



Overcoming the social and educational exclusion o



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REPORT 6: Overcoming the social and educational exclusion of vulnerable groups

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Contents

1.	Introduction	3
1.1	The starting point: national contexts	3
2.	Methodology	22
2.1	State of the Art: Vulnerable groups and educational and social exclusion (WP14)	23
2.2	Analysis of social and educational exclusion from the social agents' perspective. Data collection and Analysis I. (WP15)	25
2.3	Analysis of social and educational exclusion from the social agents' perspective. Data collection & Analysis II. (WP16)	28
2.4	Dissemination and dialogue with stakeholders (WP17)	31
3.	Main results	33
3.1	Exclusionary elements	33
3.1.1	NGOs perspectives	33
3.1.2	Vulnerable groups' perspectives	36
3.1.3	Discussion on the exclusionary elements	46
3.2	Transformative elements	47
3.2.1	NGOs perspectives	47
3.2.2	Vulnerable groups' perspectives	56
3.2.3	Contributions from Advisory Committee and Panel of Experts	73
3.2.4	Discussion on the transformative elements	74
4.	Conclusions	77
	Annex: Descriptive data of the participating NGOs	85
	Level of NGO intervention	85
	Type of programmes	86
	Vulnerable groups	87
	Number of people reached	89
	Funding source	89
	Quality awards received by the NGO	90
	Members of the vulnerable group participating in the management of the NGO	
	91	
	People who filled in the questionnaire	93
	<i>Position</i>	93
	<i>Belonging to vulnerable groups</i>	94

1. Introduction

The main objective of this Report is to summarize the principal results obtained during Project 4. The aim of this Project has been to analyse how educational exclusion affects vulnerable groups (i.e. women, youth, migrants, cultural groups and people with disabilities), and what kind of educational provision contributes to overcome their respective discrimination (Annex I, p.38). In order to achieve this objective all partners have given priority to the inclusion of the voices of vulnerable groups during the research process in order to encourage an open debate between end-users, policy makers and researchers.

Project 4 is structured in four WPs (WP14, WP15, WP16 and WP17). In this report we will present the main results obtained from the analysis conducted in the different work packages. They comprised a literature review on processes of exclusion suffered by vulnerable groups and transformative strategies that overcome it (WP14), questionnaires with NGOs working with vulnerable groups (WP15), the voices of the vulnerable groups gathered with qualitative fieldwork (WP16) and the conclusions from the country workshops to disseminate the project results organised at the final stage of the project (WP17). The results of this project complemented previous analysis carried out in Project 3 about how structures, policies and social agents are interconnected in the social inclusion processes.

Previous to describing the methodology used and the findings obtained, the next section describes the national contexts of these analyses. It synthesises the situation of each vulnerable group studied in each participant country.

1.1 The starting point: national contexts.

The situation of the vulnerable groups

This section has the objective to provide a preliminary and general overview of the situation of the vulnerable groups in the countries under study. The vulnerable groups –migrants, cultural minorities, women, youth and people with disabilities– will be addressed one by one in different sections. Each section, in turn, will include information regarding each country separately. The situation of the vulnerable groups will be briefly explained through relevant data that will be frame the

contributions of this report. At the end of each section joint brief conclusions will be provided for each vulnerable group.

The situation of migrants

Italy. According to ISTAT¹ data, foreigners residing in Italy amounted to about 4.279.000 on 1st January 2010. The foreign resident population is 7,1% of the total. In recent years there has been a marked increase in flows from Eastern Europe, following the entrance of Romania into the European Union. The Romanian community has experienced a rapid increase, approximately doubling from 342 thousand to 625 thousand people and represents the largest foreign community in Italy. In addition to them, the major foreign communities in Italy are Albanian, Moroccan, Chinese and Ukrainian.

According to the MIUR² in the 2007/08 school year (latest available data published) non-Italian citizenship pupils present in the national school system were 6,4% of total pupils. Over a ten year period the Italian school system saw an increase of more than 500.000 foreign origin pupils enrolled. The foreign population must also include the unregistered aliens, as those who are in school-age and have the full right and duty to take part in the Italian school system as provided for by the decree of the President of the Republic 349/99³. Education is regarded in Italian legislation as a way of integrating these children. Primary and secondary schools receive the greatest number of foreign origin pupils, who represent 7,7% and 7,3% respectively of the entire school population. The highest foreign group in Italy is Romanian, with the 16,15% of all foreign pupils. This group has increased to the point of exceeding the number of pupils from Albania (14, 84%), which in previous years had the highest representation.

¹ The National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) has been the main supplier of official statistical information in Italy since 1926. It collects and produces information on the Italian economy and society and makes it available for study and decision-making purposes. All reports and data are available at <http://www.istat.it/>.

² Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca (Ministry of Education, University and Research), www.istruzione.it. Data is available in the report (2009), *La scuola in cifre 2008*, Quaderni della Direzione Generale per gli Studi, la Statistica e I Sistemi Informativi.

³ Regulation with implementation norms of the consolidated law on immigration and on the foreigner's condition – Legislative decree 286/98

Spain. According to data of the Ministry of Work and Immigration⁴ of 2009 there are 4.791.232 foreign people with a register certificate or residence card in force. The 46,51% are women and the 53,35% are men. As regard their nationalities, the largest groups of migrants are from the European Union (38,65%), Latin America (30,49%) and Africa (20,8). The 82,51% of these people are included in the age group between 16 and 64 years. Migrants from the European Union do not need any document to work and reside in Spain. From the migrants that not have European citizenship, the 18,57% have a temporary residence and work, the 11,70% have only temporary residence, and the 23,21% have long time residence.

44.465 people were foreign people with study permit, which implies a significant increase as compared to the 26.638 people in 1999. The 45,51% were men and the 54,45% were women. People from 20 to 29 are the cohort with the greater percentage of study permits. People from Latin America are the group with more study permits (58,61%), followed by Asia (15,64%), Africa (11,10%) and North America (15,64%).

Romania. As regard to migration, Romania can be considered a country of emigration rather than immigration; the emigration rates are high while the immigration is very limited. Romania became a primary country of origin of labour migration in the 1990s, due to the difficult transition from a communist to a capitalist economy and the liberalization of passport administration and international travel after the fall of the Iron Curtain. An important number of workers migrated to other wealthy countries for better earning possibilities. In the 1990's, they fled to Western Europe and to countries such as Israel or Hungary. However, since 2002, they tend to go to other countries such as UK, Spain or Italy.

Hungary. Hungary, as its neighbour country Romania, cannot be considered a country of immigrants. According to data from the Hungarian Statistical Office the number of non Hungarian immigrants is negligible. Most of the very few immigrants are minority people from the neighbouring countries, speaking Hungarian and in most aspects of their life not different from any other Hungarian citizens. Their integration is very simple.

⁴ Ministry of Work and Immigration. State Secretary of Immigration and Emigration. (2009). *Anuario Estadístico del año 2009*, available at: <http://extranjeros.mtin.es/es/>.

Cyprus. According to the Passenger Survey in 2008 the number of long-term immigrants (Cypriots and foreigners arriving for settlement or for temporary employment for 1 year or more) was 14.095 compared to 19.142 in 2007. In 2008 women comprised 55,4% of the migrant population. In terms of nationality, 51,19% come from the European Union, and 5,14% from the rest of Europe. The largest majorities of EU nationals come from the UK (19,7% of the total), followed by Romania, Greece and Bulgaria (17,7%, 16,7% and 15,2% respectively). Lower percentages relate to migrants from Africa (2,4%), the United States of America (1,06%), Asia (17,16%) and Oceania (0,61). Approximately 70% of Cyprus migrants range between 15 and 64 years of age. Furthermore, during the last decade there has been an increase in the number of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Cyprus. UNHCR recorded a number of 7,903 refugees and asylum seekers (2,888 refugees and 5,015 asylum seekers)⁵.

Latvia. According to the recent study done by the Baltic Institute of Social Sciences (Zepa et al., 2009), from 2.2 million inhabitants of Latvia, 2% hold the citizenship of another country. Importantly, a large part of this group is composed by citizens from Russia who had arrived in Latvia already at the Soviet time. As of January 1, 2009 34.354 migrants reside in Latvia on the basis of permanent residence permit and most of them were Russian citizens (78%). Among the 14.715 migrants who reside in Latvia with temporary residence permit, 42% came from European Union and Exclusive Economic Zone member states, 23% were citizens of Russia and 35% were citizens of other countries⁶. The largest inflows besides Russia are from Ukraine (1653 persons), Belarus (852), USA (234), Armenia (137), Israel (251), Moldova (292), Uzbekistan (171), Turkey (106), Georgia (143), Azerbaijan (117), and India (121).

There are no data or study available on how many immigrants and their children attend educational institutions in Latvia at the moment and what is their situation in the area of education. Importantly, till the March of 2010 there have been legal barriers for third country nationals residing in Latvia on the basis of temporary residence permit to receive primary and secondary education for free.

⁵ For more information see <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e48dba6>.

⁶Ibid, p 19.

Conclusions

In most of the countries studied, migratory flows have increased considerably in recent years, with most countries receiving more immigrants than sending emigrants. The rate of migrants varies from country to country. Migrant groups, however, present some similar characteristics. Most of the migrants are between 16 and 64 years and no significant differences due to the gender have been found. The most common situation among migrants is having a permanent residence permit. As regards to the origin of the migrants, there are also some similarities. In most countries, the most numerous group of migrants come from the European Union. These migrants do not require special documentation to reside or to work in the countries under study. Many countries have specified that Romanian citizens constitute an important group in their countries, and Romania has identified itself as a country of labour migration. Other countries mostly receive citizens of neighbour countries. The countries studied have also reported the increase of migrations due to academic purposes and a rise in the petitions of asylum.

Politics affecting migrants' integration in the school system vary a lot from country to country. For instance, Italy considers the education a right and a duty of migrant children, even of irregular migrants, whereas in Latvia there are some barriers for migrants in the access to free education. Furthermore, in some countries information about the integration of foreign pupils in schools or about migrant's integration in general is not even available.

The situation of cultural minorities

Italy. Italy is a country rich in minority languages. In this context, cultural minorities are characterized by the use of a minority language and efforts to prevent inequalities have focused on the conservation of languages. The law 482/1999 recognises the existence of twelve linguistic minorities defined "historical" and protects their respective languages. Some of the minority languages recognised by law 482/1999 had previously received recognition from state laws (the German language and the Ladino language in Trentino-Alto Adige, the Slovenian language in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the French language in Valle d'Aosta) or regional laws (the Friuli language in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the Sardinian language in Sardinia). Other languages (such as Venetian, Piedmontese, the Rom and Sinti languages, and the languages of recent immigrants, etc.) are protected only by

regional legislation. Some of the main ethnic and linguistic minorities in Italy are the Ladinis, Occitanian, Albanians, Carnici, Corsicans, Jews, Friuli, Grecanic, Slovenians, Kurds, Mocheni, Bosnians, Francophone, Walser and Rom.

Spain. The Roma is the most representative cultural minority in Spain, which is a collective of approximately 650.000 people (Fundación Secretariado Gitano, 2006). Roma people encounter several difficulties and discriminatory practises in the educational system⁷ and the educational levels of many of them tend to be lower than in the case of any other social group; there is a high number of illiterate Roma adults, mainly women, and around the 70% of the Roma people older than 16 do not have basic education. These low levels of education affect their job opportunities as well as the access to other social programmes, due to a lack of information. Although the incorporation of Roma children in the school is generalised (the 94% of children), continued attendance, finishing compulsory education and academic results have to be improved. The Roma people usually accede to precarious employment and lack of decent housing. Their living and working conditions are aggravated by social discrimination.

Romania. Romania has the largest population of Roma in Europe, with an official count at 535.000, or 2.5% of the population, and an unofficial estimate ranging from 1.800.000 to 2.500.000 – or between 8.3% and 11.5% of the population. The poverty rate among Roma is three times higher than the average poverty rate in Romania due to many factors, including poor health and education, limited opportunities in the labour market, and discrimination. The Roma people are also underrepresented in the field of formal politics and in civil society's associations. Although Romania has ratified most international minority rights protection documents and has developed legislation against discrimination, racism is still a major issue.

As regard to education, Roma children have low rates of attendance and enrolment in the Romanian education system, and they face severe enrolment barriers. The

⁷ Centre of Research in Theories and Practices that Overcome Inequalities (coord.). (2004). *The creation of new occupational patterns for cultural minorities. The Gypsy case. Workaló. Final report.* Belgium: European Commission. <http://cordis.europa.eu/documents/documentlibrary/82608431EN6.pdf>

education system discriminates against children from poor families, and Roma culture is not well recognized in school curricula. Roma children also lack the necessary role models of successful Roma. In addressing Roma education, the Ministry of Education and Research has been trying to create a support structure by building on the inspectors and school mediators at the local level, with little success due to lack of sustainability in a long term basis due to diverse difficulties found in the context.

Hungary. In Hungary law recognises the existence of national and ethnic minorities and protects their minority rights. The only ethnic minority, however, is the Roma minority that makes up around 5% of the population. Roma minority is very stratified (poor and rich, educated and low educated, city and county people etc.). The majority of them are Hungarian speaker.

Cyprus. According to the latest demographic report of the Cyprus Statistical Service, out of a total of 885.600 inhabitants, the estimated composition of the population by the end of 2008 was 75,5% Greek Cypriots at (668,700), 14,5% Turkish Cypriots 88.700 and 10,0% foreign residents (128,200). The report includes three cultural minorities namely Armenians at 2,700 (0, 4%⁸), Maronites at 4,800 (0,7%) and Latins at 900 (0,1%). According to Varnava (2009), other cultural minorities in Cyprus are the Gypsies (Roma) and Anglican Minorities (Varnava, Andrekos, 2009); however they were not afforded minority rights or any other form of minority status as granted by the Constitution to the other three groups (Trimicliniotis & Demetriou, 2009).

Latvia. According to the data of 2009⁹ the share of ethnic groups are as follows: 59,3% Latvians, 27,8% Russians, 3,6% Byelorussians, 2,5% Ukrainians, 2,4% Polish, 1,3% Lithuanians, 0,4% Jews, 0,2% Germans, and 0,1% Lithuanians. Ethnic minorities in Latvia have equal access to education to the majority population. The ministry of Education and Science has established *common* primary and general secondary education standards and curriculum, and the methods to evaluate the results of pupils both for the general schools and minority schools. Importantly,

⁸ The figure refers to the percentage of Armenians within the Greek Cypriot community.

⁹ See Central Statistical Bureau data.

educational achievements in minority and general schools does not differ and with respect to some study subjects, particularly with respect to exact sciences, pupils of minority schools show better achievements than pupils from majority or Latvian schools (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, 2009).

Conclusions

The different countries which took part in the project have different cultural minorities among their populations. However, the Roma constitute a cultural minority in most of them and it is the most prominent or unique minority in some countries. At present, Roma people suffer from inequality in comparison to the main cultural groups and experience poverty, lack of jobs and low education performance. Additionally, many countries highlight language as an important element of a cultural minority and legislate towards the preservation of the various languages in their territories.

The situation of women

Italy. In Italy, women legally have the same social dignity and rights as men. These principles are guaranteed by article 3 of the Constitution. In the first decade of the 21st century, women's education level has increased considerably. According to the ISTAT report, women in the younger generations in particular (from ages 15 to 40) who had an upper school diploma were 53% compared to 45% of men. Furthermore, 65% of university graduates are women.

At present more young women than men (in absolute values) have access to jobs when they complete their studies (university degree). Furthermore, young women who decide to remain single achieve management positions in an equal percentage to men in the same situation. In the Italian public administration, women hold most of the available positions compared to their male colleagues, and approximately two thirds of the management positions. Differences on the wage structure prevail, as women get lower wages than men for equal jobs. However, these differences are not longer present among the youngest workers. Women's unemployment rate is higher than men's (4% following ISTAT data from 2005).

Spain. According to the report “Las mujeres en cifras 1983-2008” [Women in numbers] (IMU, 2009), women have a more precarious labour situation as compared to men. The active female population has increased from the 29,48% of the total population in 1982 to the 42,53% in 2007, and the occupation has followed a similar trend (from 41,53% in 1982 to 54,03% in 2007); this is an increase of 21,2 percent points as compared to an increase of 2,85 percent points for men. However, the 54,38% of the unemployed people are women. Women abandon the labour market due to family reasons more than men do, they are more frequently in part time jobs, and they also have higher levels of poverty than men.

As regards education, from 1982 to 2007 women have progressively been more and more incorporated in the different educational levels. The number of illiterate women or without education have reduced in 84,2%. However, illiteracy is mainly feminine, as in 2007 almost the 70% of the illiterate people or people without education were women.

Finally, gender violence is a problem that affects women importantly. In 2007, 63.347 women were victims of gender violence exerted by their partners or ex-partners. Between 1999 and 2007, 561 women were killed by their partners or ex-partners. Women are also the 96,73% of people victim of human trafficking.

Romania. Women account for 51,3% of the population in Romania, but in terms of access to rights, resources and decision-making in the society, opportunities available to women are rather limited. The major objective of the current policies in this respect is to promote the participation of women on the labour market. Data on occupational participation do not reveal any significant difference to the disadvantage of women: 44,5% of employees are women. However, in 2003, the level of average salary incomes of women was 17,6% lower than that of men. As for involvement of women in business, women are partners or administrators in 49.7% of the companies registered during December 1990 – December 2000. Data from the surveys also indicate unequal roles in households, where women are overloaded with tasks.

According to the census conducted in 2002, 53,8% of people pursuing education in higher education institutions were women. Poorer access of women cannot be

ascertained at any level of education, and women are over-represented in post-secondary and higher education. Nevertheless, social participation of women after graduation is rather low due to unequal opportunities.

Hungary. In Hungary, women legally have the same social rights as men. At present more young women, rather than men (in absolute values), have access to jobs when they complete their studies. In the Hungarian public administration, women hold more positions compared to their male colleagues. However, in this sector, they are employed in lower positions compared to their male colleagues. In addition, having the same position does not mean that the salary of women is at the same level of the salary of men. Women are systematically under-paid compared to their male workmates. So, there are still wage differences for equal jobs, and relevant disadvantages of women on the overall employment situation.

Cyprus. According to the report “Mapping of the Gender Social Map of the Republic of Cyprus¹⁰” Cypriot women deal with discrimination and obstacles to their integration process in the workplace and it affects their choices of profession as well as the development of their career. Greek Cypriot women in Cyprus represent 50,43% of the total population of the Greek Cypriot community. According to information from the labour force report of 2009, the 45,45% of the total labour force participation rate were women. The unemployment rate was similar for men (5,1%) and women (5,5%). However, in 2008 there was more discrepancy in unemployment rates at 3, 2% for men and 4, 2% for women. Women are also more frequently found in part-time jobs. With regard to education, women have progressively being more and more incorporated in the different educational levels since 1946. The number of women that never attended school or only graduated primary school was reduced to 9% in 2008 from 59% in 1946. Finally, gender violence is a problem that affects women primarily. According to information from the Association for the Handling and Prevention of Domestic Violence¹¹, for 2009, there were 1.148 cases of gender violence, 83% of which were exerted by women’s partners or ex-partners.

¹⁰ The Democratic Labour Federation of Cyprus (DEOK) (2007) Mapping of the Gender Social Map of the Republic of Cyprus. The report was prepared for the needs of project Open Doors, co financed by the EU and the Republic of Cyprus.

¹¹ See <http://www.domviolence.org.cy>.

Latvia. In general, the situation of women in the area of education does not differ from that of men. Both women and men in Latvia have equal chances in the area of education. Importantly, with respect to educational achievements in school girls show better results than boys¹². Another research discloses that at the primary education level there are more boys than girls (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, 2007) among dropout pupils. At the higher education level, according to the Eurostat data, the share of women in the tertiary education has been increasing from 58,9% in 1998 to 63,9% in 2007¹³. However, according to the Eurostat data, among the science and technology (in mathematics, science and technology) graduates, there are more men than women. Women tend to be overrepresented in the social and humanitarian sciences. A gender disproportion is evident with respect to how fast after the studies one can enter into labour market. At the moment, men find work faster than women (University of Latvia, 2007).

Conclusions

In the countries studied women and men have legally the same social rights. Nevertheless, women still constitute a vulnerable group as real equality has not been achieved yet. Discrimination against women is highlighted in three main fields: job market, education and gender violence. Firstly, in all the countries women suffer from a more precarious labour situation than men. However, some countries perceive that significant progress towards equality has been made in this area. The most common manifestation of gender discrimination is wage difference: women receive lower wages for equal jobs. Women also suffer other forms of discrimination in the labour market that differ from country to country: higher unemployment rate, concentration in part time jobs and housework overload.

Secondly, gender discrimination has almost been tackled in the education of the young generation. In fact, women are more numerous than men in the secondary and tertiary education in some countries. However, discrimination persists among women who belong to other vulnerable groups. For instance, women from the Roma community in Spain suffer a three-fold discrimination because they are

¹² Statistical data of 2009 by the State Education Content Centre. However, this is not the case of the chemistry subject where boys show slightly better results than girls.

¹³ See

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00063&plugin=1>

women, Roma and have low educational levels¹⁴. Furthermore, most illiterate people are women and in some countries finding a job after graduating is harder for women than for men. Finally, another important way of discrimination mentioned is gender violence. Some countries have reported that there are lots of cases of gender violence, which are mainly suffered by women. This type of discrimination is particularly serious, as it may even result in the death of the victim.

The situation of youth

Italy. During the 2007/08 school year the number of pupils attending the various state-run schools was 8.953.587. School population compared to the preceding year showed little growth (02%), but confirmed an ongoing positive trend from the 2001/2002 school year. In particular, the increase concerns all the school grades except elementary school, where a 0,2% downturn is confirmed, and specially affects the North and central areas of the county, whereas in the South a constant drop is seen. In high schools there has been a modest increase in attendance (0,4%) compared to those recorded previously. In the 2007/08 school year, 34% of students attended high school (classic, scientific or linguistic) and another 34% attended a technical school. The remaining 32% attended different specialized schools. In the past, the educational option most chosen by young people was technical education. In contrast, for several years now the favourite option is humanities. The incidence percentage of female students still remains at about 49% and is distributed according to the type of school; the exception is the teacher's school where there is the greatest flow (84%) followed by artistic education with 66%. Conversely, technical and professional schools have a higher attendance of young men; young women enrolled in these disciplines are a minority (only 34% of women choose a technical school).

Spain. According to the "Youth in Spain Report 2008" (INJUVE, 2009), young people in Spain stay in the education system until 18 years. However, a fall in the number of young people staying in education has been observed, as well as the fact that a high percentage of young people drop out of Compulsory Secondary Education. The risk of dropping out is higher among migrant young. Finishing

¹⁴ Centre of Research in Theories and Practices that Overcome Inequalities (coord.). (2004). *The creation of new occupational patterns for cultural minorities. The Gypsy case. Workaló. Final report.* Belgium: European Commission. <http://cordis.europa.eu/documents/documentlibrary/82608431EN6.pdf>

higher education is more frequent amongst young women (17,2%) than men (14,1%). However, young women have more difficulties to enter the labour market. During the years 2000 to 2008 there was an increase in occupied young people, reaching a rate of 82,6% of occupied young men and 71,3% of occupied young women. The highest percentages of youth unemployment were found among those who had only completed Compulsory Secondary Education and the unemployment rate was 2% higher among foreign young people. Within the financial crisis context, unemployment is increasing considerably and is becoming a big problem for the Spanish government. For instance in 2009 the percentage of young people around 16-24 years old who were unemployed was the 20,7%, doubling the European average. Precarious employment is also a constant among young people –in 2008, 50,5% of young people had a temporary job according to the Labour Force Survey, mostly in the 15-24 age group of women.

Romania. Young people (15 to 24 years of age) represent about 3.350.000 people, a 17% of the entire population. By origin, approximately 57% are from the urban environment and 43% from the rural environment. The main problem young people are facing is the lack of housing, following an increasing migration process from the rural to the urban areas. This migration is partially caused by the lack of high schools in the rural environment which forces students to move out of their parents' home. About 10% of the students come from the rural areas so over 130.000 students are studying elsewhere than where they live. This phenomenon is also seen in universities. Young people coming from a rural environment have the will not to come back and they face the problem of acquiring a residence with diminished material resources. They also have difficulties in accessing banking credits due to their low incomes. The lack of housing determines a decrease in birth rate and the postponement of marriage.

Hungary. Hungary has an ageing society. The percentage of people under the age of 18 is declining. There are however ups and downs in the population by different periods. Recently those under the age of 18 are relatively few, but in the coming years the birth rate will grow because a populous generation of adult women reaches the child bearing age (the children of the "Baby boom" generation).

Cyprus. According to information from Cyprus Statistical Service, young people have excellent access to education at the second level as enrolment rates reveal. However, moving to tertiary education, the percentages fall significantly. More specifically, for young people attending secondary education, the ratios are 98,5% and 93,5% for the age groups 12-14 and 15-17 respectively.

The latest report of the Cyprus Youth Organization, "Unemployment, underemployment and hetero-employment: Survey of Labour Insecurity and Uncertainty of Youth in Cyprus 2004-2005"¹⁵ states that young people face different types of job insecurity and uncertainty that stems from their age and their social status as young people. This discrimination is so strong that it even affects the job opportunities of highly trained students. According to information from Cyprus Statistical Service, young people between the ages 15-34 constitute 54,15% of total unemployment in Cyprus. Within this age group, 36,3% are young people who have completed some form of tertiary education and 24,5% of this age group are temporary employees who possess tertiary education level.

Latvia. The situation of youth in the area of education in comparison with other EU member states is comparatively good. According to the Eurostat data, in 2007 85.3% of 18 years old population was in schools. At the primary and secondary education level all pupils have equal access to education, however, at the higher education level one's access to education largely depends on one's financial means. In fact, in the state run universities approximately 70% of students pay for their studies¹⁶. The data of the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia disclose that from the pupils who finish primary school, 68.4% continue their studies in the secondary school and 28.1% continue their studies in vocational school. Following this trend, most of the pupils who finish secondary school continue their studies in the higher education institutions (66.4%). 55% of the graduates from higher education institutions after completing their studies enter in labour market without continuing their studies, 23% continue their studies and work at the same time, 9% continue their studies and do not work, while 13% after completing their studies do not work. In turn, the situation is different with respect to the graduates from

¹⁵ See <http://www.youthboard.org.cy/ereynes.shtm>.

¹⁶ See Central Statistical Bureau.

professional/vocational schools: 43% after completing their studies enter in labour market and do not continue their studies, 16% enter in labour market and continue their studies, 17% continue to study but do not work, while 24% do not enter labour market and do not continue with their studies. It is relevant to mention that 73% of graduates from higher education institutions work in the field of their studies, while 57% of graduates from professional/vocational schools find a job in the field of their studies¹⁷.

Conclusions

Young people constitute a vulnerable group in the countries studied as they suffer inequality in social status with respect to other age groups. A common difficulty young people encounter is a precarious labour situation: the unemployment rate among youngsters is high and they tend to have temporary jobs. Different countries, however, highlight different problems affecting young people. In Spain, early school leaving is of major concern. In Romania, young people from the rural areas experience an increasing lack of housing and in Cyprus some youngsters have difficulties in accessing tertiary education. It has also been observed that there is an intersection of the age with other variables associated with discrimination and that a person can belong to more than one vulnerable group at a time. For instance, in Spain migrants have a higher risk of dropping out from education and the unemployment rate is higher among them than among young people of Spanish origin. Gender discrimination also affects young people. In Spain, young women have more difficulties in finding a job than men, even though they have higher levels of education. In Italy, girls and boys choose clearly different types of school to pursue different studies, with men preferring technical schools and women tending to choose teacher's school and artistic education.

The situation of people with disabilities

Italy. A pilot programme for integrating pupils with disabilities in Italian schools began in the second half of the seventies and was later implemented by law 517 on 4th August 1977. In compulsory education, the proportion of pupils with disabilities

¹⁷ University of Latvia, Philosophy and Sociology Institute of the University of Latvia, and Ltd Baltkonsults (2007) Higher and Professional Education Institution Graduate's Career after Graduation. Riga. 5,6 page. 50 page.

has stabilized at 2.5% of the total number of pupils. In high schools, the proportion of disabled students is growing, and in the latest school year they represented a 1.6% of the total number of students. The state school is the first to receive these students (2.3% of students have some form of disability), and the officially recognised school also extends the offer with, on average, 1% of enrolments being people with a disability. Schools not officially recognised also accept students with disabilities. To encourage integration of students with disabilities, in most cases insertion is done in the ordinary classes. This method of inclusion requires the participation of a support teacher who can collaborate with the main teacher providing educational assistance to the disabled students. About 92.3% of students with disabilities enrolled in school have a psychophysical type of deficiency. Their attendance is higher in compulsory education.

Spain. The “Survey on Disability, Personal Autonomy and Dependency Situations 2008”¹⁸ shows that 3.787.400 people in Spain have some kind of disability, of which the 40% are men and the 60% are women. The age range where disabilities are more frequent is people aged 80 and older, which are the 26.7% of the total. The Survey gives some data about how people with disabilities have felt discriminated at any moment in their life. Generally, there is not a big feeling of discrimination, because most of the informants assure that they have never been in a discriminatory situation. However, the 20% of the cohort between 6 to 64 years assures that they feel discriminated sometimes, a lot of times or constantly. As regards the situation of people with disabilities in the labour market, the data from the Survey show that most of the people in this collective receive some pensions from the government: around 2 millions of people which suppose the 79%. The 16.7% are working and the 4.4% are unemployed. As regards education, data from the Ministry of Education¹⁹ show that the 1.9% of the students enrolled in the different levels of education have special educational needs. The highest percentage is found in initial professional qualification programmes (3.2%), followed by primary education and compulsory secondary education (2% each), while the

¹⁸ See Encuesta de Discapacidad, Autonomía Personal y Situaciones de Dependencia 2008 (Survey on Disability, Personal Autonomy and Dependence Situations 2008). National Institute of Statistics. Available at: <http://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?L=0&type=pcaxis&path=/t15/p418&file=inebase>.

¹⁹ Las cifras de la educación en España. Curso 2009-2010 (Edición 2012) [Education numbers in Spain. Year 2009-2010 (2012 Edition)]. Available at: <http://www.educacion.gob.es/horizontales/estadisticas/indicadores-publicaciones-sintesis/cifras-educacion-espana/2012.html>

percentages decrease in non compulsory levels of education: high school (0.2%) and vocational training (0.3%). The 78.4% of the students with special needs are enrolled in regular schools, and the 21.6% in special education schools.

Romania. According to the official data there were 613.924 persons with disabilities at December 31, 2008. Organizations representing people with disabilities contest the figure because it refers to the number of disability certificates issued by each territorial commission. Almost one third of all children and young people with SEN in Romania attend mainstream schools, mainly those with a low or medium extent of SEN. A considerable number of children with severe and multiple impairments do not attend school at all. Where these children attend school, this has often been made possible with the support given by NGOs. 19,315 pupils attend special classes, of which 61.8% are boys and most have learning difficulties.

The number of persons with disabilities employed was recorded as 21.906 on 31 December 2007. In 2006, incomes from social benefits were 19.9% of household total incomes, and an amount of RON (Romania national currency) 3,463,000 was allotted from the state budget for special protection and socio-professional integration of adults with disabilities. As regards to the citizens' opinions on this measure, the same year, Romanians showed to be comparatively less in favour of measures being adopted to provide equal opportunities employment of people with disabilities (Eurobarometer, 2007). Employers often prefer to pay the penalties set forth by the law rather than to employ persons with disabilities.

Hungary. People with disabilities are about 3% of the population. Until now they have been taught in separate schools but recently about two third of them learn in integrated educational settings.

Cyprus. According to a 2002 report by the Statistical Service of Cyprus, which covered around 3500 households and 6,805 persons aged 16-64 years old, 12.2% of the sample stated that they suffered with some form of disability. This group was 52.8% men. The age range where disabilities were more frequent was above 40. Pertaining to access to education the percentages within the sample were as follows: 15.8% did not graduate from primary education, 36.57% had completed

primary education, 35.26% completed secondary education, 12.27% completed tertiary education and 0,1% had reached the PhD level. In terms of employment, 47.8% of the sample stated that they were employed, 48.3% stated to be inactive and 3.9% were unemployed. Focusing on perceived access to workplace²⁰, 30.2% of the sample stated to experience important restrictions regarding the kind of professions that they had access to, 43.5% stated that they experience some form of restrictions and 26.3% stated that they don't deal with any perceived restrictions. No significant gender differences were found in access to employment.

Latvia. In Latvia, most of the pupils with disabilities study in special education institutions or special classrooms where they have adapted education curriculum. This means that they are segregated from other pupils both in terms of space and study content. However, there are also few inclusive practices observable where pupils with disabilities are included in the general classroom and where they follow the general study curriculum. In 2007, 3.868 pupils with mental disabilities studied in special schools (not including professional/vocational classes), 1.045 studied in special classes and 652 pupils were included in the general classes (Ministry of Education and Science, 2009). In 2004, the Social Integration State Agency²¹ was established in order to facilitate the integration of people with disabilities in the various domains of society, particularly education and labour market, by providing vocational primary and secondary education, as well as college level education for people with disabilities. This institution is co-financed by the EU funding. Likewise, there are various projects implemented by NGOs aimed to increase the skills of people with disabilities.

Conclusions

People with disabilities are perceived in all the countries studied as a vulnerable group. Disabilities are more commonly found among older people. The difference between men and women is narrow and it varies from country to country. In order to integrate people with disabilities and to improve their opportunities Governments are working specially in two main fields: education and labour market.

²⁰ See the survey included both employed and unemployed persons.

²¹ See State Social Integration Agency. www.siva.gov.lv

As regards to education, in most of the countries children with disabilities attend schools. There are different ways of providing education to disabled people, and it varies from country to country. The most common strategy is mainstreaming. The participation of disabled students in the general classroom and their use of the general curriculum usually require the supports, mainly of specialized teachers. In other cases, people with disabilities study in special schools or separated classrooms in regular institutions and they follow a differentiated curriculum.

As for the labour market, employment rates vary a great deal among countries. In some of the countries studied, disabled people perceive pensions and other social benefits from the Government. Other public help, such as formation, is also provided in order to overcome inequalities concerning the job opportunities of the disabled people. Education is generally perceived both as the path to social inclusion and the gateway to a successful incorporation into the labour market.

2. Methodology

The general objective of Project 4 was to investigate how the educational exclusion affects diverse sectors of society, particularly more vulnerable groups (i.e. women, youth, migrants, cultural groups and people with disabilities), and what kind of educational provision contributes to overcome their respective discrimination. In order to address this general objective, four operational objectives were defined, and research activities were conducted to address them:

WP NUMBER	OBJECTIVE	MAIN ACTIVITIES
WP 14	OBJECTIVE 4.1: To review the literature on vulnerable groups and educational and social exclusion in Europe.	State of the art on vulnerable groups and educational and social exclusion.
WP 15	OBJECTIVE 4.2: To identify and analyse the connection between processes of social exclusion and inclusion and educational opportunities from the social actor's perspective.	Analysis of social and educational exclusion from the social actors' perspective. Data collection & Analysis I: Questionnaire among NGOs working with vulnerable groups.
WP 16	OBJECTIVE 4.3: To study trajectories towards social exclusion within five vulnerable groups (migrants, women, cultural groups, youth and people with disabilities) in order to identify the processes and strategies that reproduce these trajectories and those that overcome them.	Analysis of social and educational exclusion from the social actors' perspective. Data collection & Analysis II: 5 Communicative Daily Life Story for each vulnerable group (migrants, women, cultural groups, youth & people with disabilities) by participant country, and 2 Communicative Focus Group for each vulnerable group in each participant country.
WP 17	OBJECTIVE 4.4: To enforce reflection, dialogue and discussion between representatives of the vulnerable groups analysed, members of the scientific community, policy makers and young researchers about the results obtained.	Organisation of local workshop. Elaboration of conclusions (Report 6): Integration of the results from the fieldwork.

In order to fulfil the aim of Project 4, different methodological approaches have been used in its different workpackages. First, a literature review was conducted to elaborate the state of the art. Second, quantitative data collection and analysis was conducted in order to obtain a relevant amount of data about the reality of educational and social inclusion or exclusion of vulnerable groups and interventions related to it, from the perspective of NGOs professionals working with vulnerable groups. Third, qualitative analysis was performed in order to deepen in the understanding of the processes of social and educational inclusion and exclusion from the perspective of vulnerable groups, based on their own experience.

2.1 State of the Art: Vulnerable groups and educational and social exclusion (WP14)

In the European Knowledge-Based Society (EKS) the processes of educational and social exclusion have a greater impact on specific groups: women, youth, migrants, cultural minorities and people with disabilities. These vulnerable groups are the object of political priorities established by different EU institutions, and based on this evidence, these are the groups targeted in INCLUD-ED as established in Annex I²². The literature review identified the particular ways in which processes of exclusion have an impact on these groups and the transformative strategies which help to overcome them.

The literature review to be done was distributed among the partners according to the different vulnerable groups, as shown in the following table:

²² See Appendix B: Rationale underlying the choice of socially-vulnerable groups (Annex I, p. 153).

Special Focus	Partner in charge
Migrants	Italy (UNIFI)
Cultural minorities	Romania (UVT)
Women	Spain (UB)
People with disabilities	Hungary (ELTE BGGYFK)
Youth	Cyprus (UCY)

The literature reviews followed five criteria: (a) interdisciplinary data sources, covering a wide range of disciplines (sociology, education, anthropology, economy, philosophy, linguistics, psychology, political sciences, cultural studies, etc.); (b) to draw from major standard and specialized comprehensive bibliographical sources collections (e.g. ERIC, EURYDICE, SOCIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS, journals with high impact factor, as ranked in the ISI Journal Citation Reports); (c) original sources meaning that original language will be given priority, reviewing directly the research document or the author, rather than through secondary sources; (d) empirical and theoretical research; (e) emphasis on the European dimension.

A list of topics was created to carry out the data collection, which was identified through a first revision of the literature on vulnerable groups. In the search, the keywords were combined with the vulnerable group being analysed.

1. School failure
2. Absenteeism
3. Low expectations
4. Educational Exclusion
5. Educational Inclusion
6. Educational Success
7. Family involvement
8. Community involvement
9. Successful educational actions
10. Successful social actions
11. Social exclusion

Combine each one with: Women, Cultural minorities, Youth, Migrants and People with disabilities (Considering the distribution of the countries and vulnerable groups described above)

All the data collected was analysed and organised into data collection tables which allowed data analysis according to different topics. The topics, which are listed as follows, were analysed in order to identify exclusionary or transformative components.

1. Educational Inclusion
2. Educational Exclusion
3. Social Exclusion
4. Successful educational action

For this purpose, the “Literature review guide: Literature Review on processes of educational and social exclusion among vulnerable groups” was written to unify the criteria and procedure for the literature review among all the partners.

This work package provided a preliminary theoretical framework on which the analysis conducted in Project 4 was to be based in order to identify the key elements of the social and educational exclusion/inclusion of vulnerable groups.

2.2. Analysis of social and educational exclusion from the social agents’ perspective. Data collection and Analysis I. (WP15)

WP15 consisted of an analysis of the elements related to social and educational exclusion and inclusion of the vulnerable groups from the social agents’ perspective. Particularly the perspective of NGOs professionals working with vulnerable groups in each participant country -Italy, Spain, Hungary, Romania, Cyprus and Latvia- were collected through a questionnaire. In order to facilitate the analysis for all the partners some analysis guidelines were elaborated and provided. In these, special emphasis was put on conducting a quantitative analysis taking into account the elements that help to overcome the different kind of exclusions and which include the gender dimension.

Indicators were defined which needed to be taken into account in order to identify social and educational inclusionary/exclusionary processes which affect vulnerable

groups, and different questionnaires were created aimed at each of the 5 vulnerable groups.

The questionnaires were the same for each country. As it has been mentioned, in these questionnaires the gender dimension was specially taken into consideration: some specific questions linking vulnerable groups to female exclusion have been included in the questionnaire. Also, special attention has been paid to the impact the economic crisis is having on vulnerable groups.

The population sampled were NGOs that work with some of the five vulnerable groups in each national context. The selection of the NGOs followed specific criteria which ensured that the NGOs chosen for the fieldwork really do carry out work which helps to overcome the social and educational exclusion of the vulnerable groups being studied. These criteria were:

- The interventions that the NGOs carry out should be aimed at groups which have the highest risk of social exclusion, that is, the most socially vulnerable within the vulnerable groups.
- The NGOs interventions should be carried out based on non- profit principles.

A representative sample was selected in each country. The sample was calculated considering the number of NGOs in each country, and with a 5% margin of error.

To further facilitate the data collection an online questionnaire was elaborated with the online tool SurveyMonkey. All partners uploaded the questionnaire in their language and facilitated the link to the selected NGO's that could then answer the questionnaire online. Nevertheless, several difficulties in the sampling of NGO's were encountered. In some countries the registers of NGO's are not up to date and led us to NGO's that did not exist anymore or provided erroneous contact information. Contacting each of the NGO's via personalised email resulted in low participation. Two different actions were taken in order to improve contact with NGO's.

On the one hand, the NGO's were contacted by phone to fill in the questionnaire. Furthermore, appointments were made to visit potential participants with printed questionnaires and assistance was provided to fill them in. The responses from the

paper questionnaires were later introduced in the online questionnaire application. In some cases, after having contacted the NGOs' representatives and informed them about the procedure to fill in the questionnaire, no responses were obtained. In other cases, NGOs' representatives refused to participate in the survey mainly due to a lack of time. Some of the NGOs could not be reached at all.

On the other hand, the sample size was recalculated according to the number of NGOs identified as working with the vulnerable groups. This implied dropping NGOs that refused to participate in the survey, giving place, consequently to a correction of the sample size. Finally, 481 questionnaires filled in by representatives of the respective NGOs. This implied a final margin of error of 4.47%. Some difficulties appeared due to the reduction of the sample. In the first place, not in all countries it was possible to apply a statistical analysis, as the number of responded interviews was too low, as for example in the case of Hungary. In the countries that recollected less than 50 questionnaires, the quantitative data was only provided in frequencies.

In the most of the cases, a statistical analysis has been carried out with the data collected from the questionnaires. This compiled frequencies and percentages of the responses given to each of the questions, in order to find out the most important exclusionary or transformative elements in relation to the situation of the vulnerable groups. These were split for each vulnerable group with the purpose to find out differences and similarities among the elements influencing social inclusion and cohesion among them.

The contingency caused by the difficulties in achieving the sample of the questionnaire entailed a delay in the work plan of the rest of Project 4. It mainly affects the submission of the working papers *Social and educational exclusion from the actors' perspective* (WP15) and the activities planned within Work package 16 and 17.

2.3. Analysis of social and educational exclusion from the social agents' perspective. Data collection & Analysis II. (WP16)

In this WP, we carried out data collection and analysis focused on the perspective of vulnerable groups. Particularly, the aim was to identify key moments in people's daily lives which have influenced the development of trajectories involving exclusion in the current knowledge society. The researchers have been interested in gathering evidence which indicates the processes and strategies which make it possible to overcome this exclusion and those that reproduce exclusion. The gender dimension has been taken into account in this design process. This implied examining the link between women and exclusion/inclusion within the other vulnerable groups being researched: youth, people with disabilities, migrants and cultural groups.

The research conducted in this workpackage is based on the Communicative Methodology, according to Annex I.

The empirical data was collected through two techniques (TQ): communicative daily life stories (CDLS) and communicative focus groups (CFG). Each research team (UNIFI-Italy, CREA/UB-Spain, UVT-Romania, ELTE/BGGYFK-Hungary and UCY-Cyprus) carried out 25 CDLS and 10 CFG: 5 CDLS and 2 FG with people from each of the five established vulnerable groups, as summarized in the table below.

Groups	Migrants	Women	Cultural Groups	Youth	People with disabilities	Total
TQ						
CDLS	5	5	5	5	5	25
CFG	2	2	2	2	2	10
Total	7	7	7	7	7	35

The conduction of CDLS and CFG's had three principal areas of interest: 1) life experiences, 2) educational trajectory and 3) areas of society: employment, health, housing, and social and political participation.

As stated in the “Guidelines for the selection of participants in WP16 fieldwork” the interviewees and focus group participants were selected according to two main criteria:

- a) Representing the given vulnerable group (migrants, women, cultural groups, youth, and people with disabilities), in terms of being among those who within the vulnerable group are considered to be at most risk of social exclusion (the most socially vulnerable within the vulnerable group).
- b) Having experienced exclusionary or transformative practices. Three main profiles of participants were sought. Firstly, people having a trajectory or being in the process of overcoming the inequalities that affect the group he or she represents. Secondly, people who have experienced educational exclusion, defined as consistently low-achievement or failure to obtain the minimum standard of performance, or who have never attended or left school before finishing primary or secondary level. Finally, people who currently continue or have continued their education after having experienced educational exclusion.

The main objective of these discussions was to reflect on the strategies, conditions and factors that have caused their exclusion and at the same time the ones that helped them to be able to create a pathway to overcoming social exclusion.

All the CDLS and CFG were recorded and transcribed. To maintain the anonymity of the participants all the transcriptions were identified by a code. The transcript codes provide information on the data gathering technique, the vulnerable group, and gender. It includes a number according to the chronological order, too (see the table below).

Technique	Vulnerable group	Gender	Number
Life Story – S Focus group - G	Immigrants – I Cultural minorities – M Young people – Y Women – W People with disabilities - D	Female – F Male – M	1, 2, 3...

In order to facilitate the analysis for all partners and the coherence of the analysis, guidelines on how to proceed in the analysis were provided. These indicated, in the

first place, the complete transcription of the information obtained and then the codification in order to maintain the anonymity of the participants. For the next step an analysis grid was elaborated containing the different categories that are of main interest for the project. Thus, the data obtained was analysed using the grid that schematized, in rows and columns, the principal results through the exclusionary and transformative axis according to the methodological principles of the communicative methodology. The focus will be on the actions carried out in the five areas which are overcoming the social exclusion of vulnerable groups as well as the actions which are reproducing this exclusion. In the categories of housing, health, work and political and social participation a division is made between those actions which are connected to education and those which are not connected to it but which help vulnerable groups to overcome their exclusion. Gender perspective was analysed as a transversal category throughout the study (see the analytical grid below).

ACTIONS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO OVERCOME or REPRODUCE EXCLUSION/DISCRIMINATION									
Health		Employment		Housing		Political and social participation		Education	
Non-educational	Educational	Non-educational	Educational	Non-educational	Educational	Non-educational	Educational		
<i>Gender (a)</i>									
Exclusionary dimensions	1	3	5	7	9	11	13	15	17
Transformative dimensions	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18

In the analysis per rows, the exclusionary dimension refers to the barriers that certain people or groups face when trying to take advantage of a particular practice or social benefit. The transformative dimension is defined as a contraposition to the exclusionary dimension, and includes the elements that transform the barriers that make access to social benefits or practices difficult. In the case of Project 4, this

dimension includes the educational and non educational elements which contribute to overcoming educational and social exclusion of vulnerable groups.

In the analysis per columns, the categories make reference to elements which are related to the reproduction or overcoming of social exclusion of vulnerable groups in the different social areas, differentiating in each area whether these elements are of an educational or non-educational.

2.4. Dissemination and dialogue with stakeholders (WP17)

The results obtained from the quantitative and qualitative analyses conducted in the previous workpackages were disseminated and put into dialogue with different stakeholders. Each participant country involved in this WP (Spain, Italy, Romania, Hungary and Cyprus) carried out a workshop which counted on the participation of different social agents, national policy-makers, SMEs, members of the scientific community, educators, young researchers and representatives of social groups. These workshops were based on the guidelines provided previously in order to accomplish the main objective of the workshops which is to discuss and disseminate the results obtained throughout Project 4, specially focusing on the gender dimension of the research results. The guidelines indicated the structure of the workshop. The participants explained their experiences in overcoming social and educational exclusion to an audience composed of representatives of vulnerable groups, policy makers, junior researchers, members of the scientific community, particularly experts on school education, NGO staff, educators and other practitioners, and SMEs representatives.

The conclusions of these workshops has been recorded and then included into the Working Paper entitled *The gender dimension in processes of social and educational exclusion and inclusion amongst vulnerable groups*.

In the next sections, the main findings derived from the scientific activities and analyses carried out in Project 4 are presented. Exclusionary and transformative elements as regards the inclusion of vulnerable groups are presented separately. In each of these two sections, first the results obtained from the NGOs perspective are presented, followed by the findings obtained from the vulnerable groups'

*Report 6
Overcoming the social and educational exclusion of vulnerable groups*

perspective. Each section finishes with a discussion integrating quantitative and qualitative results. The report ends with some general conclusions. As an annex to the report, descriptive data on the NGOs participating in the questionnaire are collected.

3. Main results

3.1 Exclusionary elements

3.1.1 NGOs perspectives

Proportion of end-users with low levels of education

The professional agents from NGOs who have filled the questionnaire show that most of the end-users they are working with have low levels of education. However, differences can be seen when countries are compared. For instance, Spain is the country with a higher percentage of end-users with low educational levels: the 33% of NGOs have between half and 75% of end-users with this educational background. In Latvia, Italy and Romania the most frequent interval in the professional agents' responses is 50-25% of end-users with low educational levels. The 43% of NGO's in Romania and Italy provided this response, the 40% in Latvia and the 26% in Cyprus.

The professional agents of most of the NGO's surveyed have specially evidenced the educational exclusion of cultural minorities. Data from Spain, Cyprus and Romania shows that, among 51% to 75% of the end-users of the NGO's analysed, are members of cultural minorities which have low levels of education. In Latvia, the vulnerable group most affected by educational exclusion is disabled people.

Groups with the most educational difficulties

According with the aforementioned data from the professional agents' perspective, the vulnerable groups which are facing most educational difficulties are mainly migrant and cultural minorities, especially the Roma community.

Taking data from different countries into account we identify that migrants and migrant women in Italy are facing such difficulties, as well as in Cyprus and Spain. Roma is also a disadvantaged group in terms of educational levels in Spain, Italy, Latvia and mainly Romania. In the Spanish case, it is also found that migrant Roma

people are experiencing exclusion for being both Roma and migrants. Gender and foreign origin are also two variables leading migrant women to a double exclusion, as well as being woman and Roma. In countries like Cyprus, Spain or Latvia just being a woman entails higher risk of educational exclusion. Disabled women face educational exclusion especially in Latvia, as compared to other surveyed countries. As regards disabled people, they have in general low percentages of educational exclusion in most of the countries involved.

Educational elements which increase vulnerability during the crisis

Concerning migrants, data from almost the six countries which have carried out the survey show that having low educational levels is the strongest element that increases vulnerability during the economic crisis. Another aspect that is coincident in Spain, Cyprus, Romania, Italy and Hungary is the existence of racist prejudices in the educational system. Professional agents have agreed that migrants are particularly vulnerable to racism and that suffering racism in the educational system is one of the most exclusionary educational experiences. They also share their worries about the lack of opportunities to participate in cultural and training activities, which is solidly considered one of the main explanations to become vulnerable. Only in Italy is also significant the percentage of professionals working in NGO's that perceive the lack of cultural diversity and democratic values as a relevant difficulty for migrant people (50%).

Regarding to ethnic and cultural minorities, the most frequent answers from professional agents are similar to those provided as regards migrants. Racist prejudices, lack of opportunities to participate in educational and cultural activities and low educational levels are connected to vulnerability for this group during the financial crisis. Other elements emerge from specific countries. For instance, in Cyprus high percentages of NGOs report that school practices which separate students according their abilities or characteristics have an adverse effect on ethnic and cultural minorities. Additionally, in Italy the lack of democratic values or cultural diversity in school is considered a big difficulty to overcome minorities' vulnerable situation. Finally, in Latvia the scarce involvement of family and community in the learning processes is also underlined as a significant aspect related to social inequalities of this group.

Women with low educational levels are also facing strong difficulties in the current financial crisis. The data analysis of all the countries coincide on this issue, but this educational inequality has a big impact in women's and their families' quality of life especially in two countries: Romania and Latvia. Other elements are also frequently reported. This is the case of violence against women or sexual harassment in the school context, which is identified in Cyprus and Romania as a key aspect that drives women to vulnerability. Unequal gender roles are also identified in Cyprus and Italy.

Regarding youth, low educational levels are the most frequently reported element by the professional agents leading to increasing vulnerability during the crisis. The results of the majority of countries also show that not having higher education is causing difficulties to access to labour market. On the other hand, and linked to this difficulty, early school leaving associated with few opportunities to return to school and to access higher education is also another element which is acting as a barrier for youth in Spain, Cyprus and Romania. Italian professionals also perceive that young students who do not have paid employment and who have little benefit provisions available to them is making youth social inclusion more difficult. From Latvia, difficulties in studies and a lack of support from teachers are both considered as elements that contribute to drive youth to social exclusion.

Finally, concerning to people with disabilities, low level of education is a common element that professional agents state that is affecting strongly this group. Another element that is being highlighted in all the surveys is the lack of human resources to attend students with disabilities in regular schools.

Women as the group with the most educational difficulties

There is an important consensus about women and their educational vulnerability checking the results of the six surveys carried out. Most of the countries' analyses confirm that women suffer more educational difficulties within different vulnerable groups. Professional agents from Italy, Latvia, Cyprus and Romania have highlighted that migrant women and women with disabilities are the most affected ones.

3.1.2 Vulnerable groups' perspectives

In this section we highlight the four main common exclusionary components identified according to the perspectives of the different vulnerable groups. In addition, when relevant, we mention the way these exclusionary components affect in a particular way to one or several of these groups.

Discriminatory attitudes, prejudices, and stigmatization processes

The data collected show that one of the main barriers that people belonging to vulnerable groups face are discriminatory attitudes, such as racism, prejudices from the mainstream society for belonging to a particular group or stigmatization processes in social institutions and public services. These situations affect women, cultural groups, migrants, people with disabilities, and young people in different ways. However, in all the cases, these are barriers which make it difficult for these people to develop their full potentials in society. As Amartya Sen (1999) stressed, the potential development of capacities of people is a key issue to overcome poverty and exclusion. Whenever structural components of society or social attitudes and behaviours hinder this development of capacities (i.e. capacity to follow a lifelong learning path, capacity to enjoy equal possibilities in the labour market, capacity to access public services or capacity to full social and political participation) the chances of overcoming exclusion diminish. In Project 4, these barriers have been identified in different social domains.

As the European Court of Human Rights clarified, the principle of non-discrimination is violated not only when states treat persons in analogous situations differently, but also when states without an objective and reasonable justification fail to treat differently persons whose situations are significantly different (EURAC, 2003). Several evidences of violation of the principle of non-discrimination have been found through our analysis.

Migrant people find discrimination very clear in different areas of society. As regards the area of health, **Muslim migrant reported perceived discrimination in health services** for wearing the veil, among other reasons. This discrimination is important not only because of the impact it has on the women's health but also because women's health is found to be directly associated with the access to health

and the welfare of the rest of family members (Sen, 1999 & Stein, 1997). A Moroccan woman in Spain working as a mediator for the city council explained this discrimination it in this way:

Yes, as I spent almost fifteen days in the hospital I got to know other women, they wear a veil and... told me about their situation and that people treat her very bad... that the nurse also treat her very bad... and not... and when meet them they say bad words. And they tell her – why are you here, why don't you go to your country... This is one woman whom I met there and told me this... [...] told me that doctors treat her very bad, the nurses, where she lived, as well... thing like these. (Moroccan migrant woman, Spain).

Prejudices have a very damaging effect as regards the inclusion in the employment field as well. In Italy, Cyprus, Spain and Romania, these prejudices take the form of **institutional and social barriers that are hindering the opportunities of inclusion in the labour market** of some people belonging to these vulnerable groups. The **lack of recognition of qualifications** obtained by migrants in their home country is one important barrier in this regard. This situation forced many of them to accept low-qualified jobs due to the institutional failure in the accreditation of their credentials. The consequences are twofold. On the one hand, it results for the host society in an inefficient use of the human resources available in the country. On the other hand, for migrant people, these circumstances have a tremendous impact on their labour and educational trajectories. Women are again one group especially affected by this exclusionary situation. The lack of recognition of qualifications of women led many of them to **accepting very bad working conditions** that autochthonous people are not willing to accept, for example, a total commitment of 24 hours a day without any private space or chances to rest. The following quote from a migrant woman in Italy reflects this situation:

It's really an experience I don't wish on anyone. I don't wish it on anyone because it means a kind of prison, a kind of prison, let's say, I called it modern slavery, yes, yes, that's what I called it, modern slavery because it's modern in the sense that at least you're paid, but working 24 hours a day doesn't exist at all, one is deprived of their freedom, because you don't move like you want to, you don't rest when you want, you don't sleep when you want, it's difficult. (Migrant woman, Italy)

Another group affected by labour discrimination is **young people with low qualifications**. Lack of education or lack of academic credentials as a consequence of an early drop out from school lead to social exclusion of young people, as they have many difficulties to access the labour market or to overcome precarious conditions in it. They face **precarious contracts, abusive situations and lack information** related to contracting conditions. An 18 year old girl who completed their secondary education in an adult school explained her limited possibilities to obtain a job because of her low level of education:

Interviewer: *What problems did you find in getting a job?*

Many requested studies, or at least secondary school, and since I did not complete it... Well, in factories, hairdressers, and even to be a garbage collector they always request secondary education. In many places, also in stores (Young woman, Spain)

Importantly, **young people** from Spain and Cyprus **who are facing labour discrimination have already suffered from stigmatization in school**, from teachers or other peer students, which has affected their educational trajectories. Thus, in these cases, **social exclusion at present has its origins in educational actions that were not effective to promote their educational success in the past**. As is explained in the following quote, young people find that schools not being able to deal with diversity lead to their educational exclusion:

Not only the system does not attract student towards education, it even repels them. When a student is different or causes trouble at school the teachers tend to label them as problematic and exclude them from the group so that they can go on with their work without having to deal with them (Young person, Cyprus).

More specifically, the lack of support and being segregated from the other students through streaming practices are characteristics of the educational actions young people lived in the school which they associate to their failure in the educational system, as reflected in this group of young people:

And you take it on, you take on that role. But the worse was when they divided up the classes and they denominated them "the Z, the Y and the

W” classes, and so it was the stupid class, the not so stupid class and the clever class (...). Those put in the stupid class would say “they have put me in here because I don’t know how to study, I am stupid” and we became even more settled. (Group of young people, Spain).

People with disabilities are also affected by discrimination in different areas of society, contributing to their social exclusion. Disabled people from Spain have expressed facing discrimination in their access to employment and in education. In Cyprus, Italy, Romania and Hungary discrimination also takes places in the fields of housing, health and political and social participation. Also their inclusion in different spaces of social and political participation is hindered by stigmatization processes they link with the fact of having a disability, which constitute from their experience a cultural aspect of exclusion. This is how a person with a disability explained their experience in their neighbourhood.

In my neighbourhood they used to stare at me a bit awkward to examine if I am able to walk or if they could tell there is a difference between my legs. I had difficulties because I live in a village that doesn’t have the infrastructure to support access for people with disabilities.” (person with disability, Cyprus).

These **processes of stigmatization in occasions also start in schools, when children are being excluded from participation due to not having into account the disability or not having it into account properly.** This was found in Romania, Italy and Spain. In these cases, actions aimed at achieving a full inclusion of children with disabilities are not implemented and as a consequence the disability can even increase –especially if disability is understood as the interaction between the individual handicap and the context–. This has a twofold impact: on the one hand, starting the exclusionary process in spaces of participation and, on the other hand, reducing the learning opportunities of the disabled students. This leads to decreased opportunities for social and political participation in the long term. A women who is deaf in one ear and works nowadays as a social cooperative coordinator explained her school experience in this way:

A teacher tried to put my desk next to the teacher’s desk. It was terrible for me, first of all for lip reading and then she made me listen... why? The

worst thing you can do. Among other things, since my problem is the right ear, she put me on the wrong side. Because in those days a person with disabilities was a little neglected, terrible, it was even worse for me because it increased my disability, I heard even less. I told my mother, who went to talk with the teacher and the problem was solved. (Woman with a disability, Italy)

Stigmatization leads to exclusionary practices towards different vulnerable groups. **Regarding cultural minorities, the lack of knowledge about them has led to the development of prejudices against them in the mainstream society.** These **stereotypes limit tremendously their employment opportunities.** A member of the Roma community, for example, shares his personal experience of exclusion following the public recognition of his Roma condition, regardless he was doing well his job:

I did not do my work neither better nor worse than anybody, I simply did my work and hours, always... besides I am a very punctual person. And one day with the guy in the warehouse while loading the goods for the shops we had the radio on. And there a flamenco song came and so we started to talk, about Roma, flamenco and so. And as I am very proud of who I am and I don't need to deny it, so it came up that I was Roma. Well, nothing, everything Ok, I left to deliver the goods. (...) in the morning I came early, start loading and he said – no, no, go to the office, they want to talk to you. So they gave me some papers: "sign these, we will pay you more than you have earned and don't ask anything." (Roma man, Spain)

Another social domain where **racist prejudices and discriminatory attitudes have been identified is housing, especially as regards migrants and Roma people.** The fieldwork conducted allowed identifying some of these attitudes: landlords do not want to rent their flats to Roma people, neighbours prefer not to have them in their community and other people avoid moving to areas where Roma people live, which creates or maintains ghetto-like areas. Roma people face many difficulties to access the housing market and these inadequate housing conditions cause a sequence of intertwined difficulties, both at a public and a personal level. Examples of these situations are limited employment possibilities, the exposure to

deteriorated environments and relationships in suburban areas, time consuming travelling to reach the workplace, etc. The following quotation of a Roma man illustrates the aforementioned discriminatory practices:

Also wanting to rent housing or to buy it is a real problem. Or let's say, there are people who have sent maybe a friend who is not Roma to ask about the conditions, to see what they offer and then get involved. Up to this. And once you got into it, it's already (...), right? This is a constant barrier, the people who let it or sell, and the community of neighbours. It's really dreadful. Or let's say, the racism there is very strong, very strong, very strong. (Roma man, Spain)

The limited interactions between people belonging to different cultural groups and the people from the mainstream society can become a factor which helps to explain this mistrust towards diversity. The lack of communication within the neighbourhood makes the overcoming of prejudices difficult, as in the case explained by this Moroccan woman:

The other parents don't talk to me. Some of them they tell me "Hello, how are you?", but nothing more. I would like the people to talk to me more. I want to talk with them. In my neighbourhood it is also the same. Most of the people don't talk to me. There is only one woman in the neighbourhood that talks to me a bit more, but not a lot. I would like them to talk more with me. Also, when I am with my children, my children always say hi to people very enthusiastically, but the people respond very fast and walk away.

Interviewer: *Why do you think that the people don't talk with you?*

I don't know. Maybe because I am wearing a veil. (Moroccan housewife, Spain)

Difficulties in communication: Use of technical language or lack of language proficiency

Not speaking the mainstream language can lead to suffering discriminatory attitudes in the health care system, which reflect the racist attitudes present in our societies towards some migrant and minority groups. In these cases, the

physical vulnerability of these people increases as they do not obtain full information or adequate medical treatment because of their origin. This is particularly serious in situations when lives of people are at risk.

For example, an immigrant interviewee in Cyprus told about his experience with a health professional when he visited the hospital after an injury. As he explained, he was excluded from receiving important information regarding his health and was verbally assaulted by a doctor because he could not speak Greek very well:

Well, I beat my head with one table in my job and then I decided to go to the hospital to stitch it, ok? Once I reached there I waited in the waiting room for more than four hours. Then the doctor came to me to see what is going on with me and he started talking in Greek. Actually, I know some Greek but I don't understand it very well. Then he told me something in Greek and I told him: "Sorry I don't understand can you speak in English?". Then he told me in a very very rude way: "You are in Cyprus you are not asking me if I speak English, you should speak Greek, even if you are going to die I don't care", and he started talking with the nurse in Greek. Then he left the room and he left me with the nurse. The nurse knew very bit of English, I explained to her what happened to me and this and that. Then he came back and he told her: "Tell him to go home, he has nothing, tell him to go home". He didn't even explain to me anything, which medicine to buy, what to do in order to cover this wood, he said nothing. So that was a very bad experience of discrimination. (Moroccan man, Cyprus).

Lack of language proficiency is also hindering migrants from social and political participation, which becomes even more difficult when they do not have the citizenship:

Yes, of course. Imagine, if you go for example to a neighbourhood party and you don't speak, in the party everything is in Catalan, for example, everything is explained in Catalan and you do not understand Catalan, then either you don't go, or go for a while, for fifteen minutes at most, and you get bored and go back home. (Moroccan Woman, Spain).

The **use of technical language in different social domains also causes exclusionary situations**. An example of this can be found again in the area of health, where migrants often do not understand the technical terms (special terminology and complicated ways of expression) used by health professionals. This behaviour prevents them from receiving essential information about their health and the necessary actions to improve it. One element highlighted in the fieldwork conducted is that the medical personnel uses a very sophisticated language and specific medical terms not only with migrant people who lack the language proficiency, but also with patients who have low levels of education and, therefore, are not able to understand it. It is an example of an exclusionary behaviour which violates the rights of specific groups, for example, low-educated young people or Roma:

.. yes, I know about other people that yes, that they were not treated well, that they use a language... because they know that these are maybe illiterate people who can't read nor write. Of course, their level of comprehension is very basic and they use a very very sophisticated way of expression and this person does not understand what is said. In this respect it is very often. When... once I took somebody to the hospital and a Roma person came, elderly, illiterate. And they used such a language with her that the woman did not understand anything. Well, when she left, I entered and they lowered the level. When talking among doctors, the porter and the security guard who were there, they didn't use such a technical language as they did with the Roma woman who was illiterate. And I was – What is going on here? How annoying. (Roma man, Spain).

I am not subscribed at any family doctor and I usually go to the public hospital but there I am badly treated because I am Roma and I don't understand the diagnostic that they tell me. (Roma man, Romania)

Situations like these difficult the access of people from some vulnerable groups to universal health provision, as well as hinder the developing of efficient health systems.

Sexism reinforcing social exclusion

One of the exclusionary components that affect particularly one of the vulnerable groups -women- is sexism. Girls belonging to vulnerable groups experience sexism

in many situations during their school time. Most of the interviewees declare that, when they were younger, they felt discriminated in schools, this fact having a large impact on their educational trajectories. Many of them left the school without having acquired a basic education, and subsequently sexism in education lead to major discrimination in women's life.

One of the social areas in which this kind of discrimination is more evident is the labour market, as it has been widely analyzed in the gender literature (Bechtold, 2008; Vendramin, 2004). In the Italian fieldwork, many of the interviewees referred to this when they explained their feeling of discrimination:

It wasn't as if there was discrimination, but, between the lines, they asked me something that was unlawful to ask, if I had been a man they wouldn't have asked, as if to say that if you want to have children we'll hire you on a fixed-term contract, because if you get pregnant we can't fire you, then you sue us, it was a problem because it was one of the first questions I was asked [...] they actually asked me that even at the last interview I had and they hired me, you actually get used to it, you answer more serenely.
(Group of people from cultural minorities, Italy).

Sexism is present not only in the selection process, but also later in work relations, as data from interviews demonstrate:

At work I did [feel discriminated] because men are always preferred over women, and I have had many discussions with mm, with the [female] boss I had...I stood up for that and told it, but it was useless, because in the end the salary was different, no, no, they weren't the same. Although I complained and discussed, I actually felt discriminated due to the education, see, I felt, mmm, I felt awful, the point is that well, I did as I did not bother
(Woman, Spain)

Due to sexism in education and employment women often suffer multiple discriminations – because of being women and if they belong to any other vulnerable groups, for example, immigrant women, women from cultural minorities, young women, women with disabilities, their discrimination increases.

Physical barriers and lack of infrastructure excludes people with disabilities

For the people with physical disabilities one of the main obstacles is the lack of adequate infrastructure that leads to exclusion in all areas of life – starting from education and housing, to employment and health, as well as for social and political participation. People with disabilities participating in the fieldwork have provided first-hand experiences in situations of discrimination, as is the case of a woman in a wheelchair from Romania, who explained how these barriers, and the lack of effective policies to overcome them, made her be discriminated in the access to appropriate housing:

Because I am in a wheelchair I asked for a house at the first floor to the municipalities on the basis of an existing law in our country and they did not do anything, they were arrogant and didn't paid attention to my needs.
(Woman with a disability, Romania)

In a similar vein, in Hungary people with disabilities have reported living in houses that do not meet the basic standards for their independence – for instance, there might be structural barriers to access the flat or to move freely indoors, or they are located too far from social services, schools etc. The same happens in Italy, where people with disabilities have complained about the impossibility of having a house for themselves to carry and independent life. They feel as well that houses do not usually meet their needs, even social housing, as they might lack a lift, or the doors are too small for a wheelchair. The same situation is found in public spaces and offices, very often even in educational contexts.

Education is a field in which access barriers are also identified as exclusionary. The lack of transport facilities, equipment and social services makes not possible the integration of children with severe and multiple handicaps in mainstream schools, leading to these children even not attend school at all. These difficulties were found in Romania, where two disabled people reflected on their personal experiences:

The school does not adapt to the needs of a person with disabilities, I had to adapt to the school. I graduated at a district school where it was very

difficult to move with a wheelchair because of the space but also the people mentality. (Person with a disability, Romania,)

When my colleagues visited different museums or they had presentation at the city hall, in the theatre, my teacher always told me that I should stay at home because these events are not for me as I am in a wheelchair. (Person with a disability, Romania)

3.1.3 Discussion on the exclusionary elements

When considering exclusionary elements, the first point to be made is that both the professionals in the NGOs and the vulnerable groups are in accordance on what the main exclusionary practices are. They both identify **education as an important field where exclusionary practices take place and therefore from where they could be prevented**. Data from NGOs support this statement: many of the people NGOs work with have low levels of education. Many people who belong to vulnerable groups are especially prone to experience educational exclusion that can badly affect their educational development and academic achievement. As a matter of fact, 51% to 75% of NGO's end-users are members of cultural minorities with low levels of education. In other cases, some migrant people have educational degrees which are not recognised in the host countries.

According to this reality, NGO's have pointed out that educational exclusion often results in limited future opportunities for people belonging to vulnerable groups, mainly in the case of cultural minorities or migrant groups, and that it increases their vulnerability, specially now with the economic crisis. Thus, suffering from exclusion at school can also increase the stigmatization vulnerable people might experience in later stages of their lives, for example, having more difficulties in finding a job.

To sum up, **four main exclusionary components have been identified, namely 1) discriminatory attitudes, prejudices, and stigmatization processes; 2) difficulties in communication due to the lack of domain of technical language or the lack of language proficiency; 3) sexism, which**

reinforces women's exclusion; and 4) physical barriers and the lack of infrastructure which works against the inclusion of people with disabilities.

3.2 Transformative elements

3.2.1 NGOs perspectives

Educational elements to overcome exclusion

The results from most of the surveys – five countries – indicate three specific elements, which are contributing to the overcoming of educational exclusion affecting migrant people: the participation in educational, training or cultural activities; the promotion of democratic and antiracist values, and the family and community participation in the schools. In Cyprus, professionals in NGOs working with migrant involved in the study reported that “having low levels of education” (4.14²³ -mean value-), or “having experienced racist prejudices and a lack of democratic values in the host country” (4.14 mean value-), are the main reasons for exclusion. This information is consistent with data coming from other countries, such as Spain, where the two main reasons for experiencing exclusion by migrant people are the same (4.48 and 4.07–mean values–) respectively.

But there are other elements identified which are strongly well considered as promoting the overcoming of exclusion. For instance, in Italy the inclusion of more teachers or other people into schools to attend to the diversity of the students and heterogeneous grouping is highly quoted by professionals. Additionally, support activities classes outside school hours are also well valued (3.95 –mean value-) by Latvian and Cypriot NGOs professionals.

Similar results have been identified in the analysis regarding the situation of cultural minorities. So, to increase opportunities to participate in educational, training or cultural activities have been stated by NGOs professionals from Romania, Cyprus, Spain and Latvia as a key aspect to overcome educational exclusion. Promoting democratic and antiracist values in the school context has also relevantly responded in Spain (4.31 –mean value-), Cyprus (3.71 –mean value-)

²³ Values range from 1 (meaning that respondents have not been vulnerable at all) and 5 (meaning that respondents have been very vulnerable).

and Italy (63.9% answered “very important” in this item). The inclusion of more people into schools to attend to the diversity of the students is well valued in Spain (4.11 –mean value-) and Cyprus (3.29 –mean value-), and the community participation in Latvia (4.00 -mean value-) and Spain (3.91 – mean value-).

Among the NGOs professional responses about women, the promotion of preventive socialisation of gender violence is significantly quoted in Spain (4.65 –mean value), Cyprus (4.55 –mean value-) and Italy (50% of the NGOs interviewed highlighted this element), as well as the need to work towards more egalitarian male models and towards the overcoming of unequal gender roles in the school, mentioned in Cyprus (4.55 –mean value-) and Latvia.

Regarding data about youth, there is a huge consensus from NGOs professionals about which elements are contributing to overcome educational exclusion within this group. The first element is, as we have seen in the previous groups, the increase of educational levels (4.30 in Cyprus, 4.71 in Spain –mean values-). The second element highly identified is the family and community involvement into the school (4.71 in Spain, 4.21 in Cyprus –mean values-). The third element greatly answered is the support received from teachers (4.61 in Spain), which is considered as a key element to avoid school failure.

Finally, and concerning to people with disabilities, there are two main elements that professionals in NGOs in almost all the countries coincide about: the promotion of positive relationships between people with disabilities and other non-disabled people (4.75 –mean value-, in Cyprus, and 4.56 in Spain, and 4.80 in Romania), and to increase the opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in educational, training or cultural activities (4.60 in Romania, 4.54 in Spain, and 4.63 in Cyprus –mean values-). These elements are perceived as contributing the most to overcome people with disabilities’ vulnerability. Other elements also pointed out by Latvian and Romanian NGOs are the inclusion of additional teachers or people into schools to attend students with disabilities within the regular schools and classrooms. Professionals in Cypriot NGOs also significantly remarks the use of school practices which do not separate these students from other students according to their ability (4.56 –mean value-).

Transformative elements in education, employment, health, housing, and political and social participation

In this section we provide a summary of the common transformative elements identified across countries (Latvia, Italy, Cyprus, Spain and Romania) by the NGOs involved in the survey process. These practices include actions in the fields of education, employment, health, housing and political and social participation.

Transformative elements in education

Several transformative elements have been identified along the six surveys carried out. There are relevant coincidences within vulnerable groups and differences as well. For instance, concerning to migrant, the development of courses aimed to learn autochthonous language is considered as a transformative element in Spain, Cyprus, Italy and Romania. Learning Spanish, Catalan, Greek, Italian or Romanian becomes essential from the point of view of the professionals in the NGOs. Other elements, which have been recognized as transformative from Spanish NGOs is the provision of general support and monitoring for migrant children.

In relation to cultural minorities it is remarkable the connections between surveys carried out in Spain, Italy and Romania. Literacy classes for adult people from cultural groups are highlighted as a transformative element as well as to provide additional support to students in primary and secondary education. There are several specificities in Romania and Italy regarding this additional support. For instance, in Romania this one needs to be connected to prevent absenteeism, and in Italy the link that these actions must have with the eradication of racist attitudes is highlighted.

Literacy classes and lifelong learning are stressed also as transformative element in contributing to overcome the exclusion affecting specific groups of women. Training is perceived as fundamental to overcome the vulnerability situation of women with low educational levels or who have had limited access to education. Spanish, Cypriot and Italian results identified this element as a priority action to be addressed for these women. Cypriot professionals highlight the relevance to increase women's opportunities in promoting the access to information about

courses and possibilities that help them to be more informed about their rights. Finally, Romanian NGOs put special attention to economic support for women with limited opportunities, mainly migrant women or women with low levels of education.

Professionals working in NGOs focused on youth mentioned that many elements that have transformative results are addressed to prevent drop out and absenteeism of this group. Spanish, Cypriot, Italian and Romanian survey's results coincide in this conclusion as well as in highlighting the relevance of elements which give students extra support after school schedule or actions addressed to students who have not previous access to school. Latvian data stress the relevance of providing information and assessment about work and opportunities to youth who are living in rural areas.

Referring to people with disabilities' actions, there is a wide agreement to consider the access to education as the most important practice to reduce this group vulnerability. All the countries present similar results, although in some cases, like in Latvian and Spanish ones, is stressed the necessity to organize inclusive classes to avoid segregation of this group. Latvian NGOs also emphasized music and occupational therapies, physiotherapy and speech and language therapy on all educational levels as a priority to this group.

Transformative elements in employment

Regarding the specific situation of migrants, cultural minorities, women and young people in the labour market, professionals from NGOs highlight the positive effects of education in people's rights in order to avoid abusive labour contracts. Among migrants the focus was to guarantee the access to information on work regulations, immigration laws, and people's rights and obligations, whereas for women the emphasis was put on guaranteeing equal rights for men and women. Furthermore, professionals from the NGOs identified the promotion of entrepreneurship and self-employment among, for example, migrants or cultural minorities as a transformative element to help them overcoming social exclusion. Specifically, in Cyprus the professionals highlight the need to guarantee the legal recognition of

asylum of migrants in order to facilitate they can work legally. Concerning cultural minorities, only the Spanish data presents some results on this group and transformative elements in employment.

Regarding the group of women, professionals stress the transformative of programmes promoting employability through training actions addressed to women in areas with good job prospects and not limiting them to traditionally female employment areas. In Cyprus, the programme EQUAL makes special emphasis on informing young women about their rights based on the constitutional law in order to reassure that they receive the same treatment in work settings as men do. Other programmes, identified in Cyprus and Latvia, are devoted to support women who have been working at home for many years. In Latvia a special focus was set on employing women with disabilities in the NGO's projects in order to help them acquiring working and communication skills.

Transformative elements addressing young people, according to the NGOs professionals in Spain, Italy, Latvia and Cyprus are providing internships in order to gain work experience, improving regulations to prevent precarious situations, and to provide facilities to conciliate their work with their studies.

Regarding people with disabilities, the NGOs professionals underline the support in finding work and help them to remain in their workplace. In Spain, the NGOs stress the need to inform the employers about the people's ability to work, and to introduce affirmative actions to promote their inclusion in the labour market.

Transformative elements in health

Young people are identified as a target population in this area, since in many countries teenagers do not have the same opportunities (or information) to family planning programs, as other groups. Seminars or other educative programs aimed at prevention by providing information and education (about drug abuse, sexual and reproductive health, engaging in risk behaviour, prevention of gender violence, sex and affection, etc.), improve significantly Youngers' healthy levels. For this reason, specific programs aimed to this group of people produce high rates of healthier behaviours, according to the NGOs.

The elements highly rated by NGOs professionals in Cyprus and Spain are related to incorporate migrants into the autochthonous health system. In Spain some aspects are described concerning this aspect, for instance to help people obtaining the health care card as essential for migrants' well being. Having universal access to this "health card" is very important since it opens the possibility for migrants (without green card) also to be visited by a doctor, which increases their chances to improve their health rates. On the other hand, to inform migrant people about the organizations which provide health care is also described as a positive element as well as raising awareness amongst medical personnel on linguistic and intercultural diversity of population. In Italy, the results also suggest the relevance to organize informative meetings with migrant women in order they could be well informed about health issues.

This also applies for other European regions. In Latvia, for example, NGOs reported the organization of seminars aimed on health issues as a transformative element to improve the levels of health of vulnerable populations. Women are one of the groups most benefited from those actions, and this practice also has strong impact on their opportunities to get involved in other activities. According to the Latvian NGOs, being healthy allows more women to be involved in the labour market, which also increases their autonomy and freedom. Finally, professionals in Spain and Italy also highlight the relevance of actions for the prevention and early detection of diseases. Indeed, professionals remark the importance of regular medical tests in order to identify as soon as possible any potential diseases and to make the correct decision to face it.

Transformative elements in housing

The survey conducted over the different European countries involved in the fieldwork suggests the importance of clear information available both for tenants and landlords, in order to avoid either abuse or fraud. Elements aimed to provide this kind of support have a strong impact as positive elements to foster inclusive housing of some people belonging to some of the vulnerable groups studied. The NGOs, for example, reported that immigrants are one of the most vulnerable groups in having access to decent housing. Migrants should afford obstacles such as

lack of legal status, high rates of mobility across the territory (looking for / developing jobs), etc. In this situation, shelter homes for emergency cases and subsidized temporary housing are examples of elements that improve the chances immigrants have in order to access a decent house.

However, this is not the only situation that emerges from the data collected throughout the survey. Another common situation identified deals with the social prejudices present in our societies against certain groups of immigrants. In order to overcome these, NGOs professionals also call for specific educative programs addressed both for immigrants (tenants) and potential landlords, in order to explain the rights and duties of tenants and landlords, to avoid any possible abuse or misbehaviour.

In addition, in some of the countries involved in the survey (Spain, Cyprus), collective elements are also productive in terms of helping people to have access to decent housing. Monitoring resettlement, neighbourhood mediation, assisted housing, are examples of elements promoted and lead by the community (the neighbours, etc.) to improve the conditions of living in certain urban areas, avoiding ghettoization, for example.

The case of women and youth is somehow slightly different. Having access to decent housing is a crucial factor for women who are victims of gender violence, and need to get away from their home. In this case, policies such as sheltered homes available for these women are improving their living conditions. Professionals working in NGOs from Spain, Cyprus, Italy, report positively on the existence of such programs. In the other side, young people usually are confronted towards an expensive market to have access to a decent housing. Although networking strategies are reported in the literature review as transformative strategies to overcome this barrier, NGOs also claim for the need of specific elements to make housing affordable for this target population.

Finally, regarding the situation of people with disabilities in housing, some NGOs professionals report many different elements that are producing positive impact in facilitating people with disabilities' lives, including solutions to facilitate architectural access to buildings, adaptation of flats, emergency services to attend urgent situations in a short period of times (direct phone lines to the closer emergency

point), etc. NGOs in Spain and Cyprus highlight the importance of providing enough resources to make people with disabilities feel independent.

Transformative elements in political and social participation

In all countries involved in the survey process, NGOs professionals claim for the need to find ways to foster “citizenship”, that is: to promote an active role in participating and taking part within the society, in its different fields (politics, economy, cultural activities, etc.). In this sense, vulnerable groups use to have fewer opportunities than other groups to active participate in the public arena (throughout associations, events, etc.). In Spain, the NGOs surveyed state the importance of opening opportunities for people from vulnerable groups to get involved in spaces from the civil society. The transformative elements quoted in the interviews highlight the relevance of the existence of some associations or entities (migrants’ organisations, women’ organizations, youth’ organisations, etc.) to provide real opportunities for individuals to get involved and develop their citizenship. This is also true in other countries, such as Cyprus. In this case, another important fact coming out of the analysis of the data collected is the dialogue (or connection) between the activities conducted by the organisation and the real problems emerging from the everyday live of the people. For example, some of the Cypriot NGOs professionals evoke the importance of promoting social inclusion programs to help immigrants to better navigate the process of living in another country.

Another important dimension connected to the political and social participation is the idea of “empowerment”. Transformative elements entail a sense of empowerment for the individuals involved in them. For example, the existence and development of women’s networks is reported as a transformative element in Spain, since it helps women to empower their identity and to have more resources to face difficult situations such as gender violence or abuses, among others. NGO’s from Latvia, Cyprus, Italy or Spain highlighted this same factor in the data collected.

Finally, another factor emerging from the analysis suggests that volunteering may provide to many people a way to get involved in the civil society. NGOs from Spain,

Latvia, Cyprus, and Italy emphasize that volunteering may be a way, especially for youth, to start playing an active role in the society.

Other practices in NGOs to overcome exclusion

Three additional elements were analysed within the survey to determine their impact in terms of explaining how to overcome exclusion affecting some people belonging to vulnerable groups. These three elements are:

- The participation in the management of the NGOs
- The participation in decision making processes (e.g. identification of requirements, needs and priorities) within the NGO.
- Raising awareness of the element which the NGO is carrying out in order to help to overcome the situation of exclusion / vulnerability of groups, in order to promote their participation in the NGO.

According to the data collected in Italy, Cyprus, Spain and Latvia, “participation in decision making” and “raising awareness” are the two more powerful and fruitful components, in terms of actions that contribute to overcome exclusion.

Gender dimension: Elements to overcome the exclusion of women

Data collected shows clearly that women are the ones from the vulnerable groups whom experience a more diverse variety of forms of exclusion. This occurs in all the countries involved in the survey. Professionals in all of them report the weak position occupied by women from any vulnerable group. Migrant women, young women, women with disabilities, are always the ones who face worse situations because they need to fight against social exclusion from the society in general, but also within the groups they belong to. Women from these vulnerable groups find more difficult to access to the educational system, and/or to remain in it, especially after the compulsory education period, as reported in the Italian survey data. This situation has a dramatic impact on women's chances to have access to employment, health, housing, and political and social participation, in crisis times. Data collected suggest that the most important factor, which increases the

vulnerability of women during the time of financial crisis, is low levels of education which still have many of them. In general, the NGOs interviewed highlight the importance of spaces for women to promote their participation and their involvement. When women, especially those who have been traditionally silenced, can express themselves in relevant decision-making processes, more possibilities for the overcoming of their exclusion are created.

3.2.2 Vulnerable groups' perspectives

From the researches analysed, it arises the urgent need for a global rethink and reassessment of educational programs and social policies in other areas with the objectives to integrate vulnerable groups into the mainstream of social and political life and to promote broad cultural renewal based on human rights principles.

The research carried out in Project 4 has allowed us to identify different strategies that have contributed to the overcoming of situations of exclusion –both educational and social- for the five vulnerable groups analysed in the INCLUD-ED project. The different analysis carried out in this project has allowed contrasting the knowledge from various sources (literature, social agents and vulnerable groups) to contribute with those critical elements that are key for the overcoming of the trajectories of exclusion –educational and social- faced by the vulnerable groups. This contrast that connects the system (scientific literature) with the agency (social agents) through the critical dialogue with the vulnerable groups, has allowed going one step beyond in the proposal of actions for the overcoming of social and educational exclusion.

The proposal that arose from this analysis touches on different areas. We have highlighted here some of the contributions and most significant actions that, according to the social agent's involved in the field work, are contributing to overcome the situation of exclusion.

Migrants

Inclusion of cultural role models in spaces of dialogic participation. Areas: Education/Social participation.

The scientific literature on the contributions of having cultural mediators participating in schools or associations, in hospitals and other public institutions is ample and shows the positive effects of introducing cultural role models as a link between two cultures, two lifeworlds (Schütz, 1980). It has become increasingly clear that mediation is a tool to prevent educational difficulties for children at risk (Ivancic et al, 2008). Socio-cultural mediators support the integration of ethnic minority and migrant children in schools and elsewhere (Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency, 2009). Beyond that, through the analysis with the vulnerable groups, **the INCLUD-ED project has found how there are persons, representatives of the vulnerable groups who are acting as successful role models** (Lockwood, & Marshall, 2005) -not as an external expert- but as a mere participant in a dialogic space. In particular, through the involvement of migrant and cultural minorities' relatives in educational centres and other institutions -as volunteers or professionals in already existing jobs- real successful role models are created. These adults serve as role models for children to look up to but also as an inspiring source of motivation for other adults. In the following case, a migrant mother who is a volunteer in a learning community in Spain follows the model of another mother in her successful path to going back to education. This school is conceived as a dialogic space meant to include all community voices, to foster community participation and facilitate interaction and dialogue. The engagement and commitment within this dialogic space contributes to enable a further engagement that goes beyond the walls of the learning community, having an impact in other spaces.

...what also gave me much strength to start studying anew was the CEIP Montserrat [learning community school] where there is the head of studies (...)and she explained me long ago, when I was a volunteer in the school, she told me that she was an immigrant with two children, separated and she studied, you know? And this has helped me a lot, so she can, having two children and I can't and I have one daughter? You know? It helped me a lot to take the first step and once you take the first step, everything else is much easier then. (SIF4, 18, 151)

The same voluntary mother becomes a model for others beyond the walls of this space of dialogic participation. She is giving to migrant families and students an example to overcome difficulties, becoming a critical element for the success of other girls.

There were two Moroccan girls, the father of the one wanted that she goes to Morocco, and she was in the 4th grade of compulsory secondary education, and the teacher told me that if she will finish, she would be able to follow a course for nurse, you know? And I spoke to her father, and finally he allowed her to stay. She finished her 4th grade, and is now studying to become a nurse (...) she came to the party of the group of newcomers, she was talking there, and I also explained them that I myself am studying and working, and I have a daughter, and well, two of them said to me: "We will also do like you". (SIF4, 18, 147).

The reflection of this migrant mother confirms the evidence suggested in the literature that the presence of migrants as school staff or like volunteers play a key role in different aspects of their own and others' successful trajectories (ECOTEC, 2008).

Inclusion of immigrant voices within decision-making processes. Areas: Education/Social participation.

NGO's respondents who work with migrants highlight the importance to encourage the involvement of migrants in associations (Abu-Ryya, 2009) and different forms of civic engagement (e.g. volunteering) as it increases their ability to demand that their rights be respected. Furthermore, what INCLUD-ED has identified is that **involvement of migrants in decision-making processes in these organisations becomes a critical element for engagement and participation**. Democratic structures in adult education and NGOs gave them the opportunity to speak up, tell their story, empowering them to transform their lives and their communities (Ganz, 2010). The fact that it is the end-users who decide on what to do and how to organise it, contributes to them getting responses to their needs. Democratic adult education for instance is based on the fact that training activities are tailored considering the needs and interests of migrant people as well, be it the schedule of the courses or the contents to be taught (Junn, 2004). The following reflections from an Ecuadorian man from Spain confirm the fact that having participatory decision-making processes in an adult education centre

promotes the usefulness of the training and their continuation in the educational system.

*[referring to the participants in the school] **All of us at the board, all the volunteers, we all do the assemblies. It is not the hired staff who decide, we do. [This is important] because the community, we know what we want, for instance, if you hire someone, she or he doesn't know, but on the other hand we know if we want to do dancing or dialogic literary gatherings, I don't know! many things!*** (SIM2, 14, 117-119)

In the same vein, **the reflection of this participant confirms the relevance of taking the needs and interests of end users into account in the organisation and management of the school functioning, as a means to ensure the possibilities for participation.**

*The school is more focused on adults, not on fourteen year old people, for education that is more feasible for people who work and don't have possibilities to study. **So it is quite good [the fact that the school offers training until 10pm], because there are parents who work till seven, go home and have their children, so this is a quite good system.*** (SIM2, 18, 59, WP16, Spain, p. 17).

Cultural Minorities

Lifelong learning programs which respond to demands of the cultural groups Area: Employment.

Beyond understanding the key role that education and training plays in the quest for overcoming exclusion, also for cultural minorities (Ogbu, 1992), it is essential to highlight **the particular educational provision that best contributes to this goal. From the fieldwork's analysis the INCLUD-ED has gathered that this educational provision needs to respond to the interests and particular needs of the vulnerable group.** By active participation in Roma organisations managed by themselves, some of the demands of this cultural group have been taken into account, favouring the labour insertion of people from this group. This is

the case of the provision of a course for monitors in school canteens addressed to Roma women and organised by a Roma association of women that ended up with almost all of these women finding a job. This has offered the opportunity for women with poor employment expectations to meet the demand for a job that has been traditionally occupied by people not belonging to a minority group, contributing also to create new role models. As quoted by McDonald (2004), improvement of conditions for Roma will also have an impact in the improvement for society as a whole. The experience of this Roma mother confirms the impact of her training process in other aspects of her life:

Yes, that's what I want, I've been told that it will take me two years to have the degree [secondary education] so I will start doing a course. Because I can keep on working as a monitor in the school and in the afternoon I can study. And then I will do a course for nurse or something likes that (...) Yes, I finished the internship of the course and I immediately started to work (SMF2, 18, 69)

The fact that the educational provision took their voices into account also in the way it was arranged, flexibly beyond "office-hours", with childcare foreseen, was key for their success. Furthermore, by implementing this job these women are also becoming referents for Roma and non-Roma people, overcoming stereotypes and promoting social cohesion.

Inclusion of cultural role models in spaces of dialogic participation Areas: Health/Employment.

As we have seen in the former section, there are specific strategies that contribute to promote the presence of these role models in different spaces. In the case of this course for Roma women, **some of the participants explained to us how they have become models for other women to follow their successful trajectories and for Roma girls and boys** as well when they see their mothers succeeding in the labour market. This has been possible through the educational provision which enables them to occupy jobs that have been traditionally occupied by non minority people. The reflection of this mother confirms how this practice

finishes with a situation of discrimination that was occurring in the schools and that is smoothly being transformed.

Before, there were only the teachers, there were no social educators, there were no Roma role models within the schools; well, now there are, there are starting, and this is very important within the school (Spain, GM2)

Another example that has been identified through the fieldwork is the **positive impact of the presence of cultural role models in the health care institutions**. A Roma man in Spain, for example, explains us how this transformative practice improves the quality of health care services provided to Roma:

[Talking about people from different cultures that have been employed in a public hospital]. For example, in the Hospital, there are some right? And I have asked people who have been there and it went very good because for example the Roma person working there has seen them, listened to them and well, and has made a kind of bridge, right? Between the doctors and them and seems that he has made the things easier. But I also think that it shouldn't stop at this, right? (SMM4, 2, 68, WP16, Spain, pp. 21-22).

As it has been analysed in the INCLUD-ED research, the benefits of having cultural references go beyond the impact of cultural mediators' activity. Previous findings suggest that the inclusion of cultural mediators is a first step towards the **process of diversifying the health care and medical staff in order to reach the goal of having Roma doctors and nurses creating a much more diversified and efficient practice of minority inclusion** (INCLUD-ED Consortium 2009b, Ibidem, p. 22).

Interactive self-confidence to change the path of exclusion. Area: Education.

High expectations (Conchas, 2001), solidarity (Ogbu, 1990) and mutual support are key elements pointed out as transformative factors which will contribute to the success of minorities as long as teachers or other educators base their training on that. Furthermore, INCLUD-ED has identified how the **creation of contexts and spaces of mutual support, facilitates the interactive self-confidence among peers and other significant others, contributing to the success of cultural minorities** (Flecha, 2000).

In this regards, many of the interviewees have highlighted the importance of these support and high expectations in the overcoming of their trajectory of exclusion.

We were taught to share with others, to understand that the support among all, we were teaching each other, what one doesn't know, knows the other, right? And it's true because I got a 7 in history of art that I had never done before and it was because I had friends, right? (...) And of course, later you realize that it gives positive results, following this "let's help each other with everything, let's make groups..." Right? And the truth is that it is very positive... (Spain, SMF1, 18, 52-54).

I think it is a good thing that the schools are putting together all the children no matter what religion, ethnicity they have. In this way they learn to accept each other, to live together and to build friendships. (Romania, GMM10)

What is pointed out as being relevant for the promotion of educational inclusion of cultural minorities is the **creation of educational contexts which are based on this interactive self-confidence that promotes educational success**. In this vein, through the interviews and focus group participants from cultural minority groups have emphasized the importance of support and solidarity which help to overcome the educational and social exclusion they are suffering. The support and confidence from peers and other significant others contribute to work on motivation and continue their learning process.

What helped me was the personal help, to put a hand on the back and say - come on, and telling you that you are worth it, that you can. (...) If I had not had people who've been around to see other alternatives, my life had

been different; *I would have had other jobs. (...)She thought that I had a potential but it would be very difficult (...) and she is still encouraging me.* (Spain, SMM5, 18).

Women

Empowering women through dialogic learning. Areas: Health/Employment/Housing.

When women participate in educational activities that are characterized by equal dialogue it constitutes a process of empowerment, which gives them more self-confidence and communication skills. In the interviews and the focus groups participants referred mainly to the importance of women recognizing their rights and equal position in the society and workplace and, most importantly, claiming these rights whenever they feel they are being mistreated. They see education as a tool for social recognition and professional advancement. Voluntary and private agencies have also been involved in efforts to re-engage women who have exited early from the labour market to pursue the alternative route of motherhood (Bynner & Parsons, 2002). Successful efforts that aimed to overcome social exclusion of this group of young women have done so through their empowerment and their reengagement to education.

When women participate in educational activities which enable them to speak freely and which generate meaning creation but also which guarantee the instrumental dimension of their training, a process of empowerment arises which provides them more self-confidence and skills that impact different areas of their lives.

*Knowledge about things, apart from what I have learned here as I probably was more open to all kind of learning, ... in the moment when I was confronted with the illness – **to be able to talk to the doctors, to understand what they were saying to me and if I did not understand to say “Listen, what does it mean?”** So maybe I would have remained*

silent or had said or to say "Listen, don't say this to my father because I don't want, eh?" (Spain, SWF5, 4, 575)

The empowerment developed through dialogic education has contributed to make these women more self-confident which has **allowed them to overcome difficult situations of exclusion also at work.**

As you are about to retire, then you can leave, because the company is closing down and if you leave on your own will it will be better for you..." and then I stood up and said "Listen, do you think I am stupid or something? I am going to do the same as my fellow employees. If the company closes down we will all go, and if it does not close with the owner who comes, we will stay right here". And he told me "Ok, then it will be worse for you!" And I said "That's my own business, my problem!" I have this, I mean, this security to face it (SWF5, 6, 595).

The increase in self-confidence and in the instrumental knowledge achieved through this strategy provides a useful tool for these women to overcome a situation of exclusion in the housing domain, too, as they **overcome barriers to manage their own house and their administrative and financial issues.**

*[When found herself into a bureaucratic trap with a bank using her personal data for a non requested administrative transaction]...So you start to search and say –But until it happens to you, you don't know all what could happen, **it gives you more confidence and an ability to react and... obviously, to write something – you can do it yourself, right? And of course, thanks to education, because otherwise... I remember that I solved it alone, with complaints and so.** And you don't step back because you say... they have to give me back what is mine. (SWF3, 12, 100).*

Indeed, women participants in the fieldwork discussed how education increased their knowledge on practical matters. A participant in a focus group in Cyprus, for

example, explained how the training she received in the evening school enabled her of managing more adequately her family budget (Cyprus, GWF1, 395-396).

On another level, participants argued that education contributed to the development of their interpersonal and negotiation skills, allowing them to be more critical with decisions related to housing. Participants in the focus group in different participating countries provide concrete examples for this. A woman from Cyprus, for example, talked about her experience with a real estate agent who was trying to sell her a house which was superficially repaired to hide the fact that it was old:

I wanted to make an investment just before the economic crisis, so I went to see a house. The house looked really nice. After further examining the house, I noticed that it was really old; You know, one of those houses that you fix so it will look nice so people will buy it and after two months the wall would crack again. So I avoided it. But I had to speak with the estate agent and address him appropriately and fearless (Cyprus, GWF2, 727-740).

Leadership of non-academic women in organisations. Solidarity among women. ALL AREAS.

The social participation of women is very important since it helps them to build networks, to be supported in their problems and it also promotes their own empowerment. The **importance of networking** is sustained in the literature (Puigvert, Elboj; 2004), as well as in the data from the qualitative fieldwork. Active participation in local associations for immigrant women, for example, is the main tool for their social promotion, allowing them entrance in the working world outside the home environment and to give value to acquired competences: the command of several languages (and in any case their language of origin), intercultural approach, knowledge of the difficulties and bureaucratic procedures that immigrants must face.

In this same vein, the importance of the **social involvement of women as a means for overcoming their exclusion in different areas shows clearly in the survey results**. In the questionnaire the representatives of NGOs working with women were asked to evaluate some practices as to what extent do they contribute to overcoming the exclusion of women in the society on the scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means that they don't help at all and 5 – that they help a lot. As seen in the table below the practices - participation in the management of NGO, and their participation in decision making processes (e.g. identification of requirements, needs and priorities) within the NGO - were rated very highly, meaning that these practices help a lot to overcome the situation of exclusion and vulnerability.

	Cyprus	Italy	Latvia	Romani	Spain
Their participation in the management of the NGO	4,7	3,9	4,3	3,2	3,7
Their participation in decision making processes (e.g. identification of requirements, needs and priorities) within the NGO	4,7	3,9	4	3,8	4,1

Involvement **in education also fosters the representation of women as a group in different areas**. In order to achieve more gender equality in decision-making, the participation in different fields of women should be ensured, e.g., by introducing gender quotas into all-important bodies, thus reducing gender inequality and exclusion from political parties. NGOs working with women carry out a wide range of activities aimed at involving women in the associations for example through self support groups and workshops. The experience of this woman confirms us that through participation in a dialogic space not only her academic knowledge was increased but also her participation in other domains.

The association of women is part of the Women's group in the district and we are committed to that, and we also take part in activities in the neighbourhood, now we have a project to help the families (Spain, SWF, 427).

To sum up, processes of engagement in decision-making structures promote an increase of self-confidence and encourage the social participation of women in many fields.

Youth

Positive peer support and heterogeneous grouping promoted by teachers **Area: Education.**

Research has shown that those community practices that have promoted interpersonal integration relied on a network of neighbourhood, personal and family bonds. Such programs have directly funded community-based solutions, took advantage of informal rather than formal institutions and considered friends as a crucial aspect of local identity (Clements, 2007; Raaum, Rogstad, Roed, & Westlie, 2009). School as a 'community' is an important site for social interaction among peers (Morrow, 2001). The participants in the field work have also confirmed these same premises: helping each other, the atmosphere of friendship encouraged by trainers and other support staff, is identified as a tool which generates very positive effects: increase of engagement and self-confidence, greater motivation for learning and improving educational success. Following the findings of INCLUD-ED's Project 1 (INCLUD-ED Consortium (2009), current findings confirm how working in heterogeneous groups achieves better results for youths as well as did for children. A participant in Cyprus confirms how support among the group was critical in her reversing the trajectory of exclusion to achieve academic success:

Or we might arrange group studying to explain each other the course. You might stay up all night studying just so that you can tell the other person "I helped you". Or if someone would ask you something, even if you didn't know the answer, you would study hard until you can learn it and explain it to them. Because we were a team, especially my class during that year, we

bonded (...) I graduated with honours in the end, I felt proud because I studied hard and got what I deserved" (Cyprus, SYF1, 140-159).

In that sense, one element to highlight is the influence of the social network of young people as a factor which can contribute to the overcoming of educational and social exclusion. It is referred to the influence and support young people received from their families and peers to return to school. GYF1 described how he was influenced by his friends in an adult school from Cyprus: *The most important thing is the influence and the friends you had when you were attending the evening school. So, for me it was another reason to go, my friends and the persistence of someone to explain that it was a second chance for me and I should take it. After that you could see things with a different eye and wanted to go to school. There was encouragement (GYF1, 129-133).*

Participation in such social arenas is a "psychological necessity" (Raaum, Rogstad, Roed, & Westlie, 2009) that provides genuine opportunities for meaningful social relations. Certain aspects of schooling, particularly bonding with friends, make the experiences of school meaningful and worthwhile where students feel a sense of belonging as they do in youth clubs (Raffo & Reeves, 2000). From the NGOs responses, it is also derived that in all educational settings small groups with individual attention are seen as efficient.

A rapport of interpersonal relationship between teachers and pupils is another transformative aspect of schooling that prevents social exclusion. Specifically, some relations between students and teachers enable students to feel more comfortable and develop these supportive social networks (Raffo & Reeves, 2000). Participants in the fieldwork, when talking about the role of their teachers in their going back to education and in the understanding of their success stress the relevance of the relationship they have with these teachers and how they help them:

C: and they are here because they want to [volunteer teachers], giving classes and support to us every day and you say "oh my god if this does not help for studying [nothing does]".

A: and to motivate you, they have come just for that.

D: I think it is one of the best experiences I've ever had, at an educational level (GY1, 18, 102- 110)

When teachers transmit to young people the high expectations they lay on them, students end up believing in their possibilities of educational success and in their possibility to change their situation of exclusion.

Long term inclusion needs training that guarantees instrumental learning

Areas: Education/Employment.

Training schemes that included courses on personal and social skills, and numeracy/literacy have been particularly successful. The variety of studies offered has expanded in order to meet the demands of the job market. This diversity has also made it more attractive for young people to continue their studies up to higher levels, diminishing the risk of early school leaving. (Fergusson, 2004; Maguire & Thompson, 2007). The learning that is a key for their success is that which combines the interactive self-confidence -which has been mentioned before-, with the instrumental dimension of learning. The key is to provide youth with high quality qualified professional training that contributes to guarantee continuity in education, and long term inclusion in the labour market. **Professional training needs to include instrumental learning, open up to new skills and competencies which are necessary in the labour market, in order to be able to go back to an educational path, continuing education in any moment of their trajectory.**

No, I got married, and once I got married I started to look for a job, I couldn't find any, maybe I had one for two or three days, I didn't last more ...I found out about the course, I did it and I started to work. I have a certificate and now it is easier to start to work. (SYF5, 8, 40-42)

On the one hand, transversal lifelong oriented education is what is required in the labour market and is most clearly identified as being necessary in order to promote employment in today's society and adapt to different and changing occupations. On the other hand, pre employment and more technical education provide training on specific jobs and contribute to increasing employment rates.

Because I have seen that this certificate has opened a lot of doors for me, in the sense that now I have a permanent job, I am working. Then, if you get another title, then you will have more open doors, you know, it is not the same. Although you wanted, if you get the title of nurse, there have to be nurses. (SYF5, 8, 138-139)

Youth participation in decision-making processes boosts participation in other areas. Areas: Social and Political participation.

The respondents emphasise the importance of promoting the social and political participation of young people since it fosters their empowerment at an individual as well as a group level.

Practices such as participatory programmes in schools, volunteering programmes, involving young people in NGOs and neighbourhood associations, and in advisory councils at different levels were mentioned. Respondents representing NGOs working with youth in the different countries surveyed, mentioned also that participating in decision making and voluntary work were among the main factors which help to decrease the exclusion and vulnerability of young people. It is especially important to involve the young people in the development of programmes and activities, particularly those aimed at them. **A positive experience of social and political engagement strengthens motivation and teaches democratic values.** The following youth from Romania exposes the link between the participation in the context of the school that drove him to academic success but also to further participation in different institutions, which is an European priority in youth policy:

Due to my good results in school and my collaboration with teachers and students I managed to be involved in the student council and after that in a party from our county. (Romania, GYF3).

People with disabilities

Involvement in NGOs, helps to advocate for social rights. Area: Participation.

The NGOs surveyed emphasise the role of associations as far as advocacy for people with disabilities is concerned. On an individual level, involvement in an association helps to obtain information and, at a group level, strong associations represent people with disabilities on a wide range of occasions and on different levels. It is especially important that **people with disabilities participate in decision making processes at a local, national, and European level**. As we have corroborated in WP15, NGOs role is being a key element for this group. They are becoming spaces for claiming respect for human rights and for elaborating proposals with the aim of transforming their daily life. The goal is to encourage actions with the aim of improving the labour and social inclusion of people with disability. This type of action also included raising public awareness to make this reality more visible, making people without any kind of disability aware of the difficulties faced by people with a disability. The following quotes illustrate this argument:

I created an association with a friend. We sought support, we created an organization and from there... We wanted to fight against the architectural barriers, to fighting for social inclusion and employment of people with disabilities and a bit to help to get to know these groups. That well, there are people in wheelchairs and there are many, and we have a disability. And that you can be walking one day and the next day be in a wheelchair, and to raise the awareness about this issue and to try to help understand this a bit. (SDM4, 15, 72, WP16, p. 35).

Inclusive education for inclusion in other areas. All areas.

Integration and inclusion in mainstream schools has been the concern of politics as well as of many teachers, schools and parents. The respondents who work with

people with disabilities highlight access to education as being one of the most significant transformative elements – at all educational levels. Providing access includes physical access to buildings, but also access to educational programmes (e.g., access to regular education at least until the age of 16, providing access to education to adults with motor disabilities, increasing learning options– e-learning).

The inclusive approach that tackles the case of people with disabilities based on high expectations and positive support is corroborated as a successful strategy by the field work participants, like this person from Romania:

I liked being in school, the teachers were friendly even though I was a child with disabilities, they involved me in all the activities, they gave normal tasks like the others students. I was responsible to bring the map and chalk. In the school I felt like a normal child. (Romania, SDM18)

Many of the actions mentioned provide different types of support to learners with disabilities – flexible times, high expectations, tutoring and support throughout their studies, and a supportive team of professionals from different areas.

The best support I had came from a professor at the University. When we met and asked about my problem he then told me that the best civil engineer in Greece has disabilities and is permanently on a wheel chair. These words meant a lot to me because it convinced me that I can become a very good civil engineer despite my problem (Cyprus, SDM1, 312-320).

I am very involved in the community; I often organize meetings at church, in the park where I encourage people with disabilities to trust in themselves. I share with them my life experiences and exchange good practice examples. (Romania, GDM8)

The same happens with the community approach which promotes the inclusion and engagement of different agents, opening up the schools, raising awareness of the people around learners with disabilities to break stereotypes among classmates and educational staff.

3.2.3 Contributions from Advisory Committee and Panel of Experts

Following the orientations set on the Joint Programme of Activities for the on-going reporting period, the Advisory Committee (AC) and the Panel of Experts (PoE) have reviewed and contributed their insights to the current results of Project 4.

The two bodies agree that, in order to achieve inclusion and social cohesion, avoiding any kind of social segregation in schools is necessary. Therefore, they oppose streaming practices, adapted curriculums and even educating disabled people in separate schools, as these practices tend to increase exclusion and limit the access of vulnerable group' members to full education. Both the Advisory Committee and the Panel of Experts have suggested that diversity should be considered as a positive element in the educational system in a context where educational barriers still existing for women, migrant, cultural minorities and disabled people. They highlight that diversity should, in fact, be considered as an element that rises the quality of the educational institutions. The Panel of Experts has also suggested the convenience of organizing the schools democratically as a way of promoting social cohesion and training students to become responsible citizens. Furthermore, the two bodies observe that specific rules against bullying should be considered as an obligation.

Another point in which the Advisory Committee and the Panel of Experts share a common view is in incorporating members of the community into schools in order to facilitate the learning process of those students with difficulties related with a low educational level background or with the lack of command of the language in which courses are imparted. In this regard they have highlighted the success of interactive groups in overcoming inequality. The Advisory Committee has emphasized the need of establishing concrete channels to ensure that everybody can participate in these activities, whereas the Panel has pointed out that children would benefit from seeing different adult role's models.

Experts have also emphasized that parents should participate in the schools' decision-making processes through an egalitarian discussion. On the other hand, the Committee and the Panel have stressed that the school is part of the

community and should be responsible of its impact on it. It has been suggested that schools should provide additional support to the pupils who require it as well as extracurricular activities for everybody. The school has also been identified as a key element for the transformation of excluded neighbourhoods and it has been highlighted that teachers could act as social change agents.

The Advisory Committee has stated that educational policies should be based in the evidences that are provided by scientific research, including also in their design the diversity and intergenerational dimensions. The Panel of Experts has evidenced that the successful actions identified in the research can be transferable. Therefore, it has emphasized the importance of turning INCLUD-ED theoretical results into concrete social and educational policies. The experts have remarked that, even before the INCLUDE-ED project was finished, the application of its outcomes led to the definition of policies addressed to the transformation of exclusionary realities. For instance, a poor neighbourhood in Spain called La Milagrosa experienced radical changes following the implementation of successful actions analysed in the INCLUD-ED in the neighbourhood.

The Advisory Committee has transmitted the feeling shared by vulnerable groups that social improvement is only taking places within small groups of population. The Committee members proposed that in order to foster social change it can be created different networks that link these privileged groups among them and with the rest of the neighbourhood. Finally, they have highlighted that inclusion cannot be achieved exclusively through education, as it should be carried out jointly with other areas of social life. Therefore, they encourage the development of new policies in the fields of employment, housing, health and political participation.

3.2.4 Discussion on the transformative elements

According to the fieldwork, there are three common trend among all European countries involved within the survey: 1) **the educational level achieved is a very important element to explain the situation of being at risk of exclusion;** 2) **the stereotypes against people belonging to vulnerable groups generate a social environment of rejection which makes it difficult for these groups to access the opportunities for social inclusion;** and 3)

people who have experienced situations of “low expectations” towards them have many more difficulties to achieve trajectories of social inclusion.

In order to overcome these three sources of exclusion, here is a summary of the common trends regarding actions in order to transform situations of exclusion.

- (1) **Further education.** The investment in further education, at any level, is suggested to be a transformative element that increases the chances to have better jobs, better health insurance, better housing, and so forth. Education should be understood in a general way, that is: formal and non-formal courses. Particular attention is paid to VET programs, as well as literacy (adult basic education) and courses for newcomers (migrants) in order to teach the language from the host country. In Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Romania and Latvia, education emerges as a crucial factor to improve the chances of inclusiveness. Particular examples cover a wide range of fields and situations. For example, in Spain NGOs highlight the existence of general programs for monitoring migrant children. This helps these children to increase their chances to succeed in the new educative system (in the host country). In Cyprus, NGOs report the importance of affirmative action policies for women, to have access to educative programs (as well as employment, etc.).
- (2) **Basic education.** A particular emphasis is done to the relevance of literacy courses in different countries (Spain, Cyprus, Italy...) as a key element to increase the educational level of the most excluded people.
- (3) **Prevention of early school leaving.** All countries report the importance of avoiding children getting out of the educative system, especially at early stages. Successful alternatives to prevent drop out contribute to increase children's chances to have access to a job in their adulthood. Particular actions also include financial support for those children whose families are not able to afford the cost of the education. This is especially emphasized in Spain and Italy.

- (4) **Relations among the community.** Another positive element in terms of building new opportunities for people from different vulnerable groups is the improvement of community contexts, that is: to create a supportive environment for migrants, women, youth, people with disabilities, etc. in order to provide them better chances to access to educative, economic and health opportunities.
- (5) **Prevention of gender violence.** This is a common trend identified among all countries involved in the survey. Prevention of gender violence is crucial for all women, also for those from vulnerable groups, to not suffer exclusion, abuse and oppression. When it occurs, then it is really important to have a system to support women living in a violent situation, to keep them safe and away from the sexual harassers.
- (6) **Support for employment (and employability).** The fieldwork has revealed the importance of educating in people's rights in order to avoid abusive labour contracts. As regards to migrant people, it has highlighted the importance of providing them with up-dated information on work regulations and on the laws affecting them. As to women, the focus of improvement is generally placed on guaranteeing equal rights and on training women to access areas with good job prospects which have not been traditionally considered suitable for women. For instance, the Cypriot programme EQUAL inform women of their rights in order to prevent discrimination. In Latvia, NGO's employ women with disabilities in their programmes as a way to train them to access the labour market. Other actions, which are specially oriented to young people, are providing internships, facilitating employments which can be conciliated with their studies and improving regulation to prevent precariousness. Providing lifelong oriented education has also been identified as a action with positive results in the life trajectory of people suffering social exclusion.
- (7) **Health prevention.** Regarding health, prevention is the main idea that emerges from the WR. Actions highlighted include programs to teach healthy behaviours, information about the use of drugs, smoking, sexual and reproduction programs and planning, health checks, information about healthy attitudes, life styles and support in departments such as gynaecology in the case of women.

- (8) **Active health.** Another important fact regarding health, is the existence of programs to support in the case of illness (breast cancer in women, for example), access to the health system (providing information, or support, to get the individual card to have access to the system), and support for any documentation or procedure with the health administrations.
- (9) **Autonomy.** Transformative elements are defined as the ones that provide individuals with disabilities with the possibility to increase their levels of autonomy, to not be dependent of somebody any time. In addition, therapies are also particular actions pointed out by the Cypriot report to help not only people with disabilities, but also people with any kind of mental disease, to gain levels of autonomy in their lives.

4. Conclusions

The present report have deepened on how the most vulnerable groups of the European societies, namely women, youth, migrants, cultural groups and people with disabilities, experience educational exclusion, and what transformative elements contribute to overcome this exclusion. The detailed analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from the different countries which participate in the project, and the comparison of the views of the professional agents with the perspective of people from the vulnerable groups, have shed light on the key importance of educational successful actions in overcoming inequality and exclusion, not only in the educational system but also in many areas of social life, such as in employment, housing or political participation.

The research has confirmed the highly recognised fact that equality depends to a large extend on providing people a consistent educational background. Even more, it has pointed out that it is possible to overcome inequalities existing in societies through inclusive educational actions and by providing the vulnerable groups' members with information and resources to overcome the problems that concern them. It has also been highlighted that successful actions that work towards social cohesion and inclusion have become a real must in the context of the current

economic and fiscal crisis, which is particularly affecting the most vulnerable groups in society.

The fieldwork has revealed that there are three main sources of exclusion that are common in all the countries that have participated in the study: low educational levels, stereotypes and social rejection, and experiencing situations of “low expectations” towards oneself. In accordance, vulnerable groups’ members have pointed discriminating attitudes and stigmatization processes in social institutions as the core elements of exclusion.

It must be indicated that many of the NGO’s end users are people especially prone to experience educational exclusion. Some of the exclusionary elements mentioned by the members of the vulnerable groups and by the professional agents are racism, streaming practices, and lack of recognition of diversity in the educational system. People with disabilities have also stressed that they suffer the prejudices of the educational personnel who have low expectations of them.

Different actions are being implemented in order to overcome the underlined exclusionary practices. For instance, all the countries are working on providing basic education to the members of vulnerable groups. Another action identified in the project is investing in further education. This strategy increases the opportunities to access better jobs, better housing, etc. and can be implemented through myriad different programmes. For instance, in Spain migrant children are monitored so they can succeed in the for-them-new educative system, whereas in Cyprus affirmative action towards women in the access to educative programmes gains importance. Programmes which prevent early school leaving have also been suggested as a way of increasing children’s chances to have a job in the future, especially in Spain and Italy.

The lack of communication between people belonging to different groups has been pointed out as an obstacle for overcoming inequalities and migrant people and people from cultural minorities have expressed having difficulties to communicate naturally with non-migrant people. Responding to this exclusionary element, the research has found out that improving community context and strengthening community links contributes to build new opportunities for these vulnerable groups’

members. For instance, in Romania and Spain progress has been achieved by increasing communication between families and schools.

The research has also shown that women are the vulnerable group which experience more difficulties in the field of education. Furthermore, women can experience a two-fold discrimination: for being women and for belonging to another vulnerable group. Going beyond education, gender violence has been highlighted as a major form of discrimination in the state of the art revision. Further research has revealed that a successful action to tackle this problem is preventing gender violence and developing systems of support easily available for the women who are living in a violent context.

The state of the art revealed that young people are suffering from precarious employment and unemployment as accessing the job market is increasingly difficult for them. Project 4 has identified another problem: the difficulty of re-entering the educational system in order to improve one's credentials and, therefore, one's chances of success in the labour market. In that sense, all NGOs have reported the convenience of promoting an inclusive "policy of employment" which makes easier the way into the labour market. Programmes which help people from vulnerable groups to improve their employability or to overcome unemployment have also been identified as transformative contributions towards inclusion.

People from different vulnerable groups have also reported experiencing discrimination in the fields of housing and health. For instance, Roma people in Spain have expressed having great difficulties to rent or buy a flat due to landowners' and neighbours' prejudices. Migrant people have felt excluded from the health system because of their lack of command of the national language. Inclusion could be achieved in the health system by promoting health prevention programmes and programmes that make easy the access to the system, provide support in administrative procedures and support ill people.

As regards to disabled people, Project 4 provides an increased knowledge of the difficulties they are facing to become included as full members of society and how to achieve this. Previous research had found out that disabled people experience difficulties in their access to education and to the labour market. INCLUD-ED research has expanded this knowledge by highlighting that physical barriers and

prejudices play a crucial role in the exclusion of disabled people and that exclusionary educational practices, such as streaming, can even aggravate the disability. It has also been revealed that discrimination can occur through direct actions, but also as a lack of attention towards vulnerable people. Actions with positive results in these fields are those that facilitate the autonomy of the people with disabilities.

Having considered the main contributions of the Project 4, some limitations ought to be mentioned. Firstly, the project focused on studying exclusionary practices and transformative elements in some concrete countries, namely Italy, Spain, Romania, Cyprus, Hungary and Latvia. Thus, the project does not shed light on the situation of vulnerable groups all across Europe and its conclusions cannot be generalized to the rest of the European countries. Secondly, researchers had difficulties in conducting the quantitative analysis. As referred above, data was collected through questionnaires that had to be filled in by the social agents from NGO's which work with people from vulnerable groups. Due to this difficulty, in some countries data is weaker. Having said that, it must be remarked that the Project 4 completely meet the established objective of analysing the key aspects in the relation between education and vulnerable groups' inclusion and it has largely contributed to identify the transformative elements that boost social inclusion.

In conclusion, Project 4 has made remarkable contributions in the understanding of the exclusionary practices vulnerable groups' members face and in how to overcome exclusion. The analysis of data and the inclusion of both experts' and affected people' voices in the study have resulted in an increased knowledge of the exclusionary and transformative elements that are currently going on in some European countries, adding to the state of the art up-to-date information on the effects of the economic crisis in the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. It has also deepened in the study of the cultural and social aspects of exclusion, what have been identified as a must-do in the state of the art, and it has provided evidences on successful actions that could be implemented in order to achieve equality and cohesion.

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Annex: Descriptive data of the participating NGOs

Descriptive data of the participating NGOs

The objective of this section is to provide some information about the profile of the NGOs surveyed. The analysis will be based on data from Italy, Spain, Romania, Cyprus and Latvia. The low levels of respondents in the Hungarian survey don't not allow including this data in this analysis. In order to facilitate the good understanding of the information provided, some summary tables will be provided. All these tables have a similar structure and they are build according to own data. Each country has a column, which is in turn divided into two columns. The first column collects the number of NGOs which have the characteristics assembled in each row. The second column displays the valid percentages. In the cases where multiple responses are allowed, the total valid percentage is higher than 100%. Each row in the tables stands for a characteristic of the NGOs surveyed.

Level of NGO intervention

The level of NGO intervention varies among countries. In Italy, most NGO's participate at the local and regional levels and international intervention is more abundant than national intervention. In Latvia, NGOs also work mostly at local and regional levels, while only few NGOs work at the European and the international levels. In Spain and Romania, the level in which more NGOs operate is the regional level. The second main level of participation is the local level in Romania and the national level in Spain. Finally, in Cyprus, most of the intervention is conducted at a national level, following in importance the local level.

In general, it can be stated that most of the intervention takes place inside the countries' borders. The external participation, nevertheless, is considerable in some countries. For instance, Cyprus has relevant participation rates at the European and international levels.

	Italy		Spain		Romania		Cyprus		Latvia	
Local level	28	70,0%	102	47,0%	11	26,8%	38	66,0%	18	66,7%
Regional level	18	45,0%	112	52,0%	16	39,0%	27	47,0%	15	55,6%
National level	7	17,5%	109	51,0%	10	24,4%	45	78,0%	12	44,5%
European level	5	12,5%	36	17,0%	4	9,8%	26	45,0%	7	25,9%
International level (Outside Europe)	10	25,0%	42	19,0%	3	7,3%	14	24,0%	6	22,2%

Multiple response question. Italy n= 40; Spain n=216; Romania n=41; Cyprus n=58; Latvia n=27

Type of programmes

Most of the NGOs combine in their work various types of activities. Although there are some differences among countries, in most of them the main type of programme is educational projects/training. As regard to the other types of programmes, Spain, Romania and Latvia present a similar distribution: leisure and free time activities are also offered by many NGOs, followed by assistance programmes. In the fourth place are cultural programmes. In contrast, in Italy and Cyprus, the second main type of programmes are cultural events, while in the third place are leisure/free time activities and in the fourth, assistance programmes. Research activities are the less offered type of programmes in all the countries. NGOs also offer other kind of programmes.

	Italy		Spain		Romania		Cyprus		Latvia	
Educational projects/training	29	72,5%	167	77,0%	21	51,2%	44	76,0%	20	74,1%

Leisure/free time activities	21	52,5%	132	61,0%	19	46,3%	34	59,0%	21	77,8%
Assistance programmes	19	47,5%	124	58,0%	17	41,5%	31	53,0%	18	66,7%
Cultural events	26	65,0%	95	44,0%	15	36,6%	39	67,0%	11	40,7%
Research projects	8	20,0%	65	30,0%	9	22,0%	28	48,0%	6	22,2%
Other	10	25,0%	71	33,0%	2	4,9%	12	21,0%	3	11,1%

Multiple response question. Italy n=40; Spain n=217; Romania n=41; Cyprus n=58; Latvia n=27.

Vulnerable groups

There are really few similarities among countries in regard to the vulnerable groups at which their NGOs are aimed at. The group which receives more assistance is women, as in all the countries they are the first or the second collective by order of assistance. Migrants are the second most assisted vulnerable group. In contrast, cultural minorities are the least supported group. Considering country by country, in Italy most NGOs work with migrants, the second main group are women, and the third, cultural minorities. In Spain, people with disabilities are the ones more helped by NGOs, followed by women and migrants. In Romania, all vulnerable groups, except people with disabilities, are almost equally covered. In Cyprus, women and young people are the ones that receive more assistance, followed by migrants. In Latvia, NGOs work particularly with women, youth and people with disabilities, whereas the assistance of migrants and cultural minorities is much lower.

	Italy		Spain		Romania		Cyprus		Latvia	
Migrants	37	92,5%	46	20,0%	12	29,3%	12	20,0%	4	14,8%
Cultural minorities	15	37,5%	13	6,0%	12	29,3%	7	11,0%	8	29,6%
Women	20	50,0%	56	24,0%	10	24,4%	25	41,0%	21	77,8%
Young people	14	35,0%	40	17,0%	10	24,4%	25	41,0%	17	63,0%
People with disabilities	9	22,5%	107	46,0%	5	12,2%	16	26,0%	13	48,1%

Multiple response question. Italy n=40; Spain n=235; Romania n=41; Cyprus n=61; Latvia n=27.

The vulnerable groups studied are not homogeneous and some subgroups can be, therefore, identified. As regards to migrants, it is possible to establish subgroups on the basis of their origin. Many NGOs which work with migrant people aimed at migrants from various regions of origin. Nevertheless, in each country NGOs are particularly devoted to different categories of migrants. In Romania and Italy, most NGOs aim at migrants from Africa, whereas in Spain they focus on migrants from Latin America, and in Latvia they work with migrants from former Soviet Republics. In Cyprus, the different groups of migrants are evenly assisted. Among migrants, it is also possible to identify particularly vulnerable collectives, namely women, children and young migrants. Some NGOs are specially aimed to these collectives.

As to cultural minorities, Roma people are the cultural minority with whom NGOs work the most. Each country also has its particularities. For instance, in Latvia and Cyprus NGOs also work with cultural minorities from neighbouring countries. As in the case of NGOs which work with migrant people, some NGOs in the field of cultural minorities specialize in working with women, children and young members of these collectives.

Subgroups can also be found among women. These subgroups are created in the conjunction of gender vulnerability with other social vulnerabilities such as being a migrant or belonging to a cultural minority. Many NGOs work with women in general, without specializing in any concrete group. However, some NGOs work with a particular collective, being migrant women, young women and women with low levels of education the most aimed at. For instance, 20 out of 53 Spanish NGOs work with women with a limited education.

As regards to young people, some subgroups can also be identified such as young people with drug abuse or delinquency problems, young people with low levels of education or violence victims. NGOs in each country particularly focus on different subgroups. For instance, most NGOs in Latvia and Spain aim at young people with low levels of education, whereas Italian NGOs work more with young migrants and young people who belong to a cultural minority. All the countries also have NGOs devoted to young women and girls.

People with disabilities can also be divided into different subgroups following different criteria. Three groups are found when considering types of disabilities: people with motor disabilities, people affected by intellectual disabilities and people who suffer from sensitive disabilities. In each country, NGOs give priority to a different group. For instance, half of the Cypriot NGOs aimed at young people work with people with motor disabilities, whereas in Spain priority is given to people with intellectual disabilities. Disabled people can also be divided according to the other vulnerabilities they have to face: being young, a woman or a child. From these groups, young people are the ones that receive more assistance. For example, 4 out of 9 NGOs from Italy are aimed to this group.

Number of people reached

	Italy		Spain		Romania		Cyprus		Latvia	
Less than 50 people	10	26,3%	14	7,0%	5	17.2%	4	7,0%	2	7,4%
50-100 people	8	21,1%	28	13,0%	10	34.5%	4	7,0%	7	25,9%
100-1.000 people	17	44,7%	87	40,0%	11	37.9%	29	50,0%	16	59,3%
1.000-10.000 people	11	2,6%	54	25,0%	3	10,3%	15	26,0%	2	7,4%
10.000-100.000 people	2	5,3%	22	10,0%	-	-	4	7,0%	-	-
100.000-1.000.000 people	-	-	6	3,0%	-	-	2	3,0%	-	-
More than 1.000.000 people	-	-	4	2,0%	-	-	0	0,0%	-	-
Total	48	100,0%	215	100,0%	29	100,0%	58	100,0%	27	100,00%

As regards to the number of people reached by NGOs, it has to be highlighted that in all the countries studied most NGOs reach between 100 and 1.000 people. In Cyprus, this bracket contain half of the NGOs and in Latvia 59,3% of them. It must also be pointed out that far-reaching NGOs are not common. Only Spain and Cyprus have NGOs which reach between 100.000 and 1.000.000 people and only Spain have NGOs whose activity reach more than a million people. The second more usual level of people reached is 50 to 100 people. In Italy, short-reaching NGOs are also important, whereas in Spain and Cyprus a quarter of the NGOs reach between 1.000 and 10.000 people.

Funding source

	Italy		Spain		Romania		Cyprus		Latvia	
Public administrations	28	73,7%	186	87,0%	9	22,0%	44	76,0%	16	59,3%
Membership fees	16	42,1%	128	60,0%	7	17,1%	43	74,0%	19	70,4%
Private companies	12	31,6%	117	54,0%	12	29,3%	37	64,0%	9	33,3%
Individual donors	11	28,9%	112	52,0%	21	51,2%	29	50,0%	12	44,4%
Others	2	5,3%	35	16,0%	8	19,5%	17	29,0%	10	37,0%

Multiple response question. Italy n=38; Spain n=215; Romania n=41; Cyprus n=58; Latvia n=27.

Broadly speaking, NGOs get funds in more than one source. Italy, Spain and Cyprus have the same structure of funding sources. The main source is public administration, from which between a 73% and a 87% of NGOs get funds. The second main source of funding is membership fees and the third one, private companies. The less used sources are individual donors and other sources. Romania and Latvia have a different structure. In Romania the main source of funding is individual donors, followed by private companies and public administrations. In Latvia, membership fees are the ones that provide more funding for NGOs. The second funding providers are public administrations and the third one, individual donors.

NGOs also get funds from other sources. In Italy, Latvia and Cyprus, NGOs mentioned their source of financing as projects, implemented by EU financial assistance and other international foundations. In Italy, Catholic Church donors have an importance and, in Spain and Cyprus, NGOs also get funding from activities and charities they organize.

Quality awards received by the NGO

	Italy		Spain		Romania		Cyprus		Latvia	
Yes	4	12,1%	81	39,0%	4	15,4%	12	21,0%	7	26,9%
No	29	87,9%	129	61,0%	22	84,6%	45	79,0%	19	73,1%
Total	33	100,0%	210	100,0%	26	100,0%	57	100,0%	26	100,0%

In all the countries there are many more NGOs which have not received any quality award than NGOs that has been awarded for their quality. Nevertheless, the percentages vary among countries. Spain is the country with more rewarded NGOs (39%). In Cyprus and Latvia around 25% of the NGOs have received an award, whereas in Italy and Romania the awarded NGOs are only about a 15% of all NGOs. The quality certificates are granted by different institutions. Countries have mentioned international certificates, such as ISO certificates, and European institutions; for example, some Spanish NGOs have been awarded with European Foundation for Quality Management certificates. Awards are also given by national institutions such as the Latvian Society Integration Foundation, in Latvia. The work of some NGOs in Spain and Cyprus has also been recognised through various prizes at a national, regional and municipal level.

Members of the vulnerable group participating in the management of the NGO

In Italy, Cyprus and Latvia, a bit more than a half of the NGOs surveyed include members of the vulnerable groups they work with into the management of the NGOs. In contrast, in Spain and Romania NGOs which do not include members of the vulnerable groups into their leadership slightly exceed those that count on them. Nevertheless, the difference between the two groups of NGOs is very little, being ten percentile points the maximum difference.

	Italy		Spain		Romania		Cyprus		Latvia	
Yes	18	52,9%	98	46,0%	13	44,8%	33	59,0%	14	53,8%
No	16	47,1%	116	54,0%	16	55,2%	23	41,0%	12	46,2%
Total	34	100,0%	214	100,0%	29	100,0%	56	100,0%	26	100,0%

As for the number of management members belonging to vulnerable groups, data from Spain and Cyprus reveal that NGOs tend to have only few members of these groups in leading positions.

	Spain		Cyprus	
1-5 members	23	40%	22	67%
6-10 members	16	28%	7	21%

Report 6
Overcoming the social and educational exclusion of vulnerable groups

More than 10 members	9	16%	2	6%
All of them	9	16%	2	6%
Total	58	100%	33	100%

Respondents who specified the number of members of the vulnerable group participating in the NGO leadership: Spain= 58, Cyprus=56.

Data from 6 Italian NGOs show that members from vulnerable groups represent from 3% to 50% of their managerial board.

People who filled in the questionnaire

Position

In each country studied, the questionnaire was filled in by members with different positions in the NGOs. In Italy, the members who filled in the questionnaire in most NGOs were volunteers. In contrast, in Spain and Cyprus, most questionnaires were filled in by members of the board of directors and, in a slightly smaller proportion, by workers. In Romania, these two types of members were also the responsible of filling in the questionnaires. It has to be highlighted that, in a number of cases, the respondents combined various roles in the NGOs. This accounts for the fact that the total valid percentage is higher than 100%. In some NGOs, the respondent had another role in the NGO. For instance, in Italy, these other respondents were teachers or consultants, presidents or legal representatives.

	Italy		Spain		Romania	Cyprus		Latvia ²⁴	
Member of the board of directors	7	18,4 %	12	57,0 %	10	32	55,0 %	21	
Worker	9	23,7 %	94	44,0 %	11	27	47,0 %	1	
Volunteer	20	52,6 %	20	9,0%	7	21	36,0 %	3	
Other	7	18,4 %	11	5,0%	1	9	16,0 %	3	

Multiple response question. Italy n=38; Spain n=216; Romania n=; Cyprus n=58; Latvia n=25

²⁴ Three respondents among those who have chosen the answer "other" are the directors of the board

Belonging to vulnerable groups

Most of the people who responded to the questionnaire in the different countries did not belong to the vulnerable group/s their NGOs work with. The proportion of members of the vulnerable groups who answered the questionnaire ranges from 20% to 38%, being Cyprus the country with a higher participation of these people.

	Italy		Spain		Romania		Cyprus		Latvia	
Yes	8	20,5%	48	22,0%	8	27,6%	22	38,0%	5	20,0%
No	31	79,5%	165	78,0%	21	72,4%	36	62,0%	20	80,0%
Total	39	100,0%	213	100,0%	29	100,0%	58	100,0%	25	100,0%