.601	24.219	1.089	1.778	11	26.422	675
5 or more children	2.512	1.944	84	261	3	2.031	261
Source: MTAS, Anuario							
NOTE: The entitlement is given to single parents of couples with one or two children, whether the children are common or not, if at least one of them is disabled. Also those families with two or more children where one of the parents is deceased. Three or more children over 18 years of age if at least one of them is disabled. All other families must have three or more children whether the couple lives together or not. A so called special category is given to families with 5 or more children; 4 children if at least three are from multiple birth or adoption; 4 children if the income is less than 75% of the interprofessional minimum salary including extra payments (summer holidays and Christmas).							

Furthermore, the recent law on dependency has not included the demands by associations of parents caring for dependent children who see the law as catering to dependent adults almost exclusively. The cases covered are explained in the policy section below

The conditions of accommodation for the more vulnerable children has been addressed above in section 1.2. However, it is important to say here that we have found that very little research has paid attention to Roma and immigrant children, in particular with respect to access to housing. Slightly more research has been undertaken on access and results in the education and health areas (that we have reviewed above).

### 1.5. Institutional care and foster care

The figures on children in care are summarised in the table below. There are no figures available by sex, age or nationality in the case of custodies and national adoptions. In our previous report on immigration we have already noted the situation of unaccompanied minors entering Spain and their specific situation of vulnerability. It is also important to note that for some years data are missing from some CCAA, therefore a full and comprehensive analysis cannot be carried out.

Child protection measures										
	ABSOLUTE VALUES					RATES PER 100 THOUSAND POPULATION				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>TOTAL EXCLUDING INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS</b>	<b>14.992</b>	<b>18.481</b>	<b>17.931</b>	<b>19.709</b>	<b>19.917</b>	<b>235,1</b>	<b>252,7</b>	<b>246,5</b>	<b>268,3</b>	<b>268,6</b>
"Ex lege"custodies	4.705	6.082	5.722	5.973	5.784	74,8	82,3	77,3	81,0	76,5
Residential custodies	6.037	7.695	7.020	8.703	8.958	101,6	104,1	95,9	116,4	118,5
Administrative custodies with foster parents	2.215	2.554	2.896	3.113	3.306	30,1	34,6	39,1	41,6	45,0
Judicial custodies with foster parents	1.071	1.075	1.265	1.024	1.041	17,0	17,6	20,6	18,6	17,9
National A doptions	964	1.075	1.028	896	828	13,1	14,5	14,2	12,0	11,6
<b>INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS</b>	<b>3.062</b>	<b>3.428</b>	<b>3.625</b>	<b>3.951</b>	<b>5.541</b>	-	-	-	-	-

Source: M T A S, Anuario

It is also important here to highlight the number of children who are under care of the state for having committed crimes. In this case, the following table gives a more detailed account of the incidence per 10 000 population by age and sex of the children. The total number in 2005 was 17 133 (15 098 boys and 1 854 girls). In the case of boys, nearly 70 % of offenders were aged 16 or over, and in the case of girls the figure was 61 % — which means that a higher proportion of younger girls compared to boys were condemned.

Condemned minors per 10 thousand population (14-17) by sex			
AGE	Total	Men	Women
Total	93,82	162,53	21,12
14	37,52	63,11	10,47
15	71,56	119,59	20,76
16	105,11	182,31	23,44
17	157,95	279,27	29,33

Source: Estadísticas Judiciales 2005

As far as the type of crime is concerned, in well over half the cases it was theft of various types including car theft. It is worrisome to point out that in 1 % of the cases (some 171) there is no information on the age or sex of the offender, and in over 14 % of the cases the offence is 'other' which seems very high (19 % in the case of girls).

It is also important to point out that the number of cases of violence against children, including murder by their own parents or by partners of their biological parents, has been increasing and the cases are concentrated among socially excluded persons and immigrants. These cases are linked in most cases to gender-based violence and it should be important that the Childhood Observatory keep a close monitoring of this issue. The Observatory has in fact produced one publication on the issue, but efforts must be maintained <sup>19</sup>.

## 1.6. Regional differences

Large regional differences remain in Spain and these could be due to differences in labour market outcomes as well as in specific policies aimed at reducing child poverty. In Annex 1 we have prepared a table with basic information on policy aspects at regional level. It is important to point out that there is a very uneven spread of policies directed at children and that perhaps some national legislation to ensure the same rights to services and benefits would be necessary. It is worrisome that the poorest region (Extremadura) does not have a specific plan for childhood (at least not publicly available).

In the study by Ayala et al. (2006) using the amplified sample, the authors were able to analyse the differences between regions (NUTS 2 level or CCAA) in Spain except for the north African cities of Ceuta and Melilla. It is interesting to note that the order of regions from the lowest to the highest child poverty rates do not always coincide with the same order for the whole of the population, and child poverty is not always higher for children. This can be explained by large regional differences in the main socioeconomic characteristics that we have mentioned above (family size and structure as well as labour market characteristics) but also, as we will address below, the way child poverty is addressed by regional policy. Thus only Navarra, La Rioja and the Basque Country have lower or equal poverty rates than those affecting the whole of the population, and the rates of these CCAA are also much lower than those of the national average (9, 13 and 11 % respectively for the total population compared to 18 % for Spain and 7, 9 and 11 % respectively for children compared to 23 % in Spain). Other CCAA also have lower or equal rates at the national level but higher than their general level as follows: Catalonia (9 % total and 13 % for children); Madrid (10 and 14 % respectively); the Balearic Islands (10 and 13 % respectively); Asturias (11 and 15 % respectively); Aragon (12 and 16 % respectively); Cantabria (12 and 16 % respectively); Galicia (18 and 23 % respectively); and Castile-Leon (18 and 23 % respectively). The final group has higher child poverty rates than the national average, which also coincide with higher total national rates and also has the largest differences between both rates except for the first CCAA in the list: Murcia (11 % total and 15 % for children); Valencia (21 and 27 % respectively); Canary Islands (22 and 28 % respectively); Castilla-La Mancha (27 and 33 % respectively); Andalusia (28 and 33 % respectively); and Extremadura (40 and 45 % respectively).

The number and proportion of child immigrant population varies considerably between CCAA. In absolute numbers (in 2001), Madrid and Catalonia had approximately 60 000 immigrant minors; Valencia and the Basque Country around 30 000 immigrant minors; and in third place the Balearic Islands, Canary Islands and Murcia with just above 10 000 immigrant minors. The percentage of under-18 immigrant minors from the total under-18 population varied greatly between CCAA in 2001; Melilla with almost 12 % followed by Madrid and the Balearic Islands (around 7 %) ranked at the top, while the lowest rates were in Extremadura, with just over 1 %.

Regional differences in Spain are reflected in other areas such as education and health. The national average of children under three in school is 12.9 %, however there are significant territorial differences. While some CCAA such as Andalusia, Asturias, Castilla-La Mancha and Extremadura do not surpass

<sup>19</sup> Maltrato Infantil: Detección, Notificación y Registro de Casos, 2006.

2 % rates, others such as Catalonia and The Basque Country experienced under-three year old schooling rates of 28.6 and 30.9 % respectively. The national rate of three-year-old children at school rose from 93 to 95.6 % between the periods 2001-02 and 2003-04. Some CCAA achieved rates of 100 % for the mentioned period but not all the CCAA experienced an increase; the Balearic Islands and Madrid, in particular, experienced an alarming 4 percentage point decrease in schooling rates of three year olds. These CCAA have experienced significant influx of immigrant populations in recent years. Regarding the financing of education, the public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP was 4.4 % at national level in 2003-04. Among the CCAA, only Extremadura (5.5 %), Canary Islands (3.6 %), Galicia (3.7 %) and Andalusia (3.7 %) spent over 3.5 % of public expenditure on primary and secondary education. One of the most alarming symptoms of the Spanish educational system is the number of early school leavers, which averaged almost 35 % in 2000-01. While some CCAA such as Asturias (85.4 %) and the Basque Country (81.1 %) achieved very high rates of secondary graduates, the Autonomous Cities of Ceuta and Melilla had very low rates of secondary graduates (46.8 and 50.95 % respectively), evidencing great disparities in this aspect at regional levels.

Health figures also reveal territorial differences within Spain. The average child mortality rate of Spain in 2004 was of 3.99 child deaths per every 1 000 births. The highest rates occurred in Ceuta, Melilla and Murcia and the lowest in Navarre. Perinatal deaths (after the 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy and seven days after birth) in 2002 was 5.4 ‰ on average, but peaked at 12 ‰ in Ceuta and was the lowest in Cantabria at around 3.5 ‰.

### 1.7. Gender issues

This is the most unexplored aspect in the studies reviewed here and in general in the literature on poverty in Spain. In fact there are also a number of incomplete statistics, in the sense that they were not submitted by the CCAA and in that there are no data by sex or more specific age groups in some cases.

In any case, there are a number of specific issues that we have drawn out from the various reports and data gathered:

- according to figures published by the INE in 2004 <sup>20</sup>, poverty levels of girls under the age of 16 are 3 percentage points higher than those of boys;
- trafficked girls for sexual purposes (under 18 years of age) **might** be included in the 'other' category of judicial statistics, which is quite high (19 % of offences committed by girls under this "other" category. This is likely as their activity is penalised and recorded as such as it is in most other EU countries. This does not mean that the girls are incarcerated, they are under special re-insertion programmes with NGOs);
- Among children suffering sexual abuses both in their home environment and out of it, girls make up 78% of victims
- women show much higher proportions of deprivation compared to men (52 vs 38.2 % without adequate heating; 44.1 vs 35.1 % no holidays away from home; 51 % vs 36 % who cannot renew furniture, 11 vs 6 % who cannot buy new clothes; and 10 vs 6 % who cannot have friends over (ECHP 2001).

<sup>20</sup> INE, *Estudio descriptivo de la pobreza en España. Resultados basados en la encuesta de Condiciones de Vida 2004*. Available online at: <http://www.ine.es/daco/daco42/sociales/estudiodesc.pdf>.

## 2. Policy framework

This section of the report will describe and assess the overall framework for coordinating and developing policies regarding child poverty in Spain. The first part of this section identifies and assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the overall policy framework that exists for preventing and alleviating child poverty and social exclusion amongst children and promoting their well-being in Spain. The second part identifies and assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the main policy areas that are in place in Spain for preventing and alleviating child poverty and social exclusion amongst children and promoting their well-being, taking into account policies for different age subgroups of children and the importance of a multidimensional approach.

### 2.1. Policy framework

The main social policy documents in place at national level in Spain regarding child poverty and social inclusion are listed below:

- the 'Spanish national reform programme' (NRP);
- the 'IV National action plan on social inclusion of the Kingdom of Spain' (NAPincl);
- the 'National strategic plan for childhood and adolescence 2006-09' (NSPCA);
- the 'II National action plan against child and adolescent sexual exploitation 2006-09' (Napsec);
- the 'Interministerial youth plan 2005-08' (IYP).

Apart from the national policy documents listed above, 12 CCAA have their own childhood plans in place. These regional childhood plans will also be taken into consideration for the overview of the overall policy framework. Details of the national plans listed above and all regional childhood plans are provided in the annexes. It is also important to mention the recent approval of new legislation with an important social content, such as the Dependency Act and Equality Act, aimed at improving the quality of life and well-being of all citizens, including children.

Judging from an analysis of the documents listed above, child poverty and social exclusion cannot be considered a priority at national level. There is a lack of a multidimensional intervention and coordination between official authorities, social organisations and citizens. Although the NRP focuses on economical aspects rather than social ones, it also establishes a series of educational objectives and targets that indirectly affect the well-being of children. The NAPincl sets the main objectives and targets of social inclusion policies at national level. One of the five priority objectives is to fight against poverty and social exclusion through the promotion of employment, but within this priority objective it does not contain any specific measures aimed at preventing and alleviating child poverty<sup>21</sup>. It has been widely recognised that access to employment can be an effective way to combat poverty and therefore children in families that benefit from employment policies will be positively affected. However, as mentioned in the first section of this report, in Spain the largest proportion of poor children is still concentrated among households where the head of house is employed (despite a decrease in recent years). Therefore, employment policies should be much more specific and tackle problems such as low wages and the

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<sup>21</sup> NAPincl, p. 4.

high amount of fixed-term contracts having a significant impact on poor children. Moreover, within the section of measures of access to all resources, rights and services that are needed to participate in society, the NAPincl includes a section with seven specific measures aimed at children in situations of extreme vulnerability (it is important to note that these measures are not included within the priority objectives). The seven measures aimed at children included in the NAPincl are mostly administrative and legislative which need to be developed to directly affect the well-being of children, but none is specifically aimed at preventing and reducing child poverty and exclusion. Both the NRP and the NAPincl contain a set of measurable targets, but none of these are directly aimed at reducing child poverty. However, the specific target to reduce early school leavers from 30 % in 2005 to 15 % in 2010<sup>22</sup> will indirectly help reduce future poverty and reduce social exclusion at present. Other specific targets included in these policy documents cover raising the rate of adequacy (proportion of students in given age groups enrolled in the year corresponding to their age, by sex) in primary education to above 95 % by 2008 and guaranteed free education in the second cycle.

The development of the NSPCA and Napsec are two of the administrative measures aimed at children included in the NAPincl. The NSPCA is the most specific policy framework in place to prevent and reduce child poverty and social exclusion. The NSPCA is a tool for the promotion and protection of children's rights and represents a first effort for planning and coordinating child policies between different levels of government (national, regional and local). It was developed within the Childhood Observatory and approved by the Council of Ministers. All of the NSPCA objectives are aimed at improving child well-being, and therefore are deemed to contribute to the fight against child poverty and exclusion. However, only one of its strategic objectives is clearly and explicitly aimed at fighting and preventing child poverty and exclusion. Strategic objective 6 aims to foster social intervention and care of children and adolescents in situations of risk, lacking protection, disability and/or social exclusion<sup>23</sup>. This strategic objective contains a series of specific measures against the poverty and social exclusion of children, but lacks any specific targets. Throughout the rest of the plan, there are measures within other strategic objectives that target children at risk of poverty, such as measure 4.16 that promotes actions with NGOs that targets socially excluded children or measure 8.12 aimed at promoting care and support for schoolchildren from socially deprived backgrounds and at-risk situations. However, given the worrisome situation of child poverty in Spain discussed in the previous section of this report, the NSPCA clearly does not sufficiently address, in our view, the issue of child poverty.

Although for each of its 11 strategic objectives the plan includes a large number of indicators, these are void of meaning as there are no specific quantifiable objectives or targets. The NSPCA has been presented as a strategic tool and is an important first step forward in the fight for preventing and alleviating child poverty, but clearly needs a more quantitative focus which in principle will be achieved once the objective of setting up a permanent and shared information system is accomplished.

The Napsec, on the other hand, intends to confront the problem of child and adolescent sexual exploitation by setting up and promoting a network of key agents to fight and prevent child sexual exploitation at all levels<sup>24</sup>. This plan lays out five objectives aimed at fighting against the sexual exploitation of minors, a group of children in high risk of social exclusion. As with the NSPCA, the measures included in the Napsec are mainly administrative (mostly coordination and cooperation) and do not include any specific quantifiable targets.

The absence of specific quantifiable measures aimed at reducing child poverty in the policy documents reviewed is a clear weakness of the national policy framework. One of the possible reasons for this is unavailability of national and sub-national data and figures on child poverty issues. This lack of data is

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<sup>22</sup> NAPincl, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Napsec, p. 33.

<sup>24</sup> NSPCA, p. 2.

mainly due to the decentralised competencies. Despite the recent effort to coordinate policies at national and sub-national level expressed in the NSPCA and to develop a set of national child indicators, which is discussed further on in this section of the report, the real situation is that there is no homogeneous database containing detailed information. This is the first step towards achieving measurable objectives and targets, precisely one of the major deficiencies of the overall policy framework in Spain regarding child poverty and social exclusion. Thus, the reality is that there are great regional differences in the data available for each CCAA, as well as the policies in place. The differences in policies at sub-national level are discussed below.

The extent to which there are clear objectives and targets for preventing and alleviating child poverty at sub-national level is difficult to assess because of the sheer amount of documents at regional level. It is important to note that the importance given at sub-national level to child poverty and social inclusion varies greatly among regions: while some CCAA have well developed childhood plans with clear objectives in place, others simply have no policies at all. In general, from the regional childhood policy documents reviewed, one could say the situation is very similar to that at national level; child poverty and social exclusion is not a priority of regional governments. For further information, see the annex with details of the regional childhood plans of each CCAA.

Regarding the approach of childhood policies in Spain, our previous discussion indicates the balance is in favour of a universal and preventative approach rather than of a targeted approach, although the preventative approach is rather weak. Policy documents such as the NRP and NAPincl approach the issue of child poverty from a more universal and preventative perspective. As mentioned above, their objectives and measures aimed at reducing poverty and social exclusion are generalist, but the overall social inclusion strategy does lack a targeted approach to tackling children at poverty and in risk of exclusion. The NSPCA has a more focused approach on children and their families; its sixth strategic objective includes specific measures that target particular groups of children at high risk of social exclusion and poverty, including disabled minors, young delinquents, children victims of physical and sexual abuse, immigrant children and adopted children. The seventh strategic objective targets child and adolescent groups facing social conflicts, such as drugs, delinquency, sexual aggressors and gangs. Despite a more targeted approach of these two objectives, the remaining objectives have a more universal approach aimed promoting the well-being of children. Finally, the Napsec specifically targets child and adolescent sexual exploitation, a particular group at high risk of social exclusion. This is the only policy document that exclusively and specifically targets a high-risk child group. A very recent development in child policy measures has been the approval of EUR 2 500 aid for every child born as from 3 July 2007<sup>25</sup>. This measure reflects the preventative approach of the Spanish government, rather than a targeted approach to children at risk or in situation of poverty or social exclusion. Despite the fact that some particular groups of children at high risk are targeted within policy documents, the Spanish national social inclusion policy framework aimed at preventing and alleviating child poverty should develop further specific objectives and measures that recognise the needs of groups of children at high risk and provide targeted relief.

Regarding the extent to which policy is informed by a recognition of children's rights and the balance that exists between a focus on the family and on children in their own right, although children's rights are not referenced in the NRP and NAPincl, at national level the NSPCA recognises children's rights based on the UN Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC). The NSPCA includes a strategic objective aimed at promoting the social awareness of the rights of children. Likewise, at sub-national level, most regional plans recognise children's rights in the context of the UNCRC and the Spanish Constitution.

<sup>25</sup> For further information, see: <http://www.la-moncloa.es/ActualidadHome/130707-consejo.htm>. This measure will be in addition to the amount of the previous measure, whereby EUR 100 per month, until the child was three years of age, were granted for every working mother. The new measure extends, however, to both working and non-working mothers.

Despite the recognition of child rights in the policy documents, a greater focus on children's rights should be given to improve the effectiveness in the fight against child poverty and social exclusion.

The recognition of children's rights, except for some specific benefits for textbooks and school lunches, focuses more on the family than on the child. It is therefore difficult to know to what extent state benefits arrive directly to the child or if they are spread out among the family. This is particularly important in the case of 'numerous family' benefits. Social benefits aimed at families take into account indicators such as the number of infants and the situation of children, however, some low-income families might 'use' their children to receive state benefits and there is no guarantee that these benefits will reach children themselves. The lack of mainstreamed and complementary policies aimed at working mothers with low-income jobs and basic education, the lack of measures in the area of balancing work and family life (particularly for children between 0 and 3) as well as the shortage of preventive social policies and encouraging networks of social participation cast doubt on the policies aimed at children. To have a favourable impact, there should be coordination with all the former policies.

The NSPCA explicitly promotes the effective coordination of the different agents involved in the development and delivery of policies in relation to children, both at national and regional level. Until the approval of the NSPCA in June 2006, arrangements for coordinating the development and delivery of childhood policies between different levels of government were inexistent. This NSPCA is the first policy document to specifically address the need to coordinate the development and delivery of childhood policies at and between different levels of government. The plan is described as a common scheme for integrated planning, by means of which the overall lines for the development of childhood and adolescence policies are defined in a consensual manner<sup>26</sup> The NSPCA's objectives seek to be common to all the institutions participating in the development of children's rights and to define the resources needed to coordinate all the mechanisms and institutions involved. Despite the approval of this plan, the arrangements for coordinating policies have yet to be applied and great regional disparities regarding childhood policies remain. A review of CCAA childhood plans shows that objectives, measures and approach used in childhood plans differ greatly between regions, proving a clear absence of coordination in the development and delivery of these policies (see Annex 1). Although the approval of the NSPCA is an important step forward regarding the coordination of childhood policies, the real extent and effectiveness of such arrangements must improve greatly on the ground of achieving effective coordination.

The policy documents reviewed reveal that there are no arrangements in place for mainstreaming the issue of child poverty and well-being into national policy. Child rights have not been mainstreamed into the Spanish social inclusion strategy. Of all the policies analysed, only the NSPCA acknowledges the need for mainstreaming policies regarding child poverty at national and sub-national levels. However, the measures and information given regarding who is in charge of the measures do not reflect a commitment to adopting a mainstreamed approach to the issue. Coordination and cooperation between different levels of government cannot be accepted as mainstreaming. The lack of a mainstreamed approach to the issue of child poverty and well-being is a clear weakness of national policy-making. This report recommends to initiate a mainstreamed approach to the issue as soon as possible.

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<sup>26</sup> Napsec, p. 5.

## 2.2. Analysis of main policies

This section assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the main policy areas relevant to preventing and alleviating poverty and social exclusion amongst children and promoting their well-being. It includes a systematic examination of policies to ensure adequate income for children and their families, policies to ensure access to essential services, policies to promote the care and protection of children at risk of social exclusion and policies to promote the participation of children in social, cultural, recreational and sporting life. As indicated in the framework, this analysis will take into account policies for different age groups and the importance of a multidimensional approach.

Before continuing with a deeper analysis, there are several issues to be taken into consideration that affect the main policy areas relevant to preventing and alleviating child poverty and social exclusion. Firstly, as has been mentioned previously, there is a general lack of measurable quantitative objectives which has impeded a much-needed culture of evaluation for social policies. In second place, social policies regarding child poverty and social exclusion are the exclusive competence of regional governments and although this analysis focuses on issues at national level, it must be taken into consideration that policies differ significantly at sub-national levels. Thirdly, as pointed out before, child poverty and social exclusion are tackled with a more universal rather than targeted approach — many of the policies focus on family issues rather than on children themselves.

### 2.1.1. Policies to ensure adequate income

Income policies in Spain are about the only policies which remain more centralised. As detailed in Annex 2, the Government has continued increasing minimum pensions and the minimum wage. Retirement pensions are being topped up by regional governments although there has already been a constitutional court ruling against this (see our previous reports). As Ayala et al. point out, these pensions do little to alleviate child poverty. Although part of fiscal policies are devolved to the CCAA, especially those that can affect families, the main impact comes from central government tax collection and social security benefits. As analysed earlier, transfers (not counting tax reduction policies) impact very little on child poverty. However, it would be good to have an impact analysis using fiscal information which in principle could be carried out by university researchers using a sample from the tax authority database. In addition, details of the household composition, sex and age of children could be obtained from the analysis and all the income from transfers could also be analysed.

### 2.1.2. Policies to ensure access to essential services

This section examines policies in place to ensure access to essential services including education, child care, housing, health and social services.

Education is the policy area relevant to child poverty and social exclusion that has been given most importance by the Spanish government. This is reflected by the fact that specific educational objectives and targets are included in the main policy documents including the NRP, NAPIncl and NSPCA. For example, the eighth strategic objective of the NSPCA includes three specific measures (8.6, 8.9 and 8.12) aimed at children at risk of poverty groups and from lower income families. It is important to note that it is the only area for which specific quantitative targets have been set. Despite the importance given to education by the government, which indicates preoccupation regarding the issue, the strategy focuses on preventing future child exclusion rather than tackling current child and adolescent educational problems.

Educational policies in Spain aim to achieve an equitable education system and focused on nursery education, secondary education and early school leavers. Policy documents recognise the importance of work and family life balance for encouraging early years of education. Spain has the highest level of early school dropouts in the EU and it is well known that early school leavers are more likely to be and remain, low-skilled workers. Educational policies acknowledge this issue and focus on the future employability and inclusion of young people. Education in terms of equity has become a fundamental principle of the Spanish government <sup>27</sup> to enhance and improve human capital and should be recognised as a strength within this policy area.

Despite the importance given to education, there are several issues that should be pointed out. Firstly, there is a lack of transparency in the funding of educational policies; there is very little information available regarding where and for what funds are being used. This makes it very difficult to establish to what extent objectives and targets are being addressed and accomplished. Secondly, as it was mentioned in a previous report, the influx of immigrant children into the Spanish educational system has provoked unprecedented concentration rates of foreign students in Spanish public schools <sup>28</sup>. Although the NRP includes specific measures to integrate immigrant students, these are considered insufficient to address an issue of great importance within the educational system. Another recent issue that is not sufficiently addressed in any policy documents is the alarming increase of school violence, not only between pupils but also from pupils towards teachers.

Policies to ensure child care in Spain have focused on families and education as well as on children themselves. The third strategic objective of the NSPCA aims to promote support policies for families exercising their responsibilities of rearing, caring for and promoting the personal development and potential capabilities of children <sup>29</sup>. This objective acknowledges the importance that early child care and education cannot be encouraged without provisions for improving working and family life balances. Measures of reconciliation of family and work life are also aimed at enabling better opportunities for child care. Within the NAPincl, a multidimensional approach to child care has been taken, complementing measures promote female participation in employment with measures to increase nursery child care. A weakness of the policies in place is that there has been no mention of extending school hours and care services for children outside of the normal school hours, to meet the needs of working mothers.

As mentioned in previous reports and in Annex 1, housing in Spain is a national problem that affects a large part of the population. Therefore, policies that ensure children have access to housing must be analysed within the country's context. The cost of housing is not accommodated into the statistics on relative poverty income <sup>30</sup> and this is particularly important for a country with a distorted real estate market like Spain. Due to the high cost of housing in Spain, as we have mentioned in the first part of the report, a sizeable proportion of families with children suffer difficulties in accessing decent housing at achievable prices. Although the general housing situation in Spain is acceptable, there are certain population groups — namely the Roma and immigrant populations — that are at particular risk of suffering poor housing situations and happen to have high ratios of children per household, and which is also the case of immigrant children living with adults who are not blood relatives. There is an overall absence of specific policies aimed at ensuring access of housing to families with children. In the context of the rising violence against children among immigrant populations in crowded housing conditions, this is a very important aspect for safety of children.

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<sup>27</sup> NAPincl, p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> *First Semester Report*, May 2006, Spain, p. 31.

<sup>29</sup> NSPCA, p. 27.

<sup>30</sup> Eurochild report, *Ending Child Poverty within the EU*, January 2007, p. 6.

The housing issue is addressed in the NRP, and the '2005-08 Housing plan' aims to change traditional housing policies — but none of the policy documents reviewed include specific objectives aimed at ensuring that children have access to housing. However, there are some measures spread throughout policies that involve housing issues of minors, such as promoting programmes for residential equipment (parks, sports centres, etc.) for minors in situations of social conflict, or to improve the conditions of female prison inmates with children. Unaccompanied immigrant minors (arriving to Spain without adult family members) are a particular group at risk regarding housing that is not being adequately attended — an issue that has also been mentioned in previous reports.

The development of interventions regarding the prevention, promotion and protection of health targeted at children and adolescents is a strategic objective of the NSPCA and includes several measures to ensure access of children to health services. The NAPincl includes actions in the health area aimed at preventing child obesity, eating disorders and alcohol consumption of young people. Young people are a group at risk that have been specifically targeted regarding health issues involving drug use and sexually transmitted diseases. Overall child health is an issue in the policy agenda, but there is no integrated, multidimensional approach aimed at ensuring children access to health services. For example, despite the good working condition of the Spanish national health system, the health ministry does not have an action programme that focuses on the health of children and adolescents. Recently there has been a strong focus on disabled people, including children, but this will be discussed further on in the report. An important challenge regarding this issue is the cultural and language barriers that immigrant children suffer when they approach the health system. This report recommends an increase in specific actions to inform, facilitate and promote the access of immigrant children and their families to the public health services.

Regarding social services, the policy documents reviewed contain a series of objectives and measures specifically aimed at ensuring children's access — and it is worth reminding again that social services are an exclusive competency of regional governments. The seventh objective of the NSPCA is aimed at establishing preventive and rehabilitation mechanisms for children and adolescents facing social conflicts. However, these objectives and measures lack a multidimensional approach and do not target any specific age groups. Another weakness of policies regarding social services is that a large number of social services are outsourced to NGOs both at national and regional level. This means that the Government has very little control regarding what is really being accomplished as there is very little information on results and no evaluation in place.

An area that has been given importance throughout social policies is information technologies. These actions have been gathered in the AVANZ@ plan designed to promote information and communication technologies in Spain. Regarding minors, actions in this area have been aimed at ensuring increased access for children to new technologies as well as protecting their rights in the frame of new technologies such as the internet. The NRP includes measures to incorporate the information society into education and training, for both citizens and students. Within the actions to achieve equitable education in the NAPincl, there are measures aimed at increasing children's access to new information and communication technologies. This is one of the few areas that includes specific targets, such as achieving 100 % of educational centres having broadband access by 2010. The NSPCA includes a strategic objective aimed at boosting and protecting the rights of children in the mass media and new technologies. Within the Napsec, the threats represented by new information and communication technologies to children's rights are recognised and addressed with specific measures. Also, as elsewhere in Europe, the presence of children increases greatly the probabilities of computers and internet use in households.

Transport is a policy area that has not been mentioned in any of the policy documents and is a weakness of the overall policy framework that needs to be addressed. In general, there are transport discounts for children and youths, and these are increased if the child comes from a large family entitlement. However, and also linked to travelling to work, it would be important to know how many hours per day children spend on transport to and from schools or care, which are far away from their place of residence, and how this impacts their well-being.

### *2.1.3. Policies to promote the care and protection of children at risk*

The new Dependency Act and the setting up of the 'National dependency system' (NDS) highlights the priority the Spanish government has given to the issue of dependency and has strengthened the possibility of promoting care and protection of disabled children. Although the Dependency Act focuses mainly on adults, it includes a specific provision aimed at protecting under-three year olds with a series of measures aimed at this specific risk group. The implementation of the NDS is currently under way and represents a very important advance regarding social policies in Spain. NAPincl objective 5 includes a specific measure aimed at protecting and caring for children under the age of three who have serious disabilities. Throughout the NSPCA's objectives, there are measures aimed at families with minors that suffer disabilities and at disabled children themselves. Disabled children have been given significant importance in the policy framework reviewed, particularly the under-three age group.

Another group of children at special risk that has been a priority in the central government's agenda are children suffering sexual abuse. Napsec confronts the social problem of sexual exploitation of minors. This plan includes five measures that approach the phenomenon from a multidimensional perspective and target specific groups of children, such as adolescent girls forced into prostitution.

There are other groups of children at risk of social exclusion and poverty that are not considered sufficiently in other policy documents. The 'National strategic plan for citizenship and integration 2007-10'<sup>31</sup> includes an objective aimed at promoting social intervention for immigrant children and adolescents in situations of vulnerability, including unaccompanied minors, juvenile gangs and at-risk immigrant minors. Nonetheless, the drastic increase in the number of immigrant children in the past 10 years has posed an important social challenge, particularly to the educational system, and requires special measures to ensure their full integration into society and avoid discrimination that could become costly on the long term. Finally, children living in rural areas have special needs that are not addressed in any of the policies documents reviewed. Therefore, despite some positive initiatives such as the Napsec,, there is still much work to be done in promoting the care and well-being of children at risk.

### *2.1.4. Policies to promote the participation of children in social, cultural, recreational and sporting life*

All of the main policies documents acknowledge the importance of promoting the participation of children and adolescents in social, cultural, recreational and sporting life. The NSPCA includes a strategic objective aimed at encouraging a physical, social, cultural and political environment that allows the proper development of minors. The measures in this objective favour children's rights to play, enjoy leisure and free time and promote the creation of suitable, safe playgrounds in urban and rural areas. However, in general these measures have not been given prominence within the childhood policy documents and the approach has been universal rather than targeted. This is an area on which much needs to be done.

<sup>31</sup> 'Plan estratégico ciudadanía e integración', available at: <http://www.mtas.es/migraciones/Integracion/PlanEstrategico/Docs/160207pecitextocompleto.pdf>.

### 3. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements in place

This section will describe and assess arrangements in place in Spain for monitoring and evaluating the implementation and impact of policies to prevent and alleviate poverty and social exclusion among children, and to promote their well-being.

#### 3.1. Monitoring and reporting

This section will identify and assess the arrangements in place for monitoring and reporting on the situation of children experiencing poverty and social exclusion.

The most important organism in place for monitoring and reporting on the situation of children experiencing poverty is the Childhood Observatory. The Childhood Observatory is an information organism shared between the public administrations and NGOs working in the field of childhood and has played a major part in the creation of the NSPCA, ratifying its role as a key institution for proposing and planning child policies at national level <sup>32</sup>.

The Spanish Childhood Observatory is a working group integrated within the MTAS and composed of members from several ministries and all CCAA. Although it is a collegiate organism of the MTAS, it is neither regulated by any specific legislation <sup>33</sup> nor is it assigned its own budget. It has, however, its own internal working protocol. This situation reinforces our previous analysis that the fight against child poverty and social exclusion is not a national priority. The Childhood Observatory's main objective is the creation of a nationwide database capable of providing information about the well-being and quality of life of children and the social policies in place that affect children. The observatory is also involved in formulating proposals for strategies that affect children and evaluates the impact of childhood policies and media coverage of policies affecting the well-being of children <sup>34</sup>.

Despite the important work being done by the Childhood Observatory, it is significant to note that the issue of fighting and alleviating child poverty and social exclusion is not considered a top priority on its agenda. From a data-gathering point of view, there are still severe deficiencies in the information available for the different regions; some regions have excellent statistical data while others have almost none. Of the 17 CCAA in Spain, only two (Catalonia and Andalusia) have their own childhood observatory. The creation of a network of childhood observatories at sub-national level would help.

Another key organism in reporting the situation of children experiencing poverty or social exclusion is the 'minors' ombudsman' (*el defensor del menor*). This figure's role is the safeguard and promotion of children's rights. Its attributions include the supervision of actions of both public and private institutions that provide services to children, to deal with complaints regarding situations of risk or violation of children's rights, and to divulge children's rights and increase social awareness. However, the minor's ombudsman only exists at regional level; it depends on each CCAA to create and promote their own. Only Madrid, Andalusia and the Balearic Islands have a minors' ombudsman. Unicef is currently promoting the creation of minors' ombudsmen in Galicia and the Basque Country. At national level and in all other CCAA, the role of defending and safeguarding children and adolescents is included in the role of the public ombudsman (*el defensor del pueblo*). As with previous policies and arrangements, the

<sup>32</sup> NSPCA, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> It was created by the Council of Ministers on 12 March 1999 according to Law 6/1997 on the organisation and functioning of the General State Administration. Its members are all public institutions and administrations (central, regional and local) as well as all NGOs involved in the protection and services to children.

<sup>34</sup> For further information on the Childhood Observatory, please visit: <http://www.mtas.es/inicioas/observatoriodeinfancia>.

fact that social issues are exclusive competences of the CCAA results in great disparities in the arrangements in place to monitor and report the situation of children experiencing poverty or social exclusion.

The UN Rights of the Child Committee (UNCRC Committee) is an international monitoring body of the UN Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC). The UNCRC Committee produced a report in 2002 and identified a number of key issues that are not sufficiently addressed in the NAPincl. However, most of these recommendations are now addressed within the NSPCA. A new UNCRC report is due in 2008 and will provide valuable information on the current situation of children's rights in Spain.

A number of social organisations and NGOs have been actively monitoring and reporting on the situation of children. It is worth mentioning the work of Caritas and Fundación La Caixa, who have very recently published reports regarding the situation of child poverty, raising the issue and creating awareness at national level, and that was summarised in the first part of this report and duly referenced in Annex 5. Unicef Spain is another one of the main social entities involved in the monitoring and reporting of child poverty. Most of the smaller social entities and NGOs that work on childhood issues are grouped in the 'Platform of Infancy Organisations', a stakeholder in monitoring infancy issues and which produced the Spanish section of the Eurochild report. Finally, the National Statistics Institute regularly publishes reports on the situation of poverty in Spain, and although it does not focus on child poverty itself, it provides abundant data on the situation and well-being of children and their families there.

From an academic point of view, the issues of child poverty and social inclusion have not been a priority for Spanish sociologists and economists. As stated in section one, only two major studies regarding child poverty have been published in recent years. Many of the leading academics concerned with this matter cooperate actively with social organisations and NGOs. There is however a small group of academics who have published a series of studies on child poverty in the past decade. Among these, it is worth highlighting the constant and high-quality work of Olga Cantó, who stands out as Spain's leading expert on child poverty issues, as well as the more recent excellent work of Luis Ayala.

Regarding how children themselves have been involved in the monitoring and evaluation processes, the NSPCA encourages the participation of children and adolescents in the monitoring and assessment of the plan. The NSPCA includes a strategic objective aimed at guaranteeing effective participation of children and adolescents as citizens with full rights in order to favour their social integration and participation in decision-making processes on whatever subject affects them<sup>35</sup>. Despite the existence of some specific measures to involve children in the monitoring and evaluation of processes, there is no evidence that any real efforts have occurred to take into account the views and opinions of children and adolescents. Overall, the policy framework does not give enough importance to children and young people as key stakeholders in the fight against social exclusion and poverty.

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<sup>35</sup> NSPCA, p. 44.

### **3.2. Evaluation**

There is an absence of adequate arrangements for assessing and evaluating the impact and adequacy of policies to prevent and alleviate poverty and social exclusion amongst children. The NSCPA has just one page mentioning that monitoring and evaluation will be carried out.

As mentioned previously in the report, there are no mainstreaming arrangements in the social inclusion strategies regarding child poverty. In consequence, there are no ex ante evaluation mechanisms for mainstreaming the fight against child poverty and social exclusion at national level. The development and implementation of such mechanisms remains a key challenge for Spanish authorities.

## 4. Conclusions

From the present report it is clear that child poverty is a serious issue in Spain which needs to be addressed urgently by the Government. Despite steady economic growth in recent years, child poverty rates have remained stable at one of the highest levels in the EU.

Spanish children living in monoparental households and households with three or more children have a much higher risk of poverty than the rest of minors, even though a large proportion of children live in couple working poor households. The impact of immigration, the inflated real estate situation and lifestyle changes are shifting the emphasis of traditional nuclear households to other types of family structures. Specific groups of children at particular risk of suffering poverty in Spain include immigrant minors, ethnic minority children such as the Roma and disabled children. The ineffective impact of social benefits on child poverty is worrisome; evidence indicates that public transfers are not reducing child poverty rates but rather seem to be widening differences.

Spain has one of the highest rates of early school leaves in the EU, an issue that has a direct effect on the current and future well-being of children. There are important regional differences in child poverty rates in Spain. These could be explained with better employment indicators, however the fact that each region is implementing its own policies is clearly contributing to increasing differences in child poverty rates within Spain. Moreover, there are trends in health and education that need to be addressed through more comprehensive policies, in particular for more vulnerable groups.

The underlying causes of the high child poverty rates in Spain are related to low wages, unemployment and inactivity rates and the large proportion of fixed-term contracts. There is also a lack of specific benefits aimed at children (most benefits provide income support for adults) and a weak redistribution impact of tax benefits. However, more research on well-being needs to be carried out and should focus on the most vulnerable groups already identified in existing studies as well as on immigrant and Roma children. Efforts to document and research the situation of Roma, immigrant and disabled children need to be encouraged as well as studies taking on a gender perspective. Also, data disaggregated by age groups and sex needs to be made available, especially in the case of the most vulnerable children in social terms (those in institutional and foster care).

The review of the existing policy framework reveals that child poverty is not a priority at national level in Spain, given the balance of childhood policies in favour of a universal and weak preventative approach instead of a targeted approach — as is evident from the main policy documents reviewed. The universal approach alone is clearly not sufficient. The approval of the NSPCA has been an important first step in the coordination of different agents involved in the development and delivery of childhood policies at national, regional and local level. At sub-national level, the extent to which the issue is a priority varies greatly among regions due to the devolvement of these competencies by the regional and local governing bodies. There are many objectives found in policy documents, but very few which specifically address child poverty and exclusions, and few with quantifiable targets. The absence of these targets is a weakness of the policy framework and makes the monitoring and evaluation of policies a difficult task. The fact that social service competences are under the responsibility of regional governments implies that there are great disparities between CCAA regarding childhood policies. The NSPCA provides the framework for coordination of social policies at national and sub-national levels, but most of its objectives are at the phase of early implementation.

The Childhood Observatory is a key institution in the monitoring and reporting of the situation of children in Spain. Despite some improvements in data collection methods and the publication of childhood figures at national level, data at this level remains disperse. At sub-national level, data collection is still very heterogeneous. Data disaggregated by age groups and sex needs to be made available and efforts

need be made to document and research the situation of at-risk groups such as Roma children, immigrant minors and children with disabilities. The absence of quantifiable targets within the policy framework makes monitoring and evaluation tasks extremely problematic. It is very clear there are no mainstreaming arrangements in place, and this issue remains a key challenge.

The child poverty situation in Spain is a severe issue that is not being given enough importance. Despite slowly growing concern, awareness and some significant steps forward, a colossal amount of work needs to be carried out at all levels to effectively address the situation and reverse child poverty tendencies in Spain. At sub-national level, the extent to which the issue is a priority varies greatly, due to the transfer of these competencies to CCAAs and the only very recently introduced national basic strategy.

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## Annex 1 — Details of Autonomous Communities with childhood plans

### I. Autonomous Communities with working childhood plans in place

Autonomous Community (AACC)	Plan	Policy framework	Comments
Andalusia	Integrated care plan for the children of Andalusia 2002-07	Contains objectives and measures aimed at children at high risk.	Active region in child issues. Only AACC that has a Childhood Observatory and a Minor's Defender.
Principality of Asturias	Integrated childhood, family and adolescence plan 2004-07	Good balance between a universal and targeted approach. Incorporates an analysis of the current situation. Children participated in the preparation of the plan. Includes objectives and measures aimed at different age groups of children and recognises high-risk groups.	Second plan, previously 'Integrated childhood, family and adolescence plan 2001-03'. Some local authorities, such as Aviles, have their own childhood plan in place aimed at tackling local childhood issues.
Canary Islands	Integrated plan for children in the Canary Islands	Very long time frame (1998-2008). Includes 18 objectives, all with clear priorities and some with quantifiable targets. Transparent fund management. Recognises high-risk groups of children.	
Cantabria	Action plan for childhood and adolescence in Cantabria	Not available.	There is a 'Plan for fellowship between schools'.
Castilla-La Mancha	Integrated plan for family support 2007-11 of Castilla-La Mancha	Describes the current situation and evaluates previous plans. Has clear objectives and measures are aimed a families and different age groups of children. Recognises groups of children at high risk. Includes policies to ensure access to income, services, care and protection and social participation.	Previously 'Action plan for childhood and adolescence for Castilla-La Mancha 1999-2003', the first one in Spain.
Castilla y León	Integrated plan for family support 2007-11 of Castilla-Leon	Not available.	Previously had a sectorial regional plan for the protection and care of children of the Autonomous Government of Castilla y León 2000-03.
Catalonia	Integrated plan for the support of children and adolescents of Catalonia	Includes an analysis of the situation and has specific measures aimed at children and adolescents at risk identified through an attention system for minors.	One of the few AACC with a Childhood Observatory. Catalonia also has a social care service for immigrant minors and an interdepartmental plan for disabled

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			children and adolescents.
Basque Country	Childhood plan for dealing with situations of child unprotectedness	Not available.	This plan is only for the province of Vizcaya, not for the whole Basque region.
La Rioja	II Integrated childhood plan 2006-09	Includes an in-depth analysis of the situation and an evaluation of the previous plan. Acknowledges risk groups of children. Confronts child poverty and exclusion at all levels: health, education, exclusion, abuse, etc.	Previously 'I Integrated childhood plan'. Excellent plans overall, probably the most complete ones.
Navarre	Plan for the care of children and adolescents in social difficulty in the Autonomous Region of Navarre	Good balance between targeted and universal approach. Acknowledges different ages and high-risk groups.	
Valencia	II Integrated family and childhood plan of the Autonomous Region of Valencia 2007-10	Very recently approved, not available.	'Integrated family and child plan of the Autonomous Region of Valencia 2002-05'.

**II. Autonomous Communities currently elaborating or pending approval of childhood plans in place**

<b>Autonomous Community (AACC)</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Situation</b>	<b>Previous Plan</b>
Aragon	Integrated childhood and adolescence plan	Pending approval.	No.
Balearic Islands	Integrated plan of attention and rights of children and adolescents of the Balearic Islands	Currently under elaboration.	No.
Galicia	III Integrated plan for family support	Pending approval.	'III Integrated plan for family support 2002-05'.
Madrid	III Childhood social care plan in the Autonomous Region of Madrid	Pending approval.	'II Childhood social care plan in the Autonomous Region of Madrid 2003-06'.

**III. Autonomous Communities with no childhood plans**

Extremadura

## Annex 2

### A.2. Key trends and recent policy and legislative developments <sup>36</sup>

#### A.2.1. Economic context

The economic situation in Spain continues to be characterised since our last report (October 2006) by higher economic growth than EU averages and also by higher employment growth, continuing a trend which started before 2001 when the first NAP was implemented. According to the Eurostat *Structural Indicators* on the general economic background <sup>37</sup>, economic growth in Spain in 2006 has stood at 3.9 % compared to 2.9 % in the first 25 EU Member States and 1.5, 2.7 in the first 15 EU Member States and 2.6 % for the euro area. This growth has been mostly fuelled by consumer spending and construction, but since 2004 also by investment in equipment which over the last quarter of 2006 has recorded a 6.4 % growth. The public balance is in surplus and represents 1.1 % of GDP, which contrasts with – 2.3 % in the first 25 EU Member States and – 2.4 % in the euro area. As far as public debt is concerned, Spain also shows the extent of its fiscal discipline as this represents 43.1 % of GDP compared with 63.2 % in the first 25 EU Member States and 70.8 % in the euro area.

According to the analysis made in the diagnosis of the NRP for Spain, 'low productivity growth, which during the last decade has been below the EU average, coupled with persistently high inflation is damaging competitiveness'. Productivity per person, for example, has been dropping every year since 2003 according to the productivity index presented by Eurostat (from 99 to 93.8) <sup>38</sup>. In addition, employment growth in 2005 continued to be higher than EU averages (3.6 % compared to 0.9 % in the first 15 and 25 EU Member States in 2006) — but the share of jobs created dropped from virtually half the employment created in the EU between 2002 and 2003 to only around 39 % between 2003 and 2004 (459 000 jobs out of 1 154 000 in the first 25 EU Member States and 1 194 000 in the first 15 EU Member States) and to 38 % between 2004 and 2005, which is still impressive. This drop is of course linked to EU enlargement as the comparison to the first 15 EU Member States shows that the proportion is actually growing (from 55.4 to 62.5 to 64.7 % respectively for the same years (2002 and 2003)). Employment growth for women reached 6 % in 2006 (compared to the EU at 1.1 %, the first 15 and 25 EU Member States at 1.2 % and the euro area rate at 1.3 %), while the rate of employment growth for men stood at 2.4 % — which is also higher than EU averages (0.8 % for the EU, 0.7 % for the first 25 EU Member States and 0.4 % for the first 15 EU Member States and the euro area).

Although the unemployment rate continued to converge to the EU averages in 2006 (9.2 % in 2005 compared to 8.6 % in the euro area and 8.7 % in the first 25 EU Member States) and where men's rate has reached the 7 % average of the first 15 EU Member States, women's unemployment is higher at 12 % as compared to the average for women in the first 25 EU Member States at 9.8 %. Also,

<sup>36</sup> To prepare this report we have used the search engines for news in *El País* and *El Mundo* (the two major newspapers in Spain) as well as the online communication cabinets of the relevant ministries: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports and the Spanish Parliament. The web pages of the CCAA and regional newspapers were also consulted. Additional sources are duly referenced.

<sup>37</sup> Source: Eurostat *Structural Indicators* database: [http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/portal/page?\\_pageid=1996,45323734&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL&screen=welcome\\_ref&open=/&product=STRIND\\_ECOBAC&depth=2](http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/portal/page?_pageid=1996,45323734&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&screen=welcome_ref&open=/&product=STRIND_ECOBAC&depth=2). It is important to point out that while women's employment growth has been double that of men for the past five years, the unemployment rate continues to be double as well and in some regions even more than double that of men. Women have a much higher incidence of temporary employment, which partly explains this situation.

<sup>38</sup> Source: Eurostat *Structural Indicators* database: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?\\_pageid=1996,39140985&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL&screen=detail\\_ref&language=en&product=STRIND\\_ECOBAC&root=STRIND\\_ECOBAC/ecobac/eb021](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1996,39140985&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&screen=detail_ref&language=en&product=STRIND_ECOBAC&root=STRIND_ECOBAC/ecobac/eb021).

temporary work continues to affect women, and also young people, more heavily. According to the *Employment in Europe 2006* report, fixed-term contracts in Spain in 2005 reached 33.3 % of total employment compared to 14.5 % in the first 15 and 25 EU Member States. Employed women in Spain with this type of contract reached 35.7 %, while men reached 31.7 %. These percentages are for 2005 and represent almost a 1 percentage point increase from 2004, according to this source. With respect to this situation and other issues affecting the low employment rate, an important labour market reform was signed by the Government and social partners and is now slowly beginning to have effects. Comparing the Encuesta de población activa (Spanish Labour force survey) figures and INEM (Instituto de Empleo — Spanish Public Employment Service (PES)) figures, one can conclude that the reform has yet to take full hold <sup>39</sup>. According to INEM's accumulated (over a year) contract data from February, 83.9 % of all contracts were temporary (down from 86.3 % in the same month in 2006) and conversion of temporary contracts to indefinite contracts represented only 6.7 % of all contracts (up from 5.7 % in the same month in 2006) <sup>40</sup>. Although these are good figures, there is a negative trend in that the percentage of these contracts going to youths (aged less than 30) has increased from 40 to 45 %, and that the percentage of temporary contracts going to women out of total temporary contracts continues to grow (from 43.3 to 44.3 %). As we have analysed in this report, work instability is one of the growing trends in explaining child poverty.

Social security <sup>41</sup> figures continue to grow as employment continues to grow with important changes recorded in March.2007 The record figure of over 19 million contributors to the system was reached in March, which is a 140 931 increase compared to February 2007; over the year the increase has been 648 809 contributors, representing a 3.52 % growth. The general regime has the largest proportion with 14 million (73 %) and an annual growth rate of 3.23 % (March 2006 to March 2007). The second largest type of contributors are those with self-employed status (which has been recently reformed and improved, please see Annex 2 for details). There are presently 3 million persons in this status (Regimen de trabajadores Autonomos or RETA). By sex, women now represent 41.5 % of total contributors to the system whereas 10 years ago they represented only 36 %, and in accordance with their higher growth rate in employment they also show a higher growth rate as contributors (4.76 compared to 2.66 % for men). Slightly more than 10 % of total contributors are foreign workers. Because of EU enlargement in 2007 (entry of Bulgaria and Romania), the proportion of non-Spanish EU nationals contributing to the system rose from 350 298 in December 2005 to 615 488 in March 2007.

The continued rise in interest rates in the euro area have put pressure, as had been already noted in our previous reports, on a highly indebted population (the highest in the euro area at 125 % of GNI) and can bring one of the most important elements of GDP growth in Spain, consumer spending, to a slowdown, although continued growth in employment is keeping this eventuality at bay. It also has implications for a possible collapse of the housing market and thus construction, although this would break the long-term historical behaviour of this market in Spain, according to Bank of Spain analysis <sup>42</sup>, which predicts a smooth slowdown rather than a crash. Nevertheless, given the preference of the

<sup>39</sup> At present, the MTAS is carrying out a campaign to inform workers and employers of the possibility for the latter to obtain grants subsidising social security contributions for hiring fixed-term workers. To our knowledge there has not been a publicly available document with an evaluation or assessment regarding the failure of the measures adopted by the tripartite pact. In our view there has not been enough research carried out on the demand-side problems, including the lack of modernisation in work organisation in a large proportion of Spanish firms. This would go beyond the present debate about severance payment being too high and would place the accent on retaining good workers and offering interesting career opportunities, as well as improving job mobility.

<sup>40</sup> Our own calculations based on the contract statistics published by INEM (*Estadística de Contratos*, Vol. 2), February 2007 and February 2006.

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.tt.mtas.es/periodico/seguridadsocial/200704/SS20070403\\_2.htm](http://www.tt.mtas.es/periodico/seguridadsocial/200704/SS20070403_2.htm)

<sup>42</sup> Informe Anual 2004, Banco de España, at: <http://www.bde.es/informes/be/infanu/2004/inf2004.pdf>. These increases have led to the situation where the household debt ratio in Spain (debt to disposable income) surpassed the 100 % level compared to the 87 % euro area average and closer to the situation of households in the United States.

Spanish population for ownership rather than rental and given the high level of indebtedness, the bank recommends that housing should not take up more than 30 % of a household's income. In fact there have been several cases now which are described in more detail below, of judges granting families the status of bankruptcy so their homes will not be taken from them.

As in previous reports, we continue to highlight that poorer households and young households, according to Bank of Spain analysis, are more vulnerable to sudden shocks such as unemployment and a rise in interest rates, given that high proportions of these groups show indebtedness of over 40 % of their income and of three times above their annual gross income<sup>43</sup>. In previous reports we have also pointed out that the high level of undeclared economy and the financing structure of local level governments, which receive a high proportion of their income from the taxes on property and their competences on land use, also drive speculation in the housing market as commented in the following section. The search for cheaper housing has increased the proportion of persons living further and further away from employment sources and is creating, as noted in the section on key trends, some problems that can increase the risk of social exclusion.

## A.2.2. Political and social context

Since our last report in October 2006 there have been a series of very important developments and events concerning the political and social context. One of the most important ones was the bomb planted by the terrorist group ETA on 30 December 2006 which ended the ceasefire announced in March 2006. The bomb killed two people who were Equatorian immigrants<sup>44</sup>. This event, along with some of the decisions made by the Government regarding terrorism<sup>45</sup>, has unfortunately heightened the political tension (in fact only immediately after the ceasefire there was also a short period of reduced political tension, but then the tension returned and increased throughout 2006) and, as we have noted on other occasions, has diverted attention from other important issues which the government and opposition members could be dealing with in more depth in the area of social protection and social inclusion. As pointed out in the previous section, the economy continues to create a high number of jobs, unemployment is falling, but there are specific gaps and problems that need to be addressed and which are reflected directly in the figures on quality of employment, as well as other trends that we point to below. The monthly socioeconomic barometer<sup>46</sup> points to the fact that opinion on what are the most

<sup>43</sup> In our previous report we also pointed out that in the *Survey of Household Finances (EFF): Description, Methods, and Preliminary Results*. p. 19 (<http://www.bde.es/estadis/eff/eff-be1104e.pdf>), the bank also states that there are much higher proportions of families in the lowest quintile of annual gross income with more than 40 % of their income dedicated to debt payment at 30.2 % compared to the average for all income strata of 7.2 %. In addition, the proportion of those who are indebted three times over their annual gross income among the poorest families (34.2 %) and young families under 35 (16.5 %) is much higher than the average for all families (8.5 %). The bank highlights in its annual report for 2004 that these families are indeed exposed to a higher degree of vulnerability to sudden economic shocks such as loss of employment or increase in the interest rates in the medium term. There is now a new version of this survey which should be available throughout 2007 (based on 2005 data collection).

<sup>44</sup> The families of the two young men killed were given full citizenship, as was also granted to immigrants who were victims in the March 11 (2004) bombings. The immigrants were very visible and actually were the ones who called for a public march against terrorism to which all parties, social partners and various organisations joined except for the main opposition party and some terrorism victims associations, who called their own marches and manifestations. In both instances some extreme right and left groups have joined the manifestations, fuelling even further the already heated political debate.

<sup>45</sup> The most controversial being the reduced prison sentence and conditions for ETA member J. I. de Juana Chaos who had already been released from prison by the previous Government on the charges of numerous murders as an ETA member, and who is currently under house arrest (after the government's decision) for a crime related to exalting terrorism after having been released from the previous prison sentence.

<sup>46</sup> Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS), *Barómetro de febrero, Avance de Resultados, Estudio No 2.677, 2007*, available at: [http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2660\\_2679/2677/Es2677mar\\_A.pdf](http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2660_2679/2677/Es2677mar_A.pdf).

important problems for Spain has shifted again from last year to terrorism being again the first concern of citizens (had dropped to third place after the ceasefire was announced), unemployment in second place and immigration dropping from second to third. Furthermore, housing comes in first place if citizens are asked which problem affects them personally, while terrorism drops to seventh place.

Another important development has been the trial for the accused individuals responsible for the March 11 bombings in 2004. This trial has also been a source of political tension as the main opposition party, a number of terrorism victim associations and media sources close to both of these institutions have supported an alleged conspiracy theory where the government actually had part in the bombings and also ETA<sup>47</sup>.

There have also been a number of additional urban development corruption cases. As we have stated in previous editions of our reports, the problem here lies in a weak finance system and unregulated devolved competencies in urbanism which make it very hard for local level governments to resist the temptation of liberalising land for construction and also poses high risks of bad governance or outright corruption. Some of these cases have also involved money laundering and use of protected environmental interest areas or urban developments (which include many golf courses) in regions where there is water scarcity, which also questions the contribution of economic growth based mostly on construction of private second home residential housing<sup>48</sup> to sustainable development. As we have mentioned above and develop further below, the housing situation is also contributing to social fracture and new sources of social exclusion linked to longer commuting times and distances of urban population moving to rapidly expanding smaller and more rural communities.

With regard to immigration, the number of immigrants entering Spain through the sea (namely Canary Islands and the Mediterranean southern coast) have lowered in number, but have continued to flow given good weather conditions this winter. However, during the first quarter of 2007 (compared to the same quarter in 2006), illegal sea immigration has been reduced by 61 % according to figures given by the central government delegation in Canary Islands<sup>49</sup> compared to the same period in 2006. One of the measures taken after the debate on this issue at EU level after the high number entering during the summer months in 2006 has included improving cooperation to limit the influx through the sea, but also through other EU airports in the Schengen Treaty through which immigrants were finding it easier to come into Spain<sup>50</sup>. The entry of Bulgaria and Romania into the EU, as we have analysed above under economic trends, has meant that the composition of the immigrant population divided between EU and non-EU nationals has changed dramatically, as over half of the non-EU European nationals in 2006

<sup>47</sup> The proceedings can be viewed live at <http://www.datadiar.tv/juicio11m> which includes a wide range of videos of the hearings and offers specific legal terminology.

<sup>48</sup> See Fundación de las Cajas de Ahorros (eds), 'La Vivienda: Precios, Mercados y Financiación', *Papeles de Economía Española*, No 109, 2006. This monographic volume shows that, for example, the proportion of construction of housing represented 17.1 % of GNP (compared to 11.5 % in 1997) and 51.4 % in 1997 of total demand (compared to 40.9 % in 1997) (p.90). On the other hand, the proportion of protected/subsidised housing has dropped dramatically as a proportion of total housing projects (both public and private) from almost 30 % in 1992 to around 7 % by 2006 (p. 89).

<sup>49</sup> See for example:

[http://www.elpais.com/articulo/espana/llegada/inmigrantes/Canarias/cae/61/elpepuesp/20070402elpepunac\\_6/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/espana/llegada/inmigrantes/Canarias/cae/61/elpepuesp/20070402elpepunac_6/Tes).

<sup>50</sup> The government issued a number of emergency measures, one of which included strengthening cooperation at EU level (<http://www.mpr.es/NR/rdonlyres/D03898BE-21B8-4CB8-BBD1-D1450E6FD7AD/77436/MEDIDASURGENTESDELAUEENMATERIADEINMIGRACION%20C3%20%93N.pdf>). Measure 15 has been developed to include the presence of the Spanish national police (immigration experts) at EU Schengen airports to control Latin American illegal immigration. Also Frontex (the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders) has reported that '[the] airports in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Frankfurt, Lisbon, Madrid, Milan, Paris and Rome are participating in this operation. Beside the 29 border police experts, another seven border police officers from Greece, Romania, Bulgaria and Poland are taking part as observers in this multilateral operation. The operation is being coordinated by the Frontex Operational Coordination Centre (FOCC) in Warsaw. The FOCC includes the agency's own experts as well as national experts from Germany, Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom.' See also: [http://www.frontex.europa.eu/newsroom/news\\_releases/art15.html](http://www.frontex.europa.eu/newsroom/news_releases/art15.html).

were from these two countries (some 370 000 persons). As we analysed in more depth in our November 2006 report<sup>51</sup>, they are now seen as a new voting/political force in Spain. It will be interesting to see what the outcome of the upcoming May 2007 elections will bring in this sense. On a more negative note, there have been some clashes among national and immigrant youths in a town in the south of Madrid (Alcorcón), which was widely publicised (some blamed this coverage by media as fuelling the conflict) and which pointed to organised gangs (mostly Latin American) and extreme right youth groups coming from outside the town to create havoc<sup>52</sup>.

In the upcoming May elections no electoral upsets are expected, especially at regional level, although the total number of votes for the two main national political parties is seen by the opposition as a referendum on recent government policies, in particular on terrorism policies. At local/municipal level, however, changes are expected as there are two main considerations present: the participation of the new EU Member State citizens (namely Bulgarian and Romanian, but also those from other countries who have gained residence or citizenship status) and rapidly growing municipalities due to the housing boom. National elections will take place in 2007. Recent polls give the ruling party (PSOE) a slight victory but no absolute majority should general elections take place now<sup>53</sup> as its advantage has diminished to one point difference over the two point difference back in October 2006.

### A.2.3. Key trends in social inclusion

During our continuous monitoring exercise and contacts with various civil society and regional government representatives, we have been able to identify some trends that are difficult to capture in the current indicators given the social realities which are unfolding. These trends do not diminish the importance of trends which are reflected in the joint inclusion report, or the more in-depth analysis that was made in our previous reports. They simply reflect a deeper knowledge of some issues/areas and emerging problems in others.

The first trend is linked to the specificities of social exclusion in rural areas. The second is linked with the prices of housing in metropolitan areas which are pushing many working parents further and further away from their employment locations. The third trend is linked to the growing financial costs of housing (due to higher European Central Bank (ECB) interest rates) which increases the number of families who declare bankruptcy. The fourth is related to the pressures of full employment in some regions and on the increases of school failure/early school leaver rates. And the fifth trend is also related to housing access and neighbourhood coexistence of immigrants and the Roma population with the Spanish population. Another trend which we add is an increase in the announcement of large restructuring or closure of a number of large firms.

*Rural exclusion:* Regarding the first of these trends, it is important to note the difficulty in obtaining precise data (other than census data) as well as take into account the social dynamics of smaller towns and villages where social services need to adapt to these dynamics, as well as the lack of some services. While in urban areas social anonymity when receiving support (both in cash and in kind) can be an important element in strengthening dignity and inclusion, as such assistance in rural settings

<sup>51</sup> Available at [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/spsi/docs/social\\_inclusion/experts\\_reports/spain\\_2\\_2006\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/docs/social_inclusion/experts_reports/spain_2_2006_en.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> See for example: <http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2007/01/21/madrid/1169403888.html>, [http://www.elpais.com/articulo/madrid/300/agentes/tomaran/localidad/evitar/incidentes/elpepuespmad/20070127elpmad\\_10/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/madrid/300/agentes/tomaran/localidad/evitar/incidentes/elpepuespmad/20070127elpmad_10/Tes) and [http://www.cincodias.com/articulo/Sentidos/Alcorcon/reabre/debate/xenofobia/cdscdi/20070123cdscdicst\\_3/Tes](http://www.cincodias.com/articulo/Sentidos/Alcorcon/reabre/debate/xenofobia/cdscdi/20070123cdscdicst_3/Tes).

<sup>53</sup> CIS February barometer results: [http://www.cis.es/cis/opencms/-Archivos/Indicadores/documentos\\_html/sB606050020.html](http://www.cis.es/cis/opencms/-Archivos/Indicadores/documentos_html/sB606050020.html).

where anonymity is difficult can be a cause for social stigma. A much publicised case in the news <sup>(54)</sup> has brought these realities to public attention. On the other hand there are also indications of much lower coverage by social services of specific groups, such as disabled persons where, according to a recent report <sup>55</sup>, around 72 % of disabled persons living in rural areas have never received a visit from a social worker. A third area where there have been reports <sup>56</sup> concerns the digital gap between urban and rural areas in Spain. The reports and figures point to a growth in the gap where only two CCAA (Madrid and Catalonia) are leading growth and the rest have much lower growth rates of internet access. These figures are even worse when taking into account the type of access, as rural areas have a much lower incidence of broadband connection; some 4.5 million persons are estimated to live in municipalities where there is no broadband access <sup>57</sup>. According to the *Statistics in focus* publication *The Digital Divide in Europe* <sup>58</sup> (based on figures from the 2004 Community survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals), Spain lagged 6 percentage points behind the the first 25 EU Member States average in individual use of computers <sup>59</sup> and the figure rose to 9 percentage points in intermediate areas and 7 percentage points in thinly populated areas, with only 2 percentage points difference for densely populated areas. As far as internet access is concerned, the figures showed a 7 point gap with the total of the first 25 EU Member States, a 4-point difference in densely populated areas, 9 points in intermediate areas, and 8 points in thinly populated areas.

*Expansion of travel-to-work areas and emerging problems:* The expansion of housing in suburban areas close to metropolitan areas (mainly due to the high prices of metropolitan dwellings) should be closely monitored as there are several issues that can affect future trends in social exclusion. Beyond problems related to lack of basic infrastructures in these new housing areas, which can be seen as a decrease in living standards <sup>60</sup>, very small or medium-sized towns are faced with the challenge of opening, expanding or maintaining good quality for all services, including social services, for rapidly expanding populations with new cultural profiles and needs that often clash with the local culture so that new preventive policies are needed <sup>61</sup>. The links to social exclusion here are related to the fact that those who cannot afford metropolitan housing are already excluded through income and at risk of social exclusion. In previous reports we have pointed to the problems of financing of local-level governments in Spain and the various competencies which they cover de facto many times without coherent regional or central government support and/or strategies. In this sense, it would be advisable to have a study on the differences between inhabitants and registered residents since the number of persons living in these new or adjacent urban areas cannot often receive the appropriated funding to cover all services demanded.

<sup>54</sup> On 17 February 2007, a man in charge of a number of dependent family members with various physical and mental illnesses killed three family members (including his wife who was not ill) and left his two daughters, living in another town, seriously wounded before taking his own life. The town, El Real de San Vicente, is a town of 1 050 people. It was reported that the man had refused social services help. The man was also himself ill with a brain tumour.

<sup>55</sup> Cristina Jenaro Río, C. and Noelia Flores Robaina, N., 'Necesidades en el medio rural de las personas con gran discapacidad física y sus familias', *Informe de Resultados 2006*, prepared by, edited by Plataforma Representativa Estatal de Discapacitados Físicos (Predif). Available at: [http://213.190.9.11/predif/doc/GW54\\_necesidades\\_rural.pdf](http://213.190.9.11/predif/doc/GW54_necesidades_rural.pdf).

<sup>56</sup> Fundación France Telecom, 'eEspaña 2006: Informe anual sobre el desarrollo de la Sociedad de la información en España', 2006. Available at: [http://www.fundacionorange.es/areas/25\\_publicaciones/e2007.pdf](http://www.fundacionorange.es/areas/25_publicaciones/e2007.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Although legislation is currently being processed (*Ley de Medidas de Impulso de la Sociedad de la Información*), the objective in the NRP to take broadband to those 4.5 million persons will be done at their own expense or at least partly. It is important to note that in some of these municipalities there is also very low phone coverage.

<sup>58</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-NP-05-038/EN/KS-NP-05-038-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-NP-05-038/EN/KS-NP-05-038-EN.PDF)

<sup>59</sup> As a percentage of total number of individuals aged 16 to 74.

<sup>60</sup> There have been some newspaper reports where housing estates were delivered to clients with no running water, electricity or other basic services.

<sup>61</sup> Urena, J. M., Menendez, J. M., Guirao, B. et al., 'Alta velocidad ferroviaria e integración metropolitana en España: el caso de Ciudad Real y Puertollano', *EURE (Santiago)*, Vol. 31, No 92, May 2005, pp. 87-104. Available at: [http://www.scielo.cl/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0250-71612005009200005&lng=pt&nrm=iso](http://www.scielo.cl/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0250-71612005009200005&lng=pt&nrm=iso).

*Family over indebtedness:* There have been a growing number of cases where families have been declared bankrupt as they could no longer pay the mortgage on their homes and other personal credits<sup>62</sup>. Although there are no total figures since the first case in 2005, cases do appear in news items. Experts call for the proposal and passing of a law on family over indebtedness (*Ley de Sobreendeudamiento de las Familias*), which the government had promised to promote during its election campaign<sup>63</sup>.

*Full employment and early school leavers:* There are some CCAA, or regions within these, which have very high rates of employment growth not covered entirely by the immigrant workforce but rather by a young native workforce. This situation together with profiles of young people with weaker school achievements should be paid more attention, as leaving school early to take up existing low-qualified work today will translate into hard-to-place groups in the future more dependence on unemployment benefits, other income support schemes and social services. The differences between regions in this respect is of special concern. Mobility across regions and activity and employment rates of 16-19 year olds should be closely monitored along with school abandonment rates, especially among boys/young men, although the rate for girls/young women is also high, but not as high as among males<sup>64</sup>. Some studies<sup>65</sup> point to the fact that families with high unemployment rates make a greater effort to invest in education to a decrease the probability of remaining unemployed and because the opportunity cost of being unemployed is lower. However, as unemployment rates have decreased and the influx of immigrants has been high since 1995 (high demand for labour), the schooling rates of youth between 16 and 25 have dropped, where both income effects (greater incentives to work) and demographic effects (less Spanish children of this school level age) are likely to be behind the drop.

*Community integration of immigrants and Roma population in socially excluded neighbourhoods:* Related to the housing problem of new housing developments, the older neighbourhoods in metropolitan areas are facing new phenomena, such as the ones mentioned above, with street gangs and radical right clashes. These neighbourhoods — a mix of older people, immigrants and young people or young families — are not receiving adequate measures for environmental improvements and social integration, and did not received them in the past either.

*Delocalisation, shutting down and downsizing of firms:* Finally we would like to mention that since our report in October 2006 there have been a number of announcements by firms in different sectors about closing down because of relocation, bad management, restructuring and downturn in business. From the news items collected we have calculated around 8 000 workers affected, many of whom would take up early retirement, thus defeating the Lisbon objectives of active ageing. Also because of their

<sup>62</sup> The details of unpaid receipts can be explored further at <http://www.ine.es/daco/daco42/daco427/ei0107c.pdf>.

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.elmundo.es/suplementos/suvienda/2007/476/1169766014.html>

<sup>64</sup> The Ministry of Education (MEC) and also MTAS have recently commissioned a number of studies on school-to-work transitions, including a survey (by MEC) that should be able to shed some light on this issue as well as specific policy proposals. One critique often heard is that school schedules could be better adapted. Although there are targeted programmes designed for these early school leavers, some are sent on to 'adult' schools. On the other hand, teachers complain that the change a few years ago in the obligatory school age from 15 to 16 has created a pool of young people who have no interest in school and that they create havoc in the schools. This might also be related to the increase of violence at schools, but more in-depth research needs to be carried out.

<sup>65</sup> See for example the study on educational demand, employment, unemployment and immigration 1995-2006 by the Studies Department of Caixa Catalunya. Available at: <http://www.caixacatalunya.es/CDA/caixacat/redirect.html?link=http://www.caixacatalunya.es/CDA/caixacat/es/ccpublic/p/articulars/Publicacions/OthPublicacions1Es/0,3213,94,00.html>. Another study pointing to the fact that university studies continue to ensure employment and continuity in the labour market does not, however, take into account the fact that many of these university graduates are actually underemployed (both in terms of pay and occupational categories) — although it does recognise the fact that there is a much higher supply than demand for university graduates in Spain at the moment, except for a few specific areas such as technology, health, architecture, telecommunications, finance and insurance. Executive summary available at: <http://www.fundacioncyd.org/InformesCyD/ICYD %202006 %20Resumen %20Ejecutivo.pdf>.

geographical concentration, many of these redundancies would have knock-on effects that would raise the figure we have calculated. It is important to note that Directive 2002/14/EC on establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community has only recently been transposed and will give workers the right to be duly informed on possible changes that affect their employment.

#### A.2.4. Policy developments

Since our last report there are a number of areas where some development or changes continue to affect, or are affected, by issues concerning social inclusion. This is not an assessment of implementation but rather a brief overview of some important issues that came up in our continuous monitoring exercise. A more in-depth description and analysis of these and other issues appearing in the coming months will be dealt with in our second semester report.

##### A.2.4.1. Immigration

There have been several developments in this area from a policy point of view, including growing numbers of regional and local plans for the integration of immigrants. At national level, the 'Strategic plan on citizenship and integration' has been presented<sup>66</sup> and includes a number of measures in all areas, some of which are mirrored in the NAPincl. Some coordination and participation mechanisms and decisions have also been taken. The plan has a budgetary allocation which is linked to the one which the government has been granting CCAA and local level governments for programmes through specific agreements. The plan has included a participatory approach, including a favourable report by the Forum for Social Integration of Immigrants<sup>67</sup> which was constituted by Royal Decree 3/2006 on 16 January 2006<sup>68</sup>. Another important development has been the approval by the Council of Ministers to allow the employment of qualified immigrants<sup>69</sup>, which will make it easier for this particular group including those who present employment creation investments.

##### A.2.4.2. Minimum wage and pensions

In line with the policies started in 2004, the government has continued to increase the minimum wage as well as minimum pensions. There has also been a change in the tax law which benefits those on the lower pension levels.<sup>70</sup> Over the past three years, minimum retirement pensions have increased by an average of 25 %, whereby the objective by the end of this legislature (next year) is 26 %. The objective is for the maximum number of pensioners with minimum pensions to overcome the poverty threshold. The minimum wage is set to reach EUR 600 by next year.

##### A.2.4.3. Reducing fixed-term employment and increasing activity and employment

After the reduced impact of the agreement signed last year with social partners on reducing fixed-term employment and other employment measures<sup>71</sup>, the government launched in 2007 an information and awareness raising campaign on the new incentives to hire under permanent or

<sup>66</sup> The full text can be found at: <http://www.mtas.es/migraciones/Integracion/PlanEstrategico/Indice.htm>.

<sup>67</sup> Available at [http://extranjeros.mtas.es/es/general/Informe\\_situacion\\_integracion\\_social\\_inmigrantes\\_2007.pdf](http://extranjeros.mtas.es/es/general/Informe_situacion_integracion_social_inmigrantes_2007.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> Full text at: [http://extranjeros.mtas.es/es/general/RD\\_3-2006\\_FORO.pdf](http://extranjeros.mtas.es/es/general/RD_3-2006_FORO.pdf).

<sup>69</sup> Full press note at: <http://www.tt.mtas.es/periodico/perhisto/HistoBase.asp>.

<sup>70</sup> For a detailed explanation, please see: <http://www.tt.mtas.es/periodico/seguridadsocial/200704/SS20070402.htm>.

<sup>71</sup> Although the government has highlighted the results from a firm-based survey (*Encuesta de Coyuntura Laboral*, ECL) which shows a sharp decrease in fixed-term employment since the beginning of 2006. This sharp decline is not matched by a sharp increase in permanent or regular employment. Moreover, all other sources (LFS and administrative PES contract data) do not confirm this positive trend in lower fixed-term employment.

'regular' contracts. At regional level, campaigns have also been launched. However, as analysed above, women and young people continue to see the proportions of fixed-term employment rise. Also, more research on school-to-work transitions is needed as it seems (concluding from the raw data provided on the specific survey on this issue by the MTAS and MEC) that a pool of youth with varying degrees of school attainment (in some cases up to 25 %) prefer to live on the unemployment subsidy or make their decision based on the difference with paid work. Regarding women, more research on the return (or rather non-return) to work after maternity leave is necessary, especially of those women aged 20 to 44 who make up 70 % of non-contributory unemployment benefits of all persons aged between 20 and 44.

### A.2.5. Legislative developments

*Law on effective equality between women and men:* This law aims to be a comprehensive and holistic law that will improve the delivery of effective equality between women and men. Among many other items, it foresees a number of changes to social security benefits, workers' statutes (main labour law), general health law, etc. As far as the impact on reducing poverty and social inclusion is concerned, the law mentions women at risk of social exclusion under article 28 (information society) and article 31 (urbanism, territorial planning and housing). In both cases, the emphasis is on access to services mentioned in the two areas (namely information technology and housing). There is no specific mention of groups who should be regarded as being at risk or in a situation of social exclusion, and in the case of housing, separate reference is made to women who have suffered domestic violence.

*Law on dependency:* The law was approved and came into effect on 1 January 2007. There have been some criticisms about financing and also about the fact that major groups needing support will be left out according to the new evaluation system applied to determine dependency (*Baremo estatal del sistema de dependencia*). However, the information given so far by the government states that special attention will be given to mental and psychological illness, although it is not clear what this means or how it will influence the final evaluation given to those who apply for the dependency aids.<sup>72</sup>

*Reforms to the regional statutes (EEAA) of the CCAA:* Final approval of the statute for the Balearic Islands, Catalonia and Valencia have past through the regional and national parliaments. Aragon, Canary Islands, Castille-La Mancha and Castille-Leon are at different points of their parliamentary and political procedures. The approval in Andalusia passed through a referendum with very low turnout (36 %) which has cast doubts on the constitutionality of the statute, as well as some parts of it which affect neighbouring CCAA such as Extremadura. The statute for Catalonia has in fact been under scrutiny by the Ombudsman and the Constitutional Court. As we have mentioned in previous editions and will deal with in depth in our September 2007 reports, on the issues of reduction of poverty and social exclusion there are clear differences among CCAA which can be considered as unconstitutional because rights for all citizens are not the same across the CCAA and the new statutes seem to be widening them.

<sup>72</sup> See the MTAS news item on this issue at: <http://www.tt.mtas.es/periodico/serviciossociales/200703/SES20070323.htm>.

### Annex 3 — Key documents on child poverty and well-being in Spain

Ayala Cañón, L., Martínez Lopez, R. and Sastre García, M.. *Familia, Infancia y Privación Social. Estudio de las situaciones de pobreza en la infancia*, Fundación Foessa y Cáritas España, 2006.

Cantó, O., Del Río, C. and Gradín, C., *What helps households with children in leaving poverty? Evidence from Spain*, Society for the Study of Economic Inequality (Ecineq), 2006.

Cantó, O. and Mercader-Prats, M., *La pobreza infantil en España: alcance, evolución y duración*, Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales/Unicef, 2000.

Eurochild, *Ending Child Poverty within the EU? A review of the 2006-08 national reports on strategies for social protection and social inclusion*, Eurochild, 2007.

Flaquer, Ll., Almeda, E. and Navarro, L., 'Monoparentalidad e infancia', *Colección Estudios Sociales*, No 20, Obra Social Fundación La Caixa, 2007

Meil Landwerlin, G., 'Padres e hijos en la España actual', *Colección Estudios Sociales*, No 19, Obra Social Fundación La Caixa, 2006.

Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales, 'La infancia en cifras', *Colección Observatorio de la Infancia*, No 2, NIPO 201-06-246-1, Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales, 2006 (available at: <http://www.mtas.es/SGAS/FamiliaInfanc/infancia/AcuerdosConvenios/InfanciaCifras.pdf>).

Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo, Planificación Sanitaria, *Informe Técnico sobre Problemas de Salud y Sociales de la Infancia en España*, Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo, Madrid, 2005.

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Encuesta estatal sobre uso de drogas en enseñanzas secundarias (Estudes) 2006-2007 Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo. Madrid, Septiembre 2007.

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## Annex 4 — Main policy documents

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'IV National action plan on social inclusion of the Kingdom of Spain' (NAPincl), 2006, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/social\\_inclusion/docs/2006/nap/spain\\_annex1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_inclusion/docs/2006/nap/spain_annex1_en.pdf).

'National strategic plan for childhood and adolescence 2006-09' (NSPCA), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, approved on 16 June 2006, available at: <http://empleo.mtas.es/SGAS/FamiliaInfanc/infancia/PlanesInformes/PlanEstra2006Ingl.pdf>.

'II National action plan against child and adolescent sexual exploitation 2006-09' (Napsec), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, approved on 14 December 2005, available at: [http://www.mtas.es/inicioas/observatoriodeinfancia/documentos/IIPlan\\_contra\\_ESI.pdf](http://www.mtas.es/inicioas/observatoriodeinfancia/documentos/IIPlan_contra_ESI.pdf).

'Interministerial youth plan 2005-08' (IYP), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Madrid, available at: <http://www.plandejuventud.com>.

## Annex 5 — Tables on material deprivation

These tables are based on the tables found on pp. 168, 175, 179,183, 186 and 191 in Ayala et al., 2006.

The household can not afford the following goods/services	Poor							TOTAL
	With children	Couple with 1 or 2 children	Couple with 3 or more children	Monoparental	Other homes with 1 or 2 children	Other homes with 3 or more children	Without children	
renewal of furniture	70	64	81	80	73	74	67	69
heating	72	67	80	81	69	88	67	70
holidays away form home	76	70	81	85	81	89	68	72
have friends over at least once a month	15	9	21	30	20	15	16	15
new clothes	14	8	22	26	18	22	15	15
meat chicken or fish every second day	4	4	4	11	2	0	3	4
<b>The household does not own one of the following goods because it can not afford it:</b>								
second home	61	61	63	55	58	73	48	54
dishwasher	43	40	46	39	44	65	38	39
home computer	38	34	41	39	35	60	25	31
microwave oven	29	24	28	24	36	54	28	27
Video	11	9	11	14	21	15	19	14
Car	12	8	10	34	19	18	12	12
telephone	6	5	4	10	8	13	6	6
Color TV	1	0	3	5	0	0	1	1
<b>Absence of one of the following in the home</b>								
heating	80	76	87	78	74	100	73	77
place to sit outside (terrace, patio)	24	23	29	28	20	23	25	24
separate kitchen	2	1	3	0	0	6	1	2
hot running water	2	3	1	7	2	3	3	3
bath or shower	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	1
indoor flushing toilet	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1
<b>Environmental problems</b>								
lack of space	37	30	52	21	32	67	12	26
damp walls/floors/foundations	20	13	22	30	27	41	17	19
lack of light	16	12	26	14	13	32	11	14
leaking roof/ceilings	12	8	11	8	12	42	11	11
rotting floors/doors	8	4	10	12	14	14	6	7
inadequate heating facilities	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	1
noise from neighbours/outside	25	24	30	38	19	20	22	23
crime/vandalism	18	15	16	22	18	47	11	15
pollution, grime or other environmental problem	9	8	13	10	8	0	7	8
<b>Financial difficulties</b>								
housing costs are a financial burden	40	35	50	55	48	29	33	37
difficulty to make ends meet	21	14	16	12	9	12	6	10
purchase installments or other loan repayments are financial burden	13	15	30	39	25	12	16	18
inability to pay utility bills	9	5	13	16	13	16	4	7

SPAIN

	<b>Non-Poor</b>							
<b>The household can not afford the following goods/services</b>	With children	Couple with 1 or 2 children	Couple with 3 or more children	Monoparental	Other homes with 1 or 2 children	Other homes with 3 or more children	Without children	TOTAL
renewal of furniture	36	35	28	56	37	58	41	39
heating	36	32	28	56	41	73	39	38
holidays away from home	34	29	22	55	43	76	37	35
have friends over at least once a month	5	4	4	13	6	9	7	6
new clothes	4	3	2	8	6	27	5	5
meat chicken or fish every second day	1	1	2	2	1	6	1	1
<b>The household does not own one of the following goods because it can not afford it:</b>								
second home	45	46	45	52	38	51	39	42
dishwasher	21	17	21	26	25	51	21	21
home computer	20	17	20	22	24	41	17	18
microwave oven	10	7	8	10	13	40	12	11
Video	4	3	3	4	6	26	8	6
Car	2	2	1	8	3	0	6	4
telephone	1	1	0	4	0	0	1	1
Color TV	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Absence of one of the following in the home</b>								
heating	51	48	48	56	58	75	53	52
place to sit outside (terrace, patio)	18	20	8	27	15	12	24	21
separate kitchen	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	1
hot running water	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
bath or shower	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
indoor flushing toilet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Environmental problems</b>								
lack of space	21	22	17	16	17	50	14	18
damp walls/floors/foundations	11	7	9	7	21	39	12	12
lack of light	10	11	16	11	7	6	11	11
leaking roof/ceilings	5	4	2	5	8	5	8	6
rotting floors/doors	2	1	1	4	5	2	3	3
inadequate heating facilities	3	3	4	1	3	2	2	3
noise from neighbours/outside	22	25	24	24	14	8	26	24
crime/vandalism	10	11	16	10	9	2	13	12
pollution, grime or other environmental problem	9	10	9	7	6	6	9	9
<b>Financial difficulties</b>								
Arrears in VISA, etc	26	24	28	36	25	38	21	23
inability to pay mortgage or rent	10	10	8	17	11	21	6	8
inability to pay utility bills	6	6	11	13	6	9	6	6
difficulty to make ends meet	3	2	2	6	2	18	1	2

**Annex 6 — Basic statistics on children in Spain (all data obtained from *La Infancia en Cifras* of the Childhood Observatory)**

<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>				
<b>Child population</b>				
	1996		2005	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
0-3	752.033	712.988	862.841	812.214
4-11	1.731.830	1.642.133	1.678.303	1.588.032
12-17	1.704.654	1.620.403	1.390.260	1.314.404
Total	4.188.517	3.975.524	3.931.404	3.714.650
Column %				
0-3	17,95	17,93	21,95	21,87
4-11	41,35	41,31	42,69	42,75
12-17	40,70	40,76	35,36	35,38
Row %				
0-3	51,33	48,67	51,51	48,49
4-11	51,33	48,67	51,38	48,62
12-17	51,27	48,73	51,40	48,60
<b>Births</b>				
Average age of women at first birth	1975	1980	1990	2004
	28,67	28,21	28,85	30,86
Number of births	1996	2003		
under 15	97	168		
15-19	11.044	12.245		
20+	350.806	428.118		
Fertility rate (per 1000 women)	1975	1980	1990	2004
15-19	21,94	25,75	11,90	10,96
20-24	135,67	116,28	50,28	30,69
25-29	189,16	146,30	101,52	64,95
30-34	123,33	91,61	75,47	99,66
35-39	64,16	46,10	27,55	51,63
40-44	23,03	14,46	5,86	8,79
45-49	2,21	1,42	0,45	0,46
Births from unwed mothers	1976	1991	1996	2003
Total			42.352,00	103.446
Mother aged <15			87,00	160,00
Mother aged 15-19			6.080,00	9.952,00
% of total births	2,16	20,54	24,88	31,80
Births in second marriages	1996	2000	2004	
Number	4524	4880	5774	
% of total births	1,25	1,23	1,27	

<b>HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITON AND CHARACTERISTICS (referred to 2001)</b>
81% of children lived in a nuclear household. 73.4% with no other adults and 7.4% with other adults. Nuclear households include heterosexual, homosexual
10% lived in a monoparental home with the mother
4.7% lived in a monoparental home with the father
7% lived in households with two or more nuclear families
1% live in households with no parents but with other blood relation adults
0.6% lived in hosedouhs with no parents and no other blood relation adults
41% lived in 4 persons households, 28.5% with 3 persons, 25.3% with 5 persons or more and 4.4% with two persons.
55% of children live in households where parents have primary school or less, 23% with parents with secondary education and 16% with parents with higher education
In 40.8% of married couple households with children the woman does not work. In 89.4% of these households the man is employed and 45.3% of the women.
In 25,5% of married couple households with children the woman does not work. In 82.8% of these households the man is employed and 53.2% of the women.
In 9,1% of same sex couple households with children the woman does not work. In 75,9% of these households the man is employed and 64,8% of the women.
In 14,5% of monoparental households with children the woman does not work. In 82,6% of these households the man is employed and 61% of the women.
In 18,7% of monoparental households the mother or father are single, the rest are married, divorced, separated or widowed.
In 60.8% of monoparental households children are over 17 years of age.

<b>EDUCATION (data referred to 2003 unless otherwise specified)</b>
12.9% of children<3 are in education, in some CC.AA. the rate is much higher (32.1% in La Rioja) and in other a very low rate is found (2.5 In Ceuta)
95% of 3 year old children are im school (above the EU15 average of 72%)
81.4% of 17 year old children are in school (no EU 15 average available)
67% of all children in primary education are in public schools, and 66% of
There are 27 thousand children in special education, 0,34% of all children in education (primary and secondary) and 117 thousand with special needs in regular schools, 1.48% of total students
Total expenditure in education (public and private) was 4.9% compared to 5.6% EU15
Only 70.3% graduated from secondary education
The activity rate of 16-19 year olds has been rising from 53.1% in 2000 to 56.9% in 2005
76.5% of school leavers (16 to 19) have fixed term contracts. 75.7% affects boys and 78.3% girls
In 2000 34% of children declared to have been insulted at school and 4% suffered from physical violence according to an Ombudsman report, in 2004 acording to the Centro Reina Sofía the figure rises to 7.6%.

<b>HEALTH (all data from the Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs)</b>
Perinatal deaths (after the 28th week of pregnancy and 7 days after birth) in 2002 was 5.4 per 1000 on average, but reached 12 per 1000 in Ceuta and was the lowest in Cantabria at around 3.5 per 1000.
Post -neonatal deaths (after 28 days from birth and up to one year of life) in 2002 stood at 1.4 per 1000, where the highest rates were in Murcia at 2 per 1000 and Canary Islands at 1.9% and the lowest in Navarra at 0.3 per 1000.
The rate of infant mortality (those less the one year) stood at 3.99 per 1000 live births
Since 1997 to 2004 fetal death (still births weighing more than 500 grams) has been reduced by 23.7% and the death in the first 24 hours of life by 28%. However, the rate of these deaths is much higher for immigrant women by 37% and 40% respectively by type of death.
Children under 1 are affected mostly by premature birth, low weight, fetal growth problems, acute bronchitis, other congenital problems and urinary infections.
Children between 1 and 4 years of age are affected mostly by acute and chronic tonsillitis, pneumonia, masculine genital disorders, acute bronchitis and epilepsy
Children between 5 and 9 years of age are affected mostly by tonsillitis, masculine genital disorders, otitis, fractures in upper body and cranial injuries (these two latter affect boys on average twice as much as girls).
Children between 10 and 15 years of age are affected mostly by appendicitis, masculine genital disorders, fracture in the upper body, cranial injuries and abdominal pain.
The most common chronic illnesses among children in Spain are: allergies, asthma, bronchitis and emphysema
The most common activity while suffering injuries from accidents in children are while they are playing (especially of those 1-4 which reaches 70% of cases), followed by domestic accidents (mostly for those 15-24 which reach 40% of cases compare to less than 5% for the other age groups), sports (5-14 and 16-24 which reach 20% and 25% respectively) and other (at around 15% on average for all age groups).
Aids among children aged 1-12 has decreased drastically since 1997 where pediatric cases reached 43 reduced to only 3 cases by 2004. In the case of children 15-19 in 1997 there were 16 cases reported which dropped to 5 in 2004.

**HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE (all data from Minsitry of Health and Consumer affairs)**

45% of Spanish children eat candy everyday and a large percentage (around 30%) eat cold cuts (sausages of various types) every day which is linked to the incidence of obesity and overweight among children under 9 which was around 32% in 2003. Other reasons for obesity and overweight are lack of physical activity especially among girls.

On the other hand, those over 14 affected by normal or low weight is very high at 86,9%.

The average age for trying drugs and alcohol among secondary school children is around 15. Tobacco is lower at 13.

Some 80% of both boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 18 had tried tobacco at least once, compared to around 65% who had smoked in the past 30 days in 2004.

Around 45% of boys and 40 % of girls had tried cannabis at least once and almost 30% of boys and 21% of girls in the past 30 days in 2004.

Boys have a stronger tobacco addiction than girls. The daily consumption from 1996 to 2004, however, has lowered only for girls: 85% of girls smoked from 1 to 10 cigarettes daily compared to 75% of boys in 1996 while these figures reached 80% and 77.3% respectively.

The average age for drinking alcohol for the first time is 13 years of age and those consuming weekly amounts is 15. Consumption every weekend among girls between 14 and 18 has increased from 42% to 45% and among boys it has remained stable at 33%.

The consumption of cannabis is shockingly high among children between 14 to 18. From 1996 to 2004 the percentage of those never having tried cannabis was reduced from 81.6% to 71.7% for boys and 86.6% to 78% for girls. Those who smoked once or twice in the past 30 days in 1996 among boys was 7.3% rising to 9.4% in 2004 and among girls was 7.2% rising to 9.8%. Most worryingly, the everyday consumption rose from 2.2% to 7.4% for boys and from 0.9% to 2.8% for girls.

Not surprisingly, traffic accidents produce high numbers of deaths and injuries among young people between 15 and 24. While those in this age group constituted 11% of drivers in 2003, they represented almost 22% of road accident deaths (very similar percentages for men and women), and 26% of those seriously injured (23% women and 28% men).

Abortions of girls under 19 have been rising since 1995 from 4.5 per 1000 women in this age group to 10.6 abortions per 1000 women in this age group.

**CULTURE AND LIFESTYLES**

In 2004 television was the most common media entertainment among children aged 8 to 18 (93% on average), followed by magazines (63% on average), and internet (52,9%). Between 60% to 63% of children aged 14 to 18 watch 2.5 or more hours of television every day.

Children in lower income families consume less internet and more television than children in wealthier families as well as less cinema, radio, magazines and newspapers according also to 2004 data.

On average, 41% of girls between the ages of 14 to 18 use perfume, while around 30% use cosmetics according to data in 2005.

Only around 30 % of children aged 14 to 18 participate in team sports and under 15% any other type of individual sport according to data in 2005.

Spanish children between 14 and 18 prefer going out with friends (95.5%) and they do so to discotheques (40% on average, although the average reaches 60% in older children), dining out (50% on average) and football (15% pretty equal for all ages) than going to concerts, theatre, museum or other spectator sports (al under 15%).

However, 60% of children between 15 and 19 go to concerts with different degree of frequency.

There is a clear digital gap among poorer and richer children where 90% of children classified in low socioeconomic level had not used internet in the past year (2005) and only 53% compared to 60% had home computers.

Around 80% of young people between 14 and 19 on average have a mobile phone. The rate is lower for men than for women (75% and 85% on average respectively).

Around 50% of children aged between 8 and 13 play videogames with different degrees of frequency the most comon way being video console. The average for boys is much higher than for girls (76% vs. 25% respectively).