

Spain 2007

Multi-regional Operational Programme to combat discrimination

Synthesis Report

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Executive Summary

The role of ESF funding in addressing the elimination of discriminatory practices, in particular in the labour market, in the EU Member States as well as in improving the lives of persons experiencing poverty and social exclusion is reflected in the Spanish experience reviewed here. It is particularly relevant under the articles of the legislative framework for the 2007-2013 programming period¹ as NGOs, among other civil society and social partner organisations, are included as institutions that can, in partnership with the Member States, prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate the operational programmes.

Likewise, the emphasis made by the re-launched Lisbon Strategy on bringing together the different employment and growth objectives under a more unified approach, the emphasis on active inclusion and the application of the open method of coordination (OMC) to social inclusion, and the reduction of poverty objectives has meant that social inclusion and social protection policies should contribute to the attainment of the Lisbon objectives and that the policies of the growth and jobs strategy should create a favourable framework and ensure that social cohesion is achieved. The Multi-regional Operational Programme to combat discrimination (OPCD) is clearly relevant to this as the focus has been on increasing the employability of groups with a weak attachment to the labour market.

Although Spain has a highly decentralised government structure and social policy is fully in the hands of regional governments, the OPCD allowed for a unified national approach in cooperation with the national NGOs operating in Spain. Thus the use of the structural funds to support the OPCD very much complements the approach taken by the central government in Spain to support the work of both, the autonomous regions (CC.AA) as well as those of national NGOs. The former is done in the area of social policy and services through individual agreements and budgets with each region, whereas the NGOs present proposals under the call for proposals (funded from income tax receipts). However, occasionally, there are also individual agreements with the NGOs.

This summary report includes an annex with tables on the situation of the different groups targeted in the programme. These groups (women, disabled persons, Roma, immigrants and others) experience clear disadvantages in the labour market even in times when the country has been experiencing an economic boom. The main issues that were to be addressed by the programme under review dealt with the need to encourage the participation of women in the labour market and to promote labour market insertion for persons with disabilities. However, the needs of other disadvantaged groups at risk of suffering social exclusion were also targeted in the programme.

The budget amounted to a total of 592 million euros, 63.1% by EU funding, 36.5% by the Spanish government (central, local and regional) and 4.3% by NGOs. The six NGOs involved will continue to carry out actions under the programme until 2008. In total, 226.301 beneficiaries have been involved, from which 57.581 people were trained, 103.291 got a job (no information on the type of contract, however) and 734 enterprises have been created.

¹ Article 11 of the Council Regulation (EC) N° 1083/2006 of 11 July (General Regulation) and Articles 3.1 (e) and 3.2 (b) of the Regulation (EC) N° 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July (European Social Fund regulation)

There are no readily available documents describing the results or the methods used to evaluate and monitor this programme. In the expert report and the presentations made in the seminar there is no mention of this aspect. This is perhaps one of the weakest points of the programme. One of the few evaluations found is that of the [Fundación Secretariado Gitano](#). In fact, this is the only NGO that prominently features the programme under review on its main web page and has a specific report on results.

The relevance of this programme has to be assessed taking into account the specificities of Spain with regard to its highly decentralised framework in delivering social and employment services, the long experience of cooperation between government and national NGOs in the delivery of social services to specific groups of the population and the development of the programme upon experiences of management of structural funds by NGOs in Spain (ESF programmes). However, in terms of the aims and processes of the EU, the programme is highly relevant in the area of partnership as one of the key principles of EU Cohesion Policy. Under ESF funding, one can find a number of examples where NGOs have been implementing partners of projects under operational programmes, but the actual management and implementation of an operational programme is unique to Spain.

All the peer countries found the Spanish experience quite relevant and that, while having due regard to the differences in scale and management of ESF funding, the role and nature of the NGOs, the insertion methodology, and also the scale of persons affected by discrimination in the labour market, they considered that there is scope for transferability of some aspects.

The comments by **EAPN** (European Anti-poverty Network) and those of **ENAR** (European Network against Racism) were critical on two aspects: difficulties and obstacles in effectively mainstreaming the principles of the EQUAL programme into the new ESF operational programmes; and the lack of information in the context of the Peer Review on the circumstances of the beneficiaries (particularly how multiple discrimination – gender and age for example – was addressed through the programme).

The OPCD shows the possibilities of cooperation and collaboration between government and civil society in the design and implementation of programmes targeted at specific groups in society suffering from discrimination, poverty and social exclusion. The holistic approach taken in the implementation of the programme is perceived as one of its most important assets. The relevance and importance of the NGOs as managers of ESF funding in Spain can be understood in the context of the long history of cooperation and collaboration of NGOs and the central governments, but also in view of the challenges of managing a national programme in a highly decentralised country such as Spain. Therefore, it is not only the capacity but also the levels of trust, which are elements that have to be assessed when identifying the relevance and transferability aspects.

1. EU context

"The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms...principles which are common to the Member States."
Article 6(1) Treaty on European Union.

Since the inception of the European Community, the fight against discrimination was clearly established as it was specifically recognised in the Treaty of Rome that discrimination against women in pay had to be dealt with. Later, through the adoption of the Community Charter of Fundamental Rights of workers in 1989, recognition of other groups which needed protection and specific policies against discrimination in the labour market by Community institutions and Member States (MS) also came to the fore (mainly older workers and workers suffering from disability). The Treaty of Amsterdam, which adopted an entire title on employment, also enabled the Council to "take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion, belief, disability, age or sexual orientation". Furthermore, social exclusion as an area of action by Union institutions was included in a Council resolution of 1989 (89/C277/01) and in 1992 (92/441/EEC) and the legal authority under Title XI in the Treaty of Amsterdam. Based on this, more recently, the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC) and the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) have continued to advance in the fight against discrimination. These directives have been accompanied by financial resources in a Community Action Programme which ran from 2001 to 2006 and had the following priority areas:

- Increase analysis on the nature of discrimination;
- Support organisations involved in combating discrimination;
- Raise awareness of discriminations and the benefits of diversity.

The efforts now continue under the PROGRESS programme for 2007 to 2013 which supports "the effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies"². Although not explicitly mentioned, this mainstreaming approach has also been present, in principle, in the execution of structural funds, and in particular in the execution of the European Social Fund (ESF) during the 2000-2006 period. It is important to note that, through this financial instrument charitable associations have been able to receive direct funding from the Commission (Article 6 and calls for proposals under other programmes). These civil society organisations (NGOs in this document) were recognised by the European Communities in the Maastricht Treaty as having a relevant role in mobilising citizens, including in the area of social inclusion, and this was developed further in the *White Paper on Governance* (COM (2001) 428) and finally in the Treaty of Amsterdam. As mentioned before, provisions laid down in the ESF and the General Regulation for the 2007-2013 programming period, consider NGOs - among other civil society and social partner organisations - as fundamental players in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the operational programmes in close partnership with the Member States/regions.

² Full specifications on PROGRESS available at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/docs/guidelines_en.pdf.

On the other hand, the emphasis in the re-launched Lisbon Strategy on bringing together the different employment and growth objectives under a more unified approach, the emphasis on active inclusion; and the application of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) to social inclusion and the poverty reduction objectives make it obvious that the social inclusion and social protection policies should contribute to the attainment of the Lisbon objectives while the policies of the growth and jobs strategy should create a favourable framework for ensuring that social cohesion is achieved.

2. National Context (Spain)

In the past two and a half decades, Spain has been carrying out a far reaching process of administrative decentralisation which has not yet been concluded, presently under various reforms, and through which the larger part of policy decision making in health, education, housing and employment is the responsibility of the Autonomous Communities. The case of social policies is different given their relatively recent appearance in the country and these have, in fact, emerged and developed in fact at the local and regional Administration levels. In this case, instead of a devolvement from Central Administrations, the regions and municipalities used their new general frameworks after the inception of the new Constitution of 1978 to build the supporting mechanisms and instruments for these policies (securing funds in their budgets, offering basic social services, designing social benefits, etc.). This is a central aspect that should be kept in mind when interpreting the elements of what this Peer Review has aimed to assess and the transferability aspects that have been put forward by the participants (dealt with in section 4 in this synthesis report). In fact, the difficulty in managing such a programme at regional level in Spain was solved through the partnership with national NGOs who in turn used their networking and contacts at regional and local level to find further funding and improve the efficiency of the programme delivery.

On the other hand, the emergence and relevance of national, regional and local social action NGOs in this same period of time in addressing the specific needs of socially excluded persons and groups have placed these NGOs as stakeholders in many of the social inclusion and anti-poverty efforts and policies carried out by the national, regional and local level authorities in Spain. These NGOs regularly receive funds through different schemes depending on the administrative level of government and they hold seats in the different governance and monitoring mechanisms of policy implementation. In fact, they often implement social services on behalf of the regional and local authorities which have the exclusive competence in this field in Spain. Around 82% of all social action NGOs (which includes both foundations, such as the ones participating in the OPCD and associations) have specific agreements with public authorities which fund social services for specific groups.

With respect to the role of NGOs in creating employment opportunities for their beneficiaries, the main instrument used has been the so called "insertion firm" which is an element in the itineraries or paths to employment which are developed and implemented for persons at risk or in a situation of social exclusion (those furthest away from the labour market). These firms, like those in other EU countries, offer both transitory and permanent (and, in some cases, protected) employment to persons who, for diverse reasons, cannot find work through mainstream mechanisms, such as those offered by the public employment services. However, they also act as intermediaries between job seekers and firms in the regular labour market once their beneficiaries are ready to

enter regular employment. The legal framework prior to 2007 had been fragmented as each autonomous region (Comunidad Autónoma, CC.AA.) had, if at all, its own law regulating these activities. In 2007, a national law was passed under which a more unified approach has finally been achieved.

Finally, the use of the structural funds to fund the OPCD very much complements the approach taken by the **central government** in Spain to support both the work by CC.AA (through individual agreements and budgets with each region) in the area of social policy and services and the work by the **national** NGOs who present proposals under the call for proposals (funded from income tax receipts) and also, occasionally, through individual agreements with the NGOs.

Statistical picture 1999-2006

In the following we aim to present some data on the situation in Spain at the inception and throughout the implementation of the programme. At the beginning of the implementation of the OPCD, the situation in Spain characterised by high unemployment (especially youth, women and older unemployed), a high growth of temporary employment and a low activity rate of women. In Table 2 in annex A, some figures from Eurostat are shown and compared to EU averages for the entire period, beginning with 1999 to 2006.

In the first place, the most notable aspect has been the strong job creation rate which increased the overall employment rate from around 54% to 64% amounting, to an increase of more than one percentage point per year. Employment for the oldest age group (55-64 years of age) rose from around 35% to 44%. Between 2000 and 2006, Spain created 37% of all new jobs in the EU.

Likewise, unemployment dropped from almost 12% to less than 8% for men and from 18% to around 12% for women. Youth unemployment for males dropped from 20% to 15% and for women from 36% to around 22%. Long-term unemployment for men dropped from close to 4% to a little over 1% while the rate for women dropped from 9% to less than 3%. The ratio of youth unemployed as a proportion of the total population aged 15-24 dropped from 11% to around 8% for males while that of women dropped from 14% to less than 10%.

While the numbers shown indicate an excellent labour market performance, a closer look at another set of figures tempers these results. The percentage of fixed term contracts grew from around 33% to 34%, although in 2002 and 2003 the percentage dropped to less than 32%. However, men's rate (32% by 2006) has been much lower than women's which reached almost 37% by the end of the period. In addition, over the same period the demographic composition of Spain experienced a very large change with the entry of a large contingent of migrant workers. The total in percentage terms by 2006 amounted to 9.94% of the total population of Spain. In EU terms, Spain has absorbed one-third of all immigrants into the EU since 2000³. This makes Spain the second migration destination country after the US in recent years. A recent study has shown that without this immigrant influx the sustained economic growth over the past decade in Spain would have been impossible⁴. The immigrant population over this period also grew by around 1% per year on average. The employment of these immigrants took place mainly in the construction

³ Informe Mensual Núm 295, Servicio de Estudios, La Caixa, Octubre 2006 available in English at <http://www.lacaixa.comunicacions.com/se/ieimhm.php?idioma=eng>.

⁴ Ibid

and some service sectors (e.g. care of children and dependent adults, domestic and office cleaning, and restaurants and catering). A table showing a comparative list of indicators between immigrants and Spanish population is provided in the annex. Although on some indicators the immigrant population fares better than the Spanish population, this is not the case on others, especially those that concern the risk of social exclusion.

The activity rate of the Spanish male population is 67% while that of the immigrants is 86%. In the case of women, the rate is 69% for immigrants compared to only 46%. As regards reaching the Lisbon objective in the area of employment is concerned, the immigrant population is having a decided impact. The employment rate follows the same pattern: immigrant men have a 77% rate compared to 63% for the Spanish male population and 59% compared to 41% respectively in the case of women. As regards unemployment, however, the rates for immigrants are higher: 10% compared to only around 5% for the Spanish male population and 14.4% compared to 11% in the case of women. This situation reflects the higher levels of temporary work and quite possibly much higher frictional unemployment compared to the Spanish population. The propensity of migrants to perform informal or undeclared work is also higher and thus the unemployment rate can, in reality, be lower. It is important to point out that Spain has one of the largest undeclared economies in the EU (between 22% and 33% of GDP or 17% of the workforce) and that, according to OECD analysis, this has also helped the incoming immigrant population to quickly find work. The cases of housework and care and also construction have been the two most obvious examples. It is also possible that the boost to the employment rate of Spanish women is also being supported to some degree by the influx of cheap home, child- and adult-care services provided by immigrant women. However, the flip side is that these women are forced to either leave their own children behind or that once these children are in Spain other problems arise (social dumping effects) as the main problem is that there are no public services in Spain that can ease this problem and the efforts to make these services professional are only at inception stage (mainly the measures to be developed through the new Law on Promoting independent living and support for dependent persons).

Another group that clearly had to face a situation of social exclusion for many years is the Roma population. In fact, one of the NGOs implementing the programme reviewed here (Fundación Secretariado Gitano) has had a leading role in policies and programmes targeted at this group of the Spanish population. Table 2 in the annex provides some figures based on a 2005 labour force survey carried out for the Roma population and compares their situation to that of the rest of the Spanish population. The figures speak for themselves translating the clear disadvantages that Roma people face in the area of employment and the fact that they also engage in a high proportion of undeclared work. The figures come from a survey partly funded by the programme under review.

According to the figures of a 1999 survey on disabilities (Encuesta de Discapacidades, Deficiencias y Estado de Salud 1999) the proportion of disabled persons to the total population amounted to almost 9% (7.5% of the male population and 10% of the female population, in total around 3.000.000 persons). Those of working age make up only 40% of the total disabled population (1.4 million people). According to this source disabled persons have a 24% employment rate (women 16% and men 32%), their unemployment rate is 54%, and 36% have a low or no schooling – attributed in the case of more than half of them to their physical or mental disability.

Exact and detailed figures on other disadvantaged groups of the population are not readily available; therefore an assessment of their situation at the inception of the programme under review during the six years of its implementation is therefore not possible.

3. Multi-regional operational programme to combat discrimination (OPCD)

This section summarises the host country paper focusing on the policy measure in practice, the budget and institutional arrangements and the evaluation and monitoring that took place.

3.1 The policy measure in practice

The main issues that were to be addressed by the programme under review were:

- To encourage the participation of women in the labour market;
- To promote labour market insertion for persons with disabilities.

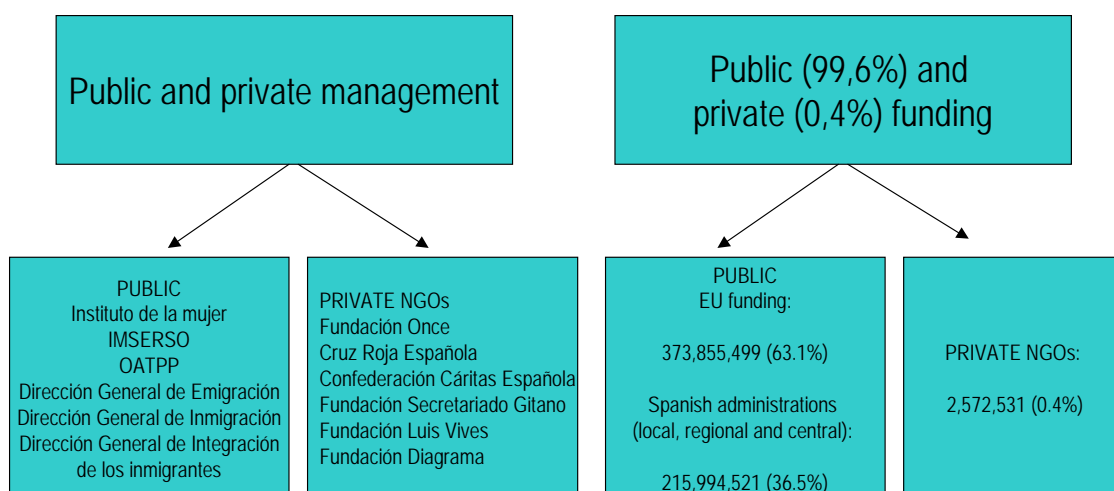
However, the other groups who were at risk of social exclusion were also included in the aim of the programme. Thus, the following groups were also targeted in the activities carried out and financed by the programme:

- Immigrants;
- Migrant workers population within Spain;
- Disabled persons;
- Ethnic minorities (basically the Roma population);
- Prisoners soon to be released or ex-offenders;
- Youth under state care (especially those interned for delinquency);
- Ex drug addicts;
- Any group suffering from discrimination.

It is important to take into account the fact that the services offered through the programme were very much demand led since beneficiaries already within programmes of the participating NGOs and those referred to by public services to the programme were included.

3.2 The budget and institutional arrangements

In the following figure, the main mechanism of implementation and financing of the multi-regional operative programme to combat discrimination (OPCD) managed by social action NGOs in Spain is reflected.



In the country report we read that Spain, as well other EU countries, increased the resources allocated to the fight against poverty and social exclusion, and that “for the period 2000-2006 an allocation of more than 1.500.000.000€ was planned to fight social exclusion, with the aim of [reaching] more than 2.200.000 recipients. The [programme under review] meant an important progress for Spain due to two reasons: firstly because for the first time a nationwide operational programme focused exclusively on the labour and social inclusion of the [groups] of society which encounter special difficulties to access to the labour market; secondly because, as well for the first time, a group of NGOs, five initially but six afterwards, became managing organisations of part of that operational programme. It is important to make clear that the participation of Spanish NGOs as [recipients of] Structural Funds has been historical, especially as regards ESF, but what is innovative in this programme is that they have become managing organisations⁵”.

The six NGOs involved will continue to carry out actions under the programme until 2008. In total there have been 226.301 beneficiaries, 57.581 people trained, 103.291 found a job (no information of the type of contract, however) and 734 enterprises have been created.

3.3 Evaluation and monitoring

There are no readily available documents describing results or methods used to evaluate and monitor this programme. In the expert report and the presentations made in the seminar there is no mention of this aspect. This is perhaps one of the weakest points of the programme. One of the few evaluations found is that of the [Fundación Secretariado Gitano](#), in fact this is the only NGO that prominently features the programme under review in its main web page and has a specific report on results.

⁵ By managing organisation we understand the one which is given the job to manage a part of the Operational Programme, for the whole period.

4. Relevance and transferability aspects

4.1 Introduction

The relevance of this programme has to be assessed taking into account the specificities of Spain with regard to its highly decentralised framework in delivering social and employment services, the long experience of cooperation between government and national NGOs in the delivery of social services to specific groups of the population and the development of the programme upon experiences of the management of structural funds by NGOs in Spain (ESF programmes). However, in terms of the aims and processes of the EU, the programme is highly relevant in the area of partnership as one of the key principles of EU Cohesion Policy.

In addition, there are some transferability aspects which *a priori* were identified as having a high potential with regard to learning and possible transferability, namely:

- Scale: Elevating anti-discrimination action from possibly isolated projects or measures to a programme;
- Targeting: Especially the Roma population but also other groups affected by discrimination and in a situation of poverty and social exclusion;
- Means of delivery: Partnership with NGOs not only as implementing partners but also as managers of the funds.

The participants in the Peer Review, both in their written and oral comments have made a number of observations on the relevance and transferability which are summarised in this section.

4.2 Comparison of similar approaches throughout Europe

When it comes to ESF funding one can find a number of examples where NGOs have been implementing partners of projects under operational programmes, but the actual management and implementation of an operational programme is unique to Spain.

Also, there is a great variety in the way the partnerships under ESF funding are arranged and behind that is the history of partnership and cooperation between NGOs and the governments of the different Member States. As an indicator, the [Joint reports](#) on social protection and social inclusion point to the fact that NGOs representing groups affected by social inclusion and anti-poverty policies are not always involved in their design, implementation, monitoring or evaluation. Indeed the OMC has offered the opportunity to introduce or to renovate mechanisms whereby measures and approaches to address poverty and social inclusion can be the subject of consultations with NGOs and the beneficiaries themselves.

As to figures, these are not readily available beyond specific projects highlighted by the [ESF projects web page](#). These are, in general, of a very small scale (none found involving more than 1.500 beneficiaries) and quantities of funding ranging from 100.000 to 2 million euros. The scale of the OPCD in Spain is indeed another of its main features.

Nevertheless, in countries such as the UK, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Portugal the structural funds managing authority has used the system of global grants and has included NGOs as intermediate bodies which has allowed for delivery of the operational programmes in these countries.

4.3 Peer country comments

All the peer countries have found that the Spanish experience is relevant and that, while taking account of the differences in scale and management of ESF funding, the role and nature of NGOs, the insertion methodology, and also the scale of persons affected by discrimination in the labour market, there is scope for transferability of some aspects.

In the case of **Bulgaria**, one of the most important lessons and transferable aspects is that of the individualised and holistic approach taken in the OPCD toward beneficiaries and the practical way in which this should be done. Bulgaria already has a legal framework that allows and expects this in addition to the approach taken by social workers. The Bulgarian operational programme on human resources development already gives financial support to the same aims and objectives of the Spanish OPCD, although there are some differences in the funding approach and in the fact that combating discrimination has been mainstreamed and not concentrated under a specific operational programme. Both approaches - to the Roma and to the immigrant population, which will become more and more important in Bulgaria - have been highlighted as the most important transferable aspects in the Spanish programme as well as the awareness raising among employers and other stakeholders.

In the case of **Cyprus**, although the initial situation is very different (in terms of scale of the whole programme, NGOs and beneficiaries), the involvement of the NGO sector in the provision of social care services has been assessed as useful. However, resources would have to be spent on capacity building for NGOs and the issues of monitoring as well as the evaluation of programmes. Furthermore, the approach to combining a targeted and mainstreamed approach would need to be debated further.

In the case of **Greece**, there have been recent reforms, including a review of the Constitution, which widen the scope of cooperation with the NGO sector in delivering social care and which also established rights for citizens. The role of the NGOs is crucial in applying individualised services that will allow individuals to be reinserted in society and in the labour market. Also, decentralisation of the competencies on employment insertion to the local level has been identified as a basic element in the effectiveness of social policy.

In the case of **Finland**, the Spanish experience could be included in the new approach to public administration and thus understood under the challenges and obstacles being faced by EU Member States regarding governance. The question here would be what is the role of civil society and NGOs in the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy and how they should be consulted and involved in the planning and implementation of strategies and programmes. In Finland, there is a wide experience of including NGOs in managing EU programmes, but now the approach is getting closer to the Spanish experience. Because of recent structural changes in local government in relation to the delivery of social services, there is a challenge in organising these services in a comprehensive way. Mainstreamed approaches involve both multi-professional and

multi-sectoral aspects which are being developed in Finland at the moment. In this regard, monitoring and evaluation (societal accounting) are very important for transparency and accountability reasons. Also, the work of NGOs through the insertion firms and the use of the insertion itineraries or pathways to employment represent a common methodology. Finally, the issue of financing NGOs to carry out social care work is of utmost importance. In Finland public tendering is used.

In the case of **Malta**, there is the issue of differences of scale when comparing to Spain. Nevertheless, the lessons from the methodologies used, the approach to cooperation between government and NGOs, but also reaching out to the private sector are all considered to be transferable, once the cultural and demographic differences are duly taken into account. At the moment the NGO sector in Malta needs to be further strengthened since it is currently made up mostly of volunteers and is thus limited as regards human and material resources.

In the case of **Slovenia**, the organisational approach and structure of the OPCD in Spain has been valued as the most important aspect both in the implementation and financial aspects of the programme. At the moment in Slovenia NGOs lack the capacity and resources to become engaged on the same scale as NGOs in Spain in the implementation and financial management of ESF funding. However, in Slovenia, through the EQUAL initiative, some examples can be highlighted as the first experiences of cooperation between government and NGOs at the local level. The most relevant elements in the OPCD for Slovenia are the lessons and methodologies of the work with the Roma and with the immigrant population. A relevant question raised was how the Spanish programme was planned and what were the mechanisms that enabled it to be spatially efficient in terms of addressing the differences among different regions.

4.4 EU Stakeholder organisations' comments

The comments by **EAPN** (European Anti-poverty Network) and those of **ENAR** (European Network against racism) have been critical on two accounts: difficulties and obstacles in effectively mainstreaming the principles of the EQUAL programme into the new Social Fund Operational Programmes and the lack of information in the context of the Peer Review on the circumstances of the beneficiaries (particularly how multiple discrimination was addressed through the programme, gender and age, for example).

In the case of **ENAR** there was also a question raised as to how the NGOs involved in the management and implementation of ESF funding were chosen, while on the other hand the fact that there was coverage of different groups suffering discrimination was very much welcomed. The fact that a holistic approach to employment insertion was adopted was also assessed as a very positive element. Finally, an important point was made on policy coherence and the OPCD. For example, how did the OPCD link to immigration policy in Spain? Have the agencies been able to have as beneficiaries of the programme those without legal residence status? Finally, the visibility of the anti-discrimination element in the programme was questioned, although the other elements such as the individualised approach together with the fact that the programme has been targeted, participatory and holistic were recognised as positive elements.

In the case of **EAPN**, it was pointed out that not only Spain, but also the UK, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland and Malta were involving NGOs in the delivery of programmes and plans to combat discrimination, poverty and social exclusion. There is a feeling among NGOs that the

social cohesion element in EU policy is not always adequately reflected, in particular in strategic and in high level policy accords. There is also the feeling that all that has been learned through the EQUAL initiative and which now is supposed to be mainstreamed under the Social Fund Operational programmes will be lost unless the same principles of the EQUAL initiative are included in the mainstream funding. The disappearance of global grants under the new financing rules might make the experience of Spain impossible to replicate.

4.5 Peer countries discussion of the transferability of the policy measure

The discussion of the transferability aspects took place in two separate workshops. In both it was pointed out that realities differ a lot between Member States. However, all could identify similar groups of vulnerable people and the need to address their problems in every country.

Bulgaria, for example, has the same at-risk groups such as disabled people and Roma. The most important difference is that whereas Spain has devoted a specific programme to fighting discrimination, some other countries work horizontally across all programmes. In Bulgaria there is increasing awareness of discriminatory attitudes among employers and other actors, and of equal rights issues. Another difference between countries concerns the funding sources, varying between the ESF, ERDF⁶ and national budgets.

Furthermore, the problem of targeting came up as not everyone in specific groups is equally vulnerable: e.g. some immigrants are highly qualified. People in disadvantaged groups are often engaged in the informal economy, and this is a further challenge. However, everyone shared the goal for an inclusive labour market, and an active approach to individuals.

The capacity and role of NGOS also differs widely in all peer countries, but in all there is clarity about the important role that these institutions have or could have in delivering more individualised services to the most vulnerable groups. In some cases the legal framework would need to be changed in order for NGOs to take on the role and responsibility that the Spanish NGOs have taken in the OPCD. However, it was expressed that NGOs could have in any case a more important role in other aspects such as planning and monitoring social inclusion and social protection policies.

The second aspect identified as having a high degree of transferability is the methodology used (itineraries or individual pathways). However, there were some questions raised about the use of the methodology in rural settings.

Some of the most important issues raised in the context of the transferability of the OPCD are:

- Democracy and accountability: what kind of measures are needed to ensure transparency?
- Once operational programmes are agreed, how can further learning be put to use?

⁶ European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

- Importance of impact assessments and indicators. Peer Review participants were impressed by the statistics from the Spanish programme, but there is a need for longer-term indicators to evaluate outcomes fully.
- What can governments do to build NGO's capacity? What is the correct role of the state and state institutions; and what measures are required to ensure that vulnerable groups' needs are met while at the same time not allowing governments to escape their ultimate responsibility for social welfare?

5. Conclusions and lessons learned

The OPCD has shown the possibilities of cooperation and collaboration between government and civil society in the design and implementation of programmes targeted at specific groups in society suffering from discrimination, poverty and social exclusion.

The holistic approach taken in the implementation of the programme is perceived as one of its most important assets. The relevance and importance of the NGOs as managers of ESF funding in Spain can be understood in the context of the long history of cooperation and collaboration between NGOs and the central governments, but also in the challenges of managing a national programme in a highly decentralised country such as Spain. Therefore, it is not only the capacity, but also the levels of trust which are elements that have to be assessed in identifying the relevance and transferability aspects.

The main lessons learned in this Peer Review can be summarised as follows:

- Activities to **raise awareness of discriminatory attitudes** among employers and other labour market actors were identified as widely relevant.
- The **targeted approach** combined with the individualised and holistic attention to beneficiaries have ensured the success of the programme although the final **evaluations** must include, for the sake of transparency and accountability, a number of indicators on the profiles of beneficiaries and the final outcomes (type of employment contracts, salaries, etc.).
- The management and implementation of structural funds by NGOs must have as a prerequisite a high degree of trust, but also a **capacity** (financial and human resources) on the part **of the NGOs** to successfully carry out the work. Again, transparent mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation are needed to ensure this. The case of the FSGG (The Roma people NGO) has been a good example in this regard.
- Although differences in decentralisation models, scale and capacity of NGOs in the peer countries have been highlighted as the most important differences, all peer countries have considered that the Spanish experience is relevant and that, again, the pathways or **insertion methodology** is one of the most transferable aspects.

- There was general support for the need to reduce **bureaucratic obstacles** that discourage or prevent vulnerable people finding solutions to their problems, and approval of the bottom-up approach for successfully tailoring services to local needs.
- The **organisation of the programme** was identified by the peer countries as one of the most relevant transferable aspects as it covered governance aspects (direct involvement of NGOs although not so much of direct beneficiaries) and addressed challenges in the delivery of services (increasing access of the most vulnerable groups not reached by public employment services, for example).
- Stronger **networking** between public and private sectors and different levels of government was identified as a widely transferable element.
- Also the way Spain manages to bring together the **national and autonomous regional levels of government** within the OPCD was interesting for countries with similarly devolved administrations. Promoting such cooperation in joint programmes was identified as a transferable element.
- The approach to **Roma** people, encouraging empowerment and initiatives from within the community, so that individuals become more active in society and develop skills and confidence, was of special interest to countries with significant Roma populations.

Annex A:

Table 1 Main labour market indicators for the Spanish Roma population, 2005

Population over 16 who are active	329.017 (69% of the population)
Unemployed	45.600 (13.76% unemployment rate, higher than the Spanish average by three percentage points)
Women's unemployment rate	16.29% (Higher than the Spanish average by 2 percentage points)
Youth unemployment rate	17.8% (lower than the Spanish average by 2 percentage points)
Employment rate	59.73% (lower than the Spanish Average by only 3.6 percentage points)
Women's employment rate	48.56% (lower than the Spanish Average by only 2.6 percentage points)
Youth employment rate	57.73% (higher than the Spanish Average by 19.4 percentage points)
Temporary or fixed-term employment	57.2% (higher than the Spanish population by almost 20 percentage points)
Verbal work contracts	14.8% (Unknown for the Spanish population)
Self-employment rate	21% (6 percentage points higher than the Spanish population)
Unpaid family workers	21% (almost 20 percentage points higher than the Spanish population)
Part time work	41.9% (higher than the Spanish population by 33 percentage points)
% working in	
Services	75.94% (higher than the Spanish average by 11 percentage points)
Agriculture	8.74% (higher than the Spanish average by 3 percentage points)
Construction	10.67% (lower than the Spanish average by 16.5 percentage points)
Industry	4.65% (lower than the Spanish average by 25 percentage points)
Source: From various tables included in Población Gitana y Empleo, 2005 and our own calculations, comparison with the Employment in Europe 2005 data except employment in construction where the comparison is with LFS INE data (2nd quarter 2005)	

Table 2. Main characteristics of the immigrant population

		Spanish	Total Foreign	EU	Rest of Europe	Latin America	Rest of the world
Total population (thousands of persons)							
Men			1956.3	316.9	335.5	793.6	510.2
Women			1969.8	313.7	375.3	965.1	315.7
Age structure (percentage in each age group)							
Men	0 to 15 years	16.77	9.16	6.75	9.60	10.85	9.43
	16 to 24 years	10.77	14.10	8.14	17.17	17.75	13.35
	25 to 34 years	16.63	31.06	19.53	35.74	32.30	36.70
	35 to 44 years	15.87	24.0	20.57	23.31	26.10	27.21
	45 to 54 years	13.56	11.10	14.13	11.45	8.58	10.25
	55 or more years	26.41	10.28	30.88	2.74	4.42	3.06
Women	0 to 15 years	15.46	9.28	6.86	8.23	9.64	12.39
	16 to 24 years	9.76	16.56	8.36	21.74	15.63	20.50
	25 to 34 years	14.90	30.76	20.61	34.18	34.75	33.52
	35 to 44 years	15.20	20.41	19.74	20.64	22.51	18.73
	45 to 54 years	13.17	11.36	11.04	11.29	12.84	10.27
	55 or more years	31.50	11.63	33.40	3.92	4.63	4.59
Educational level (percentage in each educational level of working age population)							
Men	Illiterate	1.37	1.87	0.57	0.00	0.11	6.64
	Primary	29.08	24.59	12.24	17.14	21.64	41.90
	Obligatory Secondary	28.21	21.24	20.36	13.32	24.00	22.77
	Higher Secondary I	18.55	31.54	27.76	40.87	38.14	17.68
	Higher Secondary II	0.04	0.33	0.00	1.55	0.17	0.00
	Higher education	22.12	19.69	35.78	27.13	15.70	10.63
	Doctorate	0.63	0.75	3.28	0.00	0.24	0.39
Women	Illiterate	3.14	3.07	0.58	0.17	0.18	18.44
	Primary	34.58	19.75	12.46	14.75	18.99	36.08
	Obligatory Secondary	23.01	20.18	21.19	17.39	21.69	17.82
	Higher Secondary I	17.64	35.30	29.00	40.97	40.78	17.61
	Higher Secondary II	0.05	0.09	0.24	0.06	0.08	0.00
	Higher education	21.32	21.18	35.06	26.66	17.90	10.05
	Doctorate	0.26	0.43	1.47	0.00	0.38	0.00
Activity rates							
Men		67.16	86.06	65.41	91.5	89.6	90.29
Women		45.55	69.05	50.63	76.8	79.15	47.03
Employment rates*							
Men		63.31	77.46	59.53	81.06		
Women		40.66	59.12	44.4	62		
Unemployment rates*							
Men		5.86	10	8.99	10.15		
Women		11.08	14.39	12.32	14.67		
Distribution by sectorial employment (%)							
Men	Agriculture	5.61	8.32	3.41	13.62	5.83	11.05
	Industry	22.09	16.17	17.75	20.02	12.79	18.16
	Construction	18.18	36.78	16.67	43.61	40.21	36.31
	Services	54.12	38.73	62.17	22.76	41.17	34.48
Women	Agriculture	3.21	4.34	1.62	7.70	3.04	7.67
	Industry	10.50	5.86	7.09	6.53	4.92	8.26
	Construction	1.85	0.65	0.00	0.64	0.90	0.10
	Services	84.45	89.15	91.29	85.12	91.14	83.97

Source; LFS (EPA), INE 2nd quarter 2006

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Table 3 Comparison of basic labour market indicators between Spain and EU15, 1999-2006

	EU 15 AVERAGES								SPAIN AVERAGES							
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
TOTAL																
Employment rate (% population aged 15-64)	62,5	63,4	64,0	64,2	64,3	64,7	65,2	66,0	53,8	56,3	57,8	58,5	59,8	61,1	63,3	64,8
Employment rate (% population aged 15-24)	39,6	40,5	40,9	40,6	39,9	40,0	39,8	40,1	30,5	32,5	34,0	34,0	34,4	35,2	38,3	39,5
Employment rate (% population aged 25-54)	75,7	76,5	77,0	77,1	77,1	77,6	77,8	78,7	66,2	68,4	69,5	70,2	71,4	72,7	74,4	75,8
Employment rate (% population aged 55-64)	37,1	37,8	38,8	40,2	41,7	42,5	44,1	45,3	35,0	37,0	39,2	39,6	40,7	41,3	43,1	44,1
Fixed term contracts (% total employees)	13,4	13,7	13,5	13,1	13,1	13,6	14,3	14,7	32,9	32,2	32,2	31,8	31,8	32,5	33,3	34,0
MEN																
Activity rate (% population aged 15-64)	78,3	78,3	78,3	78,4	78,6	78,6	78,9	79,2	77,9	78,8	78,4	79,1	80,0	80,4	80,9	81,3
Activity rate (% of population aged 15-24)	51,7	51,6	51,4	51,2	51,0	50,9	51,2	51,1	47,2	48,0	48,2	48,8	49,5	50,2	52,3	52,2
Activity rate (% of population aged 25-54)	92,7	92,7	92,4	92,4	92,4	92,4	92,5	92,7	93,0	93,1	91,7	92,1	92,5	92,5	92,4	92,5
Activity rate (% of population aged 55-64)	51,5	51,6	52,2	53,4	55,1	55,8	56,8	57,6	57,6	60,2	61,2	62,1	62,9	62,7	63,2	63,5
WOMEN																
Activity rate (% population aged 15-64)	59,5	60,0	60,2	61,0	61,6	62,5	63,2	64,0	50,0	52,0	50,9	53,1	55,1	56,8	58,3	60,2
Activity rate (% of population aged 15-24)	44,6	44,7	44,2	44,3	44,0	44,2	44,4	44,4	39,0	39,7	37,7	38,5	39,2	39,8	42,9	43,9
Activity rate (% of population aged 25-54)	71,6	72,1	72,3	73,1	73,9	75,0	75,3	76,2	60,7	62,8	61,3	64,1	66,5	68,3	69,0	71,2
Activity rate (% of population aged 55-64)	29,6	30,3	31,1	32,8	34,3	35,5	37,8	39,3	21,2	22,7	23,7	24,4	25,7	27,2	29,6	31,0
MEN																
Unemployment rate (% labour force 15+)	7,1	6,4	6,1	6,5	7,0	7,1	7,0	6,5	9,0	7,9	7,5	8,1	8,2	8,0	7,0	6,4
Youth unemployment rate (% labour force 15-24)	15,3	13,7	13,6	14,6	15,9	16,1	16,3	15,6	20,5	18,1	17,3	19,2	20,2	19,4	16,7	15,1
Long term unemployment rate (% labour force)	3,2	2,8	2,5	2,6	2,8	3,0	2,9	2,8	3,6	2,8	2,3	2,3	2,4	2,2	1,4	1,2
Youth unemployment ratio (% population aged 15-24)	8,6	7,7	7,1	7,6	8,1	8,0	8,5	8,0	11,0	9,8	8,0	9,0	9,7	9,4	8,7	7,8
WOMEN																
Unemployment rate (% labour force 15+)	10,3	9,2	8,6	8,8	9,1	9,2	8,9	8,4	18,0	16,0	14,8	15,7	15,3	14,3	12,2	11,6
Youth unemployment rate (% labour force 15-24)	19,6	17,4	17,1	17,1	17,2	17,6	17,1	16,8	36,3	32,5	31,2	31,1	30,8	30,1	23,5	21,6
Long term unemployment rate (% labour force)	4,8	4,2	3,8	3,7	3,9	4,0	3,7	3,5	9,0	7,4	6,0	5,9	5,7	5,0	3,4	2,8
Youth unemployment ratio (% population aged 15-24)	8,5	7,8	6,8	6,8	7,0	7,3	7,6	7,3	14,4	13,0	10,1	10,5	10,6	10,5	10,1	9,5