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INCLUD-ED

Strategies for inclusion and social cohesion in Europe from education

WORKING PAPER:

**SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION AND INCLUSION PROCESSES AMONG
VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Project 4 Workpackage 16

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1. INTRODUCTION

The research reported in this working paper is part of the **Project 4**, of which the objective is: *To investigate how educational exclusion affects diverse sectors of society, particularly the most 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.5).*

Specifically, the objective of the **workpackage 16** is: *to study trajectories moving 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. (Annex I, p.38).*

In this study the focus is 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 from the current knowledge society. Evidence of the processes and strategies which make it possible to overcome this exclusion was gathered, by placing a special emphasis on key events and particular actions that lead to success.

The empirical analysis is based on the critical communicative methodology that enables an egalitarian dialogue between the researchers and the research participants whose voices have often been excluded. The empirical data analyzed in this report was gathered through communicative daily life stories and communicative focus groups with persons belonging to the five established vulnerable groups (migrants, cultural minorities, women, youth, and people with disabilities).

Apart from Spain, research with the same methodology was carried out in Cyprus, Italy, Romania, and Hungary. The data from each country is analysed in individual reports.

National context in Spain

This section is referred to in the Introduction to the Working paper WP15 of this same Project 4 (please consult said document).

2. METHODOLOGY

This research is based on the Critical Communicative Methodology (CCM) which according to Annex I is the methodological perspective to be followed throughout the process due to its social utility and scientific rigour. CCM is based on the egalitarian dialogue to be established through the communication between the scientific knowledge –brought in by the research team- and the knowledge from the reality and the particular situation analysed – brought in by the researched persons, taking part as end-users in the research. CCM emphasizes equality in the research process, dialogic research; and it is based on the intersubjective dialogue and the emergence of an egalitarian relationship between the researcher and the researched¹. Through a cooperative process between the people, a consensual interpretation of reality is aimed for. Reflections are made on the interpretations of the person in relation to his or her life, as well as the processes and factors which help to overcome educational exclusion. The interactive process of dialogue allows to obtain information on these strategies which have promoted the social inclusion of the person being interviewed.

2.1 Data collection

The empirical data were gathered with two data collection techniques: communicative daily life stories (CDLS) and communicative focus groups (CFG). Altogether 25 CDLS and 10 CFG’s were to be carried out – 5 interviews and 2 focus groups with people from each of the five established vulnerable groups (see the table below)

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

The interviewees and focus group participants were selected according to the 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

¹ Flecha, Ramón, Jesús Gómez (2004) “Participatory Paradigms: Researching ‘with’ rather than ‘on’.” , pp. 129-140 in Michael Osborne, Jim Gallacher, Beth Crossan, eds., *Researching Widening Access to Lifelong Learning: Issues and approaches in an international context*. London: Routledge.

vulnerable group are considered to be at most risk of social exclusion (the most socially vulnerable within the vulnerable group).

- b) Having a trajectory or being in the process of overcoming the inequalities that affect the group he or she represents. 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. People who currently continue or have continued their education after having experienced educational exclusion.

The interviewees for the CDLS and the participants of the CFG's were contacted through other institutions, like, for example NGO's working with the five established vulnerable groups.

The guidelines for CDLS and CFG's had three main parts covering the life course, their educational experiences, and the impact of these on other areas of life (like employment, health, housing, and social and political participation). Throughout the communicative daily life stories and focus group discussions, connections were established between the situation of the participants in relation to the other people in his or her vulnerable group. The goal was to promote a reflection about the strategies, conditions and factors that have helped them to be able to create a pathway to overcoming social exclusion.

All interviewees were informed thoroughly about the research project and the objectives of the interview or the focus group discussion. They were asked to sign a consent form confirming that they agree to participate in the project voluntarily, anonymously and confidentially. The participants also filled in a short form providing some basic information about themselves. All CDLS and CFG's were recorded with the permission of the participants (except one interview where the person objected that, in this case the interviewer took notes of the CDLS).

2.2 Data analysis

All the recordings of the CDLS and the CFG's were transcribed verbatim and assigned a code in order to maintain the anonymity of the participants. The transcript codes provide

information on the data gathering technique, the vulnerable group, and gender. Also, it includes a number according to the chronological order (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...

The data obtained were codified and analyzed along the exclusionary and transformative axis according to the methodological principles of the critical communicative methodology. The experiences in the areas of education, health, employment, housing, and social and political participation were analyzed separately. Gender perspective was analyzed as a transversal category throughout the study. (See the analytical grid below.)

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

In the rows the exclusionary dimension refers to the barriers that certain people or groups face encounter and which, should they not exist when trying to take advantage of a particular practice or social benefit. If these barriers did not exist, the person or group which wanted to have access to this benefit may be able to achieve this. In Project 4, the

main objective is to investigate how educational exclusion affects diverse sectors of society, particularly the most vulnerable groups. Transformative dimension is defined basing on the exclusionary one, and it aims to transform the barriers that make access to social benefits or practices difficult. In this case in Project 4, this dimension includes the educational provisions which contribute to overcoming educational and social exclusion.

The columns make reference to elements which are related to the reproduction or overcoming of social exclusion in vulnerable groups, paying special attention to these actions which are being developed within the educational context. The information provided in each column will be information which connects those elements to educational and social success, either in an inclusionary or in an exclusionary way.

In accordance with the objectives of the project 4, these elements are clustered into a main category: *Actions which contribute to overcome exclusion and discrimination*. The five areas of society studied in the Includ-ED project are included into this category. The focus will be on the actions carried out in the four 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.

During the process of codification the relevant parts of the transcripts were assigned a code where the first number identifies the number of the transcript, the second number – the corresponding number from the analytical grid, and the third number – the number of the paragraph in the transcript. For the quotes referring to gender issues the letter *a* was added to the code marking the transversal category of gender.

2.3 The profile of the interviewees

Code	Description
SIF1	Moroccan housewife, 32 years, currently attending literacy classes
SIM2	Man from Ecuador, 35 years, had left school in the age of 14 and continued education at 27. Very active socially and politically
SIF3	Woman from Dominican Republic, 43 years, currently doing literacy classes
SIF4	Moroccan woman, has studied law in Morocco, currently in a vocational programme on social integration. Works as a mediator for the city council.

SIF5	Moroccan woman, 36 years, has studied natural sciences and informatics in Morocco, currently doing language courses and computer lessons. Works as a mediator for the city council.
SMF1	Roma woman, 32 years, obtained secondary education in an adult school, currently university student
SMM2	Roma man, 45 years, in a wheelchair, started higher education after the age of 25
SMF3	Roma woman, 25 years, vocational courses organized by Roma women association
SMM4	Roma man, obtained secondary education in a school for adults and started higher education
SMM5	Roma man, 37 years, currently works as a social educator
SWF1	Autochthonous woman, 72 years, is doing literacy classes, participant of literary gatherings
SWF2	Autochthonous woman, 52 years, doing secondary education
SWF3	Autochthonous woman, 53 years, in the course to enter university
SWF4	Autochthonous woman, 52 years, has done the course to enter university
SWF5	Autochthonous woman, 64 years, started literacy classes in the age of 30 and has obtained secondary education
SYM1	Autochthonous man, 49 years, obtained secondary education in an adult school
SYM2	Autochthonous man, has obtained secondary education in an adult school
SYM3	Autochthonous man, 30 years, has done a university preparation course in an adult school
SYF4	Autochthonous woman, 18 years, has obtained secondary education in an adult school
SYF5	Autochthonous woman, 19 years, after leaving school has obtained a vocational qualification
SDF1	Autochthonous woman, 56 years, mental disability, has obtained secondary education in an adult school
SDF2	Autochthonous woman, 49 years, visual impairment, currently obtaining secondary education
SDM3	Autochthonous man, 44 years, cerebral palsy, after special school obtained vocational education
SDM4	Autochthonous man, 34 years, tetraplegia, currently obtaining higher education
SDM5	Autochthonous woman, 65 years, blind woman, currently attending brailley classes and higher education in a public university.
GI 1	4 immigrants from Ecuador and Morocco, currently obtaining secondary education, learning Catalan
GI 2	8 immigrants from Georgia, Pakistan, Belgium, Morocco, Senegal, Gambia, currently learning in an adult school
GM1	4 Roma women, participating in a vocational course
GM2	4 Roma women, participating in vocational courses
GW1	7 women, current or former students of an adult school
GW2	6 women, currently doing literacy classes in an adult school
GY1	3 women and 1 man in the age range of 25 to 32, after leaving school have continued education in an adult school
GY2	3 women between 24 to 27 years. 2 autochthonous who are preparing the access to university and one from Ucrania learning Spanish in adult education centre.
GD1	3 men and 1 women with different disabilities (intellectual and physical) involved in adult education centre
GD2	5 people with physical and intellectual disabilities involved in associations of people with disabilities.

3. MAIN FINDINGS

3.1. Migrants

3.1.1 Exclusionary components

- **Racist attitudes and prejudices (Health/Housing)**

Racism and prejudices are still one of the largest barriers faced by migrants in their quest for social inclusion. They report experiencing racism in different moments of their migration path which is affecting various areas of life, and thus social inclusion. Rachida, is a Moroccan woman aged 32 that worked for the city council of a small town near Barcelona. She explains a situation of racism that she has shared with other women facing this discriminatory situation in hospitals, where they have received bad treatment from **doctors** and other hospital staff for the very fact of being a migrant, wearing a veil.

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 treats her very bad... and not... and when seeing 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 who told me this... [] told me that doctors treat her very bad, the nurses, where she lived, as well... things like these. (SIF5, 1, 149)²

Racism and discrimination which is present in other domains, have been increased with the difficult situation brought about by the financial crisis. In this regards, we are told how some housing companies use these conditions to make profit on this already vulnerable social group. Luis is a 35 year old man from Ecuador confirms this fact through a situation in his environment. He left school in his country at the age of 14 and went back to formal education at 27 when he arrived in Spain where he has had the chance to get the secondary education degree in an adult centre which follows a dialogic learning approach. He confirms that this treatment received from the renting agencies is becoming a real barrier for migrants like his own sister who experience one of this cases reported.

Yes, the truth is that I know many people, really. And many immigrants, not only, have bought flats, have a good job. Suddenly they loose the job and can't find it in one year. Of course, they are in this situation and this

² *Sí, ahí como quedamos allí como casi quince días ingresao me encuentro como otras mujeres y llevan pañuelo y me... y mi cuentas situación que le han encontrao y que la gente le trata muy mal... que la enfermera también le tratan muy mal... y no... y cuando encontrar con ellas le dicen palabras malas. Y le dicen porque estas aquí, porque no vais a vuestro país... Es una mujer que la ha encontrao allí y me cuenta este [...] me ha dicho que los médicos le tratan muy mal, la enfermeras, donde vivi también... cosas como esta. (SIF5, 1, 149)*

has an influence on the couples. Here the letting agencies are to blame, because they try to talk you into anything. This happened to my sister, they wanted to sell her a flat that I, well I know a lot about flats and I told her – no, no, don't buy it, it's outrageous. (SIM2, 9, 129)³

As another of the interviewees report, Moroccan face situations of sheer discrimination for the very fact of being foreign. Fatma, from Morocco emigrated to Catalunya -where she is now living with her daughter- despite her fathers' opposition. She is currently studying and she works as a cultural mediator. This provides her with knowledge about many situations of the barriers Moroccans find when they try to rent a flat and they are denied this possibility due to their origin.

Now for example, there is a flat that is empty here, there are many Moroccans that want to, but the agency does not want to rent a flat to Moroccans. They say: "If a Moroccan moves out, then a Moroccan can move into the same flat" if not - no, cannot enter, they don't want to... (SIF4, 9, 133)⁴

Likewise, one of the participants of a focus group with immigrants, reports the same situation of being discriminated against by reasons of origin. His report talks about how for the very fact of being Senegalese he has been rejected to rent a flat.

Before getting this flat, I had to phone and I phoned. [explains the conversation with the landlord]. Is this the flat to rent? Yes, yes it is. It is there and there. And then you arrive and you are a black, so Oh, it has been already taken today [the flat] and the next day you see it on the Internet. (GI2, 9)

³ *Sí, la verdad es que conozco a muchísima gente, la verdad. Y mucha gente inmigrante, no solamente, han comprado pisos, tienen un buen trabajo, de repente no tienen trabajo y no lo pueden conseguir en un año, entonces claro se ven con todo eso, y esto influye con sus parejas, en eso la culpa la tienen las inmobiliarias, porque te lavan la cabeza, eso ha pasado con mi hermana, claro, le querían vender un piso que yo, bueno yo sé mucho de pisos, y le dije, pero que te quieren vender, no, no, no lo compres son unos impresentables. (SIM2, 9, 129)*

⁴ *Ara per exemple, hi ha un pis que està buit aquí, hi ha molts marroquins que volen, però la Inmobiliària no volen llogar un pis a marroquins. Diuen: "Si surt un marroquí, entra un marroquí allà al mateix pis on estava" sinó, no, no entra, no volen... (SIF4, 9, 133)*

- **Lack of trust from local people and neighbours (Housing)**

Immigrants often have to face discriminatory attitudes from their local neighbours and other community members. This happens especially with people in certain areas where there have no or very scarce experience of interacting with people from other countries. In some cases the prejudices are overcome with the time and a good neighbour relationship can be established.

A Moroccan female participant of a focus group explains the mistrust and rejection felt about her neighbours' behaviour when she arrived, which after several months changed to a more cordial relationship. The fact that no other fact has changed in her life to have caused this change suggests an initial rejection based on prejudices.

When I came to live here in Terrassa, I came with my daughter who had 8 months. I was living on the 4th floor and left the stroller downstairs. So they put a paper... but without talking neither to the chairpersons, nor to the committee, put a paper – cannot put the stroller here. The neighbour who put up the paper came to me to say that I cannot leave the stroller downstairs. And I told her that when my husband comes he will take it, that in the moment I cannot leave my daughter alone at home, with the products, the stroller... They did not know me. Of course, they saw me with the veil and it's already very strange. But after a couple of months, they came to me and said that now you can leave the stroller downstairs. (G11, 9, 372)⁵

Finally, **the limited contacts that immigrants often have with local people** – on the one hand because they are new in the country, but also because of **prejudices** towards them are especially discriminatory for migrant women. There are several evidences in the field work about these prejudices. This is Sukaina's case. Sukaina is a Moroccan mother aged 32 who is currently attending literacy classes in the same adult school as Luis. Regarding her son's school, she reports how the lack of contact with other parents, and the short communication in the school and neighbourhood is preventing her from feeling included in the host society.

The other parents don't talk to me. Some of them they tell me "¿Hola. Que tal?", 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

⁵ *Cuando vine aquí a Terrassa a vivir, vine con mi niña que tenía 8 meses y viví en el 4 y dejó el carro abajo pues pusieron bajo un papel pero sin hablar con los presidentes ni la junta ni nada pusieron un papel aquí no se deja el carro. Vino la vecina que puso el cartel a picarme que ahí abajo no se deja el carro. Yo le dije que cuando venga mi marido lo coge que ahora no puedo dejar mi hija sola en casa, con la compra, el carro... No me conocían. Claro me vieron con el pañuelo y entonces ya esta es muy raro. Pero cuando pasaron un par de meses, me vinieron a picar a casa diciendo ya puedes dejar el carro abajo. (G11, 9, 372)*

always say hi to people very enthusiastically, but the people respond very fast and walk away.

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

I don't know. Maybe because I am wearing a veil. (SIF1, 13, 54-56)

- **Institutional and social barriers that hinder inclusion (Employment/ Participation)**

There are some institutional and social barriers that are hindering migrants' inclusion in the labour market and within social movements. Referring the labour market, there is the case of Rachida who reports how she, among others, has faced institutional obstacles that hinder their labour inclusion in the host society. Rachida arrived 10 years ago from Morocco thanks to the family reunification programme of her husband who was already here. Although she is currently unemployed, she has worked at Terrassa's city hall as an Environmental informer. She has had to work as cleaning staff and take care of her child (who is sick) at the same time. Rachida has previous qualifications in her country of origin which are not recognised in the host country seriously affecting her opportunities for labour insertion.

Because the things that I learn, I already had before. You know this only as before I had that in French and know only the language changes, nothing else. This is what I told you, that I am loosing a lot, not gaining. [...] Yes, these are things that can help to find a job (...) because what I had before I have to translate because then I only had it in French and Arabic. (SIF5, 7, 112-119)⁶

So, migrants **with educational qualifications obtained in their home countries are finding are forced to accept low-qualified jobs** (jobs of short duration, and precarious labour conditions) due to the **institutional lack of support for the accreditation of these credentials**. In that sense, Rarchida argues that since she arrived to Spain she has not been able to find the jobs she really would want to. The consequence for the host society is that **this leads to an inefficient use of the human resources available in the country**.

- *.. now we don't look for what we like, we look for what is available.*
- **Of course. I was referring to the fact that you have a degree.**
- *That's why.*
- **You have an education but you are doing things...**

⁶ - *Porque el... lo que tengo antes tengo que traducinarlos porque como antes solamente tengo el idioma de francés y árabe y cuando llego aquí es muy diferente. Aquí solamente español y... ese es el problema. Que antes tenía casi treinta años de... estudios con francés y cuando llego aquí tener que cambiar todo. Porque no son igual, por eso me intento a... estudiar la idioma, ha hacer un poquito de informática y yo tengo el básico. El básico la tengo pero tengo que a traducirlo en español. (SIF5, 7, 112-119)*

- *From the first day when I arrived here I don't find what I am looking for. (SIF5, 5, 105-109)⁷*

The present of certain institutional obstacles in social movements are hindering participation of migrants in a sphere which is key for their social inclusion. One of the persons taking part in a migrant focus group, and who is actually taking part in a programme to obtain secondary education and learning Catalan in a learning community of Terrassa, confirms the existence of certain **institutional barriers based on the lack of citizenship of the host country which drives her to feel excluded from social and political participation.**

No, but my mother told me that there is a party here that if you don't have the citizenship you cannot join, don't know the name of it. She has a friend who is a journalist in the newspaper of Terrassa, he invited her to come with him. But they told her that no, without the citizenship no... (GI1, 13, 409).

Fatma who is already very active in the host society as a mediator, indicates the lack of **language proficiency as an obstacle to build contacts and participate in the social and political life in the host country** – be it in the school of the children, the activities in the neighbourhood or other.

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. (SIF4, 13, 135)⁸

- **Discrimination faced due to lack of academic background (Education)**

Another exclusionary practice which are affecting migrant students, are the negative attitude from teachers. Carla, a woman aged 44 coming from the Dominican Republic, reports having been reproached by teachers of the adult education centre she attended for her lack of knowledge. She left the school at 9 to take care of her 4 brothers as her mother died. When she arrived at the age of 24, she was still illiterate and very embarrassed to admit it, so she decided to come back to education in an adult education centre. Last year she started up a literacy course where she is taking part now 9 months. She reports how she has suffered racism due to the fact of being Black.

⁷ - *ara no buscamos el gust, buscamos lo que hay. - Claro. No hombre me refiero a que veo que tu tienes una titulación... - Por eso... - Tienes educación pero estas haciendo cosas... - Des del primer día que llevo aquí no encuentro lo que busco. (SIF5, 5, 105-109)*

⁸ *Si, clar. Tu imagina't, si vas per exemple a una festa del barri i no saps, la festa en la que parlen tot en català, per exemple, expliquen tot el que han d'explicar en català i tu no entens el català, llavors o no vas, o vas una estona, un quart d'hora com a màxim, i t'avorreixes i tornes a casa. (SIF4, 13, 135)*

But in this school what you say, they talked bad to you?

They told me that why I hadn't learned it earlier, at... And of course, this is embarrassing and you already, you cannot ask a question. This is why I seldom ask questions, because I think that the same will happen to me as in other places. (SIF3, 17, 99)⁹

3.1.2. Transformative dimensions

Promotion of the positive effects of peer interactions. High expectations from teachers and trainers (Education)

High expectations from teachers and classmates are reported as being key for the learning process of migrant people. Luis explained how certain teachers have been critical for his motivation and confidence, as well as the relationship with peers, which all were very important for going back to study as he did, overcoming barriers such as the language.

He motivated me a lot, really, when somebody motivates you through a positive point of view, this inspires you. Despite the difficulties with the language in that moment partly it was also because of the spirit of the people whom I met in the class with all teachers, teachers friends I mean. (SIM2, 18-20).

The fact that **the sphere, the companionship, solidarity and trust on everyone's capacities is making a difference** and is a key element for the success in education.

I think that it's about environment where you move, the people in your surroundings, their confidence, and everything they do,... Here, in the school, people is following you up, is concerned about you, to see how you are doing, to be solidair. Such things help you to be solidair yourself. (SIM2, 18, 35)¹⁰

Beyond the group of peers, it is also the confidence they gave me, that they always were with me, giving me support, and in this sense you feel that you

⁹ - ***Pero en esta escuela que dices te contestaban mal?*** - *Me decían que porque no lo había aprendido antes, de... Y claro, te corta un poco, y ya te va pues, no puedes preguntar. Yo pregunto poco por eso, porque creo que me va a pasar lo mismo que en los otros sitios. (SIF3, 17, 99)*

¹⁰ *Yo creo que es el ambiente donde te mueves, la gente que está en tu entorno, la confianza que te dan y que hacen muchas cosas, no. Aquí en la escuela, la gente que está pendiente de ti, a ver cómo estas, a ser solidario. Entonces estas cosas te ayudan a ser solidario. (SIM2, 18, 35)*

overcome yourself, and that you are attaining something that you value when time goes by, although I would like to do other things still (SIM2, 18, 75)¹¹

High expectations support and solidarity, building confidence and self-esteem of vulnerable groups stands out as a powerful strategy to empowering people in their overcoming of social exclusion.

- **Immigrant networking. Joining migrant associations as a starting point to a greater social and political engagement (Participation)**

There are different contributions that highlight personal relationships and network creation as a key component to overcoming the situation of exclusion migrants suffer. In the case of Fatma, the **solidarity of immigrant women** has been critical for her going back to study, and even participating beyond being a mere student. Personal difficulties - many of them have their children to take care of-, do not prevent them from engaging in this emancipatory processes. Fatma explained how knowing other women in the same situation encouraged her to go back to study in spite of her difficulties.

.. 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 is also south American and she explained me long ago, when I was a volunteer in the school, she told me that she was alone with two children and she studied, she was an immigrant with two children, separated and she studied, you know? And this has helped me a lot, gosh, she can and she has two children, 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)¹²

In the same vein, having contacts to a wide range of people increases considerably the chances to find solutions to different problems. For instance, to finding a job, as one of the participants in a migrant focus group recalls:

- **How was it that you found this job?**

¹¹ *A ver a parte de los grupos es la confianza que me dieron, que siempre estuvieron pendientes, darme apoyo ánimo, en ese sentido sientes que te superas, y que estas consiguiendo algo que con el tiempo lo valoras, aunque me gustaría hacer más cosas, (SIM2, 18, 75)*

¹² *.. també em va donar molta força per començar de nou el estudi i tal va ser el CEIP Montserrat, perquè es diu Susana i també es sud-americana, i també va explicar ja fa molt, quan estava allà com a voluntària de l'escola, em va explicar que ella estava sola amb dos nens i estudiava, era immigrant amb dos nens, separada i estudiava, saps? I això també em va ajudar molt, ostres ella pot i te dos fills, jo no puc que tinc una filla?saps (...)em va ajudar molt per donar el pas. I un cop dones el pas tot l'altre es més fàcil (SIF4, 18, 151)*

- *Emmm, my mother, emm, is a member of an association. [...] And a guy there knows a woman who has a restaurant and brought me there. (G11, 6, 276-279)¹³*

This aspect is especially significant for immigrants as a vulnerable group as their contacts in the host country are often very limited. Therefore all activities leading to **widening the networks of immigrants have a strong transformative impact.**

This is the case of migrant associations where they have the chance to take part in different activities and projects which allow them to enter into contact with the host society, the institutional contexts, finding ways to overcome their situation of social exclusion. In the case of Luis, the fact of being **engaged in different associations and multicultural groups has been key for his further participation** in other domains of society.

It has had a strong influence in my life, I used to be shy and now I have taken part in many things, in the City Hall, we have taken part in the Immigration Plans, I have been to the University to explain my experience (...) I have been to Cordoba to explain a European project (Who speaks) (SIM2, 16, 33)¹⁴

- **Inclusion of immigrant voices within decision-making processes: democratic structures in adult educational centres (Participation)**

Participation in decision-making processes, in associations, has been identified as a relevant element that contributes with many positive effects. The fact that it is the end-users that decide on what to do and how to organise it, contributes to them getting what they want, the courses they need – in the following case that refers to an adult school. When explaining the functioning of the adult school, the fact **that all the members of the assemblies, that is all participants who wish to, decide together, is highlighted.**

¹³ - **Cómo fue que encontraste este trabajo?** - *Emmm, mi madre, emm, esta asociada en una asociación. [...] Y un chico de allí, conoce a una señora que tiene un restaurante y me llevó allí. (G11, 6, 276-279)*

¹⁴ *ha influido mucho en mi vida, yo antes era tímido, he participado en infinidad de cosas, en el Ayuntamiento, hemos participado en los planes de inmigración, he ido a universidades a explicar mi experiencia. Estuve en Córdoba, a explicar el proyecto Sócrates de Who Speak, (SIM2, 16-133)*

All of us in the board, all the volunteers, we all do the Comes (assemblies). It is not the hired staff who decide, we do. (...) [when asked whether he finds this important] Yes, I do. Because the community we know what we want, for instance, if you hire someone, she or he does not know, but on the other hand we know if we want to do dancing or [dialogic] gatherings, I don't know many things. (SIM2, 14, 117-119)¹⁵

Democratic adult education is based on the fact that training activities are tailored considering the needs and interests of migrant people. In that sense, the educational centres organize the schedule taking into account the reality of migrants in their lives, for instance their schedule in their jobs. So, there are some adult education schools which open until 22 p.m. This approach promotes their continuation in the educational system.

Do you believe that the way they teach in this adult school, that it is good for learning, for teaching, what do you think?

I think yes, the school is more focused on adults, not on people with fourteen years, for education that is more feasible for people who work and don't have possibilities to study. So it is quite good, because there are parents who work till seven, go home and have their children, so this is a quite good system. (SIM2, 18, 59)¹⁶

- **Involvement in school management or school activities (Education).**

The presence of migrants in school staff or like volunteers is playing a key role in different aspects of their successful trajectories. The presence of migrants in different areas contribute to the creation of role models that promote education and inclusion of this social group. In the following case Fatma argues that as a volunteer in a school she achieved that a young girl continued her studies and finished the compulsory secondary education as a result of her mediating with the family that was planning to leave the country. After this episode, Fatma has become a referent, a role model for girls in her own community.

¹⁵ *Todos los que estamos en la junta, por ejemplo, todos los colaboradores, voluntarios, colaboradores, hacemos los Comes, los consells de centre, no son las personas que están contratadas aquí las que deciden, decidimos nosotros. Y **crees que esto es importante?** Sí, porque la comunidad sabe lo que quiere, por ejemplo si tu contratas a una persona ella no sabe, en cambio la comunidad sabe que quiere hacer bailes de salón, tertulias, yo que se muchas cosas. (SIM2, 14, 117-119)*

¹⁶ - ***Creas que como se enseña en la escuela de adultos de aquí, es bueno para el aprendizaje, para aprender, para enseñar, tú qué piensas?*** - *Yo creo que sí, la escuela está más enfocada a las personas adultas, no para personas de catorce años, por la enseñanza que es más factible para personas que están trabajando y no tienen posibilidades de estudiar, entonces está bastante bien, porque hay padres de familia que trabajan hasta las siete de la tarde, entonces llegan a su casa y tienen a sus hijos, entonces es un sistema que está bastante bien. (SIM2, 18, 59)*

And you think that for example the fact that these Moroccan friends see you as a Moroccan who is studying. Do you think that somehow it makes them think...

Yes, yes I think so, not all of them but some. And in addition, this year I work with the schools, as I said before, and in one secondary school I helped in the group of newcomers. There were two Moroccan girls, the father of the one wanted that she goes to Morocco, and she was in the 4th grade of ESO [compulsory secondary education], and the teacher told me that if she will finish the ESO she will at least have the certificate, with this she will be able to do a course of medical nursing or something like this, you know, and to study something. **And I spoke with his father, did mediation, (...) and finally he allowed her to stay.** Because they all left, the father, the mother, the whole family to Morocco, and left her here with a relative. **She finished her 4th grade of ESO, has her certificate and now do the education for nurse.** At the end of the year she came to the party of the group of newcomers of the students that were there. And she was speaking there and I also explained them that **she is studying and working, and has a daughter, and well, have to have the motivation and so.** And two, she and another one said to me that **"We will also do as you"**. (SIF4, 18, 147)¹⁷

These migrant women who are involved in schools are giving to migrant families and students an example to overcome difficulties, they become role models for girls who are at the same time referents for younger girls. As we saw in a former quotation from Fatma, she also became encouraged by seeing the **model of another migrant mother** -who dealt with work and family responsibilities- which creates a sort of chain effect with empowering consequences for migrant women.

3.2. Cultural groups

3.2.1. Exclusionary Components

Use of technical language (Health)

One of discriminatory practices faced by the migrant community is the use of very technical language – special terminology and complicated ways of expression. This leads to exclusionary situations in many different areas of life, like health care, financial issues,

¹⁷ - **I tu creus que per exemple el fet de que aquestes amigues marroquines et vegin a tu, també com a marroquina que estiguis estudiant. Tu creus que d'alguna manera et fa pensar...** - Si, si jo crec que sí, alguna, totes no però alguna sí. I a més a més, aquest any jo treballa a les escoles, com hem dit abans, i en un institut col·laborava en l'aula d'acollida. Hi havien dos noies marroquines, una el seu pare volia que marxés al Marroc, i ella estava a 4at d'ESO, i la profe em va comentar que si ella acabat d'ESO tindrà el seu títol com a mínim, així podrà fer un cicle d'infermeria o algo així saps, i estudiar algo. I vaig parlar amb el seu pare, fer mediació, això sí que es mediació mediació mediació, perquè ho vaig fer mes amb ell, i per fi la va deixar perquè marxaven tots, el pare, la mare, tota la família al Marroc, i la va deixar aquí amb un familiar va acabar el seu 4at d'ESO, te el seu títol i ara esta fent, ara farà el cicle d'infermeria i la festa final de curs vaig anar per festa final de l'aula d'acollida dels alumnes que estaven allí, i estaven parlant allí i jo també els hi vaig explicar que estava estudiant i treballant, i tinc una nena, i bueno has de tenir ganes i tal. I dues, ella i un altra em van dir també farem com tu. (SIF4, 18, 147)

housing, etc. For example, in health care the interviewees describe situations where the medical personnel uses a very sophisticated language and specific medical terms with patients who have low levels of education and therefore are not able to understand it. This behaviour prevents them from receiving essential information about their health and the necessary actions to improve it and it is an expression of exclusionary behaviour that prioritizes one certain code over the well-being of a social group.

Antonio is a Roma man who obtained secondary education in a school for adults and is now finishing a Bachelor's in Sociology. He describes a situation he experienced where medical staff uses especially complicated language with an illiterate elderly Roma person who was unable to understand the explanations. Antonio noticed that when talking among them and with him, this same staff used more simple language suggesting a purposefully discriminatory treatment of the illiterate Roma person.

.. 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. (SMM4, 3, 64)¹⁸

Racist attitudes and prejudices (Employment/Education/Housing)

As it was identified above in relation to immigrants, racism is one of the sources of exclusion still faced by cultural minorities. Previous research about the situation of Roma in the **labour** market (CREA 2001-2004)¹⁹ demonstrates that this group suffers from major discrimination because of racist attitudes and prejudices against them. Interviewees have explained many situations of open discrimination in different areas, as does Antonio in the following quote where he reports on his employers firing him after having heard that he is Roma.

¹⁸ *..Sí se de otras personas que sí, que, que no les han atendido bien, que utilizan un lenguaje... porque se dan cuenta de que son personas igual analfabetas, que no saben leer y escribir, claro, su nivel de comprensión es muy básico y utilizan unos lenguajes, sobretodo un lenguaje muy, muy, muy elevado, con lo que esa persona no entiende lo que se le dice. En ese nivel muchísimo, se dan muchísimo. Cuando... a ver, una vez que llevé a una persona a urgencias y vino pues una persona gitana, mayor, analfabeta, y utilizaron un lenguaje con ella, que la mujer no se entendía de nada. Bueno, pues cuando se fue esta persona, luego entré yo, bajaron el listón, bajaron el nivel, hablando entre médicos, los celadores y el guardia jurado que estaban allí, no utilizaban un lenguaje tan tecnificado como el que utilizaban con la gitana que era analfabeta. Y yo ahí, ¿Qué pasa aquí, no? Que contrariedad. (SMM4, 3, 64)*

¹⁹ CREA. (2001-2004). Workaló. *The creation of new occupational patterns for cultural minorities: The Gypsy Case*. 5th Framework Programme of the European Commission.

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 come early, start loading and he says – no, no, go to the office, they want to talk to you. So they give some papers “sign these, we will pay you more than you have earned and don't ask anything.” (SMM4, 5, 22)²⁰

This racist attitudes based on prejudices are to be found in other spheres having an impact on their **educational** trajectories. For instance, in the case of Roma there are many stereotypes which are affecting the academic performance or educational involvement of Roma students, such as low expectations towards Roma students. Ana, is a young Roma woman who studied secondary education in an adult school and is currently following a Bachelor's in Psychology explains this situations that the Roma community face in schools. She reports how this discriminatory behaviour from teachers leads to low performance of Roma pupils and contributes to abandoning the educational system altogether.

Or let's say, when a mother is thinking about if her child should or should not continue, because he is treated badly, or because they do not teach to him, okay? I know cases, I know cases where I've been told “It's that the teacher seems to bear a grudge against her, scolds her, that don't know what, that uff, that she treats her like... uff if you won't learn like this and don't know what” “if after all you will get married in some few years, for the market where you will end up working” or comments ... (SMF1, 17, 284)²¹

As we see, the prejudices about their culture and their habits have a very negative influence on teachers' expectations and subsequently on their performance. These low expectations also lead to having teachers neglecting from explaining the different possibilities that their offspring have in school. In the following quote. Juan who is a Roma man working as social educator explains how for his parents there was never more options than learning a profession as they were never told about highschool.

²⁰ *Y no hacía el trabajo ni mejor ni peor que nadie, simplemente cumplía con mi trabajo y mi horario, siempre... además, yo ya por definición soy muy puntual y un día, con el chico, el mozo ahí del almacén, cargando lo que iba para cada tienda, pues teníamos la radio puesta. Y salió una canción de flamenco, y por ahí entramos a hablar y salió el tema de gitano, de flamenco y tal, entonces, como yo estoy muy orgulloso de lo que soy, y no tengo porque renunciar a ello, pues salió el tema que yo era gitano. Bueno, nada, todo normal, me fui de reparto. (...) por la mañana, voy temprano, empiezo a cargar y me dice, no, no, pasa por la oficina que quieren hablar contigo. Entonces me ponen allí unos papeles “firmelos, le damos más de lo que le corresponde y no pregunte nada” (SMM4, 5, 22)*

²¹ *¿O sea, si una madre se están planteando que siga o no siga su hijo, porque lo tratan mal, o porque no le enseñan, vale? Porque conocemos casos, yo conozco casos que me han dicho “es que la profesora parece que la tiene entre ceja y ceja, que le riñe, que no se qué, que uff, la trata así “uff si no vas a aprender así no se qué” “si total te vas a casar de aquí unos años, si para, pa el mercado que vas a acabar a trabajar” o sea comentarios... (SMF1, 17, 284)*

My parents did not have a clue about what highschool was. There is a huge disconnection between the information that the families receive, a huge lack of information, about what highschool means, families don't know what it is (SMM, 17)²²

Another area affected by the aforementioned discrimination is that of housing. Just as we have seen prejudices and racism affecting **housing** conditions of migrant groups, the same situation is to be found with the Roma community. Landpersons do not want to rent their flats to Roma people, neighbours would rather not have them in their community and other people avoid moving to areas where Roma people live which creates or maintain ghetto-like areas.

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. (SMM4, 9, 74)²³

Just as Moroccan or Senegales migrants have reported feeling rejected due to their origin, Roma community face racism situations that evidence discrimination based on the sole fact of being Roma.

3.2.2. Transformative components

Importance of cultural references (Health)

As it was already found in the survey of NGOs working with vulnerable groups (workpackage 15, INCLUD-ED) and from the literature review the interviewees belonging to cultural minorities, like Roma and other, stress the importance of having cultural references in the health care institutions. This facilitates the communication between the medical personnel and the patients from cultural minorities.

A Roma man interviewed told us about the experiences of the community with Roma persons working as mediators in a hospital. He values it as a transformative practice

²² *A mis padres les sonaba a chino eso del bachiller. Hay una gran desconexión entre como le llega la información a la familia, y una **gran falta de información**, de lo que es el bachillerato (...) las familias no saben qué es (SMM5, 17)*

²³ *Luego casos de, de querer alquilar una vivienda o comprarla, es realmente un problema. O sea, hay personas que para preguntar han mandado a lo mejor un amigo que no es gitano para que pregunte las condiciones, a ver que dan y luego meterse. Hasta este punto. Y una vez metido, bueno pues ya (...) ¿no? Es una barrera constante, por la misma persona que te lo alquila o vende y por la propia comunidad de vecinos. Eso es brutal. O sea, el racismo que está allí es muy fuerte, muy fuerte, muy fuerte. (SMM4, 9, 74)*

reducing difficulties based on cultural differences and improving the quality of health care services provided to Roma.

..Have employed four or five people from different cultures and they work with the people from different cultures who come. For example, in the Hospital del Mar, there are some right? And I have asked people who have been there and, very good. Good, because for example he... the person working there, 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)²⁴

As it has been analysed in former INCLUD-ED research, the benefits of having cultural references go beyond the fact of having the activity of cultural mediators. Previous findings suggest that the inclusion of cultural mediators is a first step towards the process of diversifying the health care and medical staff, where there will be Roma doctors and Roma nurses and in a more diversified and efficient practice of minority inclusion (INCLUD-ED Consortium 2009b).

Lifelong learning programmes which respond to demands of the cultural groups (Employment)

A Roma woman reports as a key event in her life the fact of being able to join a course that responded to the needs Roma people were demanding through a Roma Association of Women. The training responded to these demands by providing a course for monitors in school canteens addressed to Roma women that ended up with almost all the women that followed the course finding a job.

Rosario is one of those women who took part in the course. As she left school at the age of 16 with no enough academic preparation that could guarantee a proper job, this experience has opened up doors for her. Having a job allows her to care of her child and to study further in order to widen her opportunities.

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

²⁴ *..han puesto un poco cuatro o cinco personas trabajando de diferentes culturas, y estas personas atienden a las diferentes culturas que vienen. Por ejemplo, en el hospital del mar está ¿no? Y yo le he preguntado a personas que han estado allí y bien, bien porque por ejemplo pues el... la persona que trabaja allí, la persona gitana que trabaja allí los ha atendido, los ha escuchado, y él, bueno, pues de alguna forma ha hecho como de puente ¿no? Entre los médicos y ellos y parece ser que se ha facilitado bastante la cosa ¿eh? Pero yo creo que tampoco se debería quedar allí ¿no? (SMM4, 2, 68)*

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 like that... (SMF2, 18, 69)²⁵

The fact that the educational provision took their voices into account also in the way it was arranged -flexibly beyond "office-hours"- 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, just as Roma staff in healthcare centres does.

Social network, mutual support, and solidarity help to change the path of exclusion

In interviews and group discussions our informants emphasized the importance of support and solidarity which help to overcome the educational and social exclusion they are suffering. We have seen how Roma parents lack information about possibilities of further studies for their children and the impact this has upon everyone's expectations, as Juan reported. In his case however, this systemic barrier was overcome thanks to the personal support and confidence of some of his teachers and other persons which helped him to keep his motivation and continue the education.

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. (SMM5, 18)²⁶

Meeting inspiring personalities makes to believe that changes and improvement are possible, to believe in the potential of people and encourages working for this. For Antonio experiencing the support and solidarity of teachers and other people in the adult school has been a life changing experience which has given him the motivation and possibilities to study and to spur his social and political participation.

²⁵ *Esto es lo que quiero, y dos años que es lo que me han dicho que tardas en sacarte el graduado me voy a poner ha hacer algún curso. Porque yo puedo seguir trabajando de monitora y por la tarde puedo ir a estudiar. Cuando acabe eso pos hacer algún curso de enfermería o alguna cosa de esa para tener más ventaja (SMF2, 18, 69)*

²⁶ *Lo que me ha ayudado han sido las ayudas personales, de pasarte la mano por la espalda y decirte venga tío, que tu vals, que tu pots. (..) Si no hubiese tenido las personas que he tenido alrededor para ver otro tipo de alternativas, mi vida hubiese sido otra, mis trabajos hubiesen sido otros (...) era mi tutora durante 3 o 4 años y me conocía desde bien pequeño creía que tenía posibilidades pero que iba a ser muy difícil (...) y me sigue animando. (SMM5, 18)*

In the year 1978, when I did the secondary education in the adult school in La Mina, there I made friends with a person who was a teacher there, and through him I have met a large network of non-Roma people, really alternatives. (...) They, well, they have made me to believe, have made me believe that the good, that another world is possible and to believe in people, right? This has opened up possibilities for me and given me encouragement, right? To keep and keep fighting, and (...) (SMM4, 16, 32)²⁷

Also the interaction and mutual support among students is one of the aspects which is highlighted as key element in the successful learning. For example, Ana is a Roma woman who obtained secondary education in an adult school and is currently studying in university. Ana considers that she could access higher education because the peer support was promoted so much in the adult school where she studied.

*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...(SMF1, 18, 52-54)*

3.3. Youth

3.3.1. Exclusionary Components

Low levels of education as a barrier for labour market (Employment)

Young people find important barriers in the labour market. These barriers are leading them to a path of exclusion. For example, Roberto is a young person who left secondary school when he was a teenager and began to work in different occupations. These jobs had very precarious conditions including not considering basic workers' rights and taking advantage of him not having a good academic level.

²⁷ *En el año 78, cuando fui a hacer el graduado escolar a la escuela de adultos de La Mina, pues allí me hice amigo de una persona que era profesor de allá, y a través de él, pues he conocido a una gran red de personas no gitanas, realmente alternativas, (...) los cuales, bueno, me han hecho creer, me han hecho creer en que bueno, que otro mundo es posible y creer en las personas ¿no? Esto pues me ha abierto posibilidades y me ha dado ánimos ¿no? Para seguir y seguir luchando (SMM4, 16, 32)*

²⁸ *- ¿Nos enseñaban a compartir con los demás, a entender que el apoyo entre todos, enseñábamos entre todos, a donde uno no llega que llegue el otro no? Y es cierto porque yo saqué un 7 en historia del arte, que no había hecho nunca y fue porque había compañeras no? (...) y claro, luego te das cuenta que tiene resultados positivos, haber hecho caso a ese "vamos a ayudarnos en todo, vamos a hacer grupos..." no? y la verdad es que muy positivo... - ¿Crees que te enseñaran así o aprender así, crees que ayudó a tu éxito académico? que después pudieras entrar en la universidad? - Hombre... yo creo que sí. (SMF1, 18, 52-54)*

Not right now, no... well in the contracts they try to take advantage of you many times when they are doing the hiring. For example, to me...I have seen less but... I remember when I was in León that I was there for a while and they gave me to sign an empty release document, which was a way of not doing a contract. A blank release document... well things that they did not gave me and many that they know I won't sign. (SYM3, 5, 50)²⁹

The young people interviewed have proven the lack of education and educational credentials to be the aspect that makes access to the labour market more difficult. This was told by Susana a woman of 18 who gave up compulsory secondary school without obtaining the secondary school diploma. She was advised to start a social guarantee course but she has had problems to find a job: currently, the labour market is demanding the secondary school diploma, even if the occupation is considered to be a simple one.

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 (SYF4, 7,177-180)

Roberto also argues about how, in his first jobs, the lack of an educational diploma implied a barrier to improvement. In these jobs, other people with a better credential were always leaving him behind.

Two years, I was there two years (...) we have very little of theoretical class. It was more about the experience of working and working, and yes, you do learn stuff, but afterwards at work (...) one is a second class skilled worker and it is like being behind, I don't know... there are a lot of things you don't have, things that people who have done a professional training, know, and of course you cannot compete against them (...). It happened to me several times, and you try and you do certain things but there are others that are outside of my reach, (...) and as you leave yourself out a little bit, you remain apart... (SYM3, 5, 64-66)³⁰

²⁹ *No verdad es que ahora mismo no.... hombre en contratos muchas veces si que intentan aprovecharse de la gente cuando te hacen un contrato y tal. A mí...yo lo he visto menos...pero me acuerdo de cuando estaba en León que estuve una temporada y lo que si que me daban a firmar el fino quito en blanco, que era una forma de no tener contrato. Finiquito en blanco....bueno cosas que no me habían dado y varias cosas que se que este no firma sabes(SYM3, 5, 50)*

³⁰ *Dos años, estuve dos años (...) mucha clase teórica no nos dieron nos dieron poca cosilla. Era mucho la práctica de trabajar trabajar y trabajar y si aprendes cosas, pero luego tu en un trabajo (...) no es oficial de segunda, como que estas por detrás, no se... te faltan muchísimas cosas de gente que a lo mejor ha hecho un FP y que si lo controlan, y claro, no puedes competir (...) me ha pasado varias veces además, y tu intentas, y haces unas cosas, pero hay otras que no llegas, (...) y como que te relegas un poco, te quedas par aún lado... (SYM3, 5, 64-66).*

Lack of positive support and stigmatization (Education)

Interactions and high expectations and the lack thereof have been very important for the youth that have suffered exclusion in the educational system. Many times, these youth that have failed to succeed in the educational system are blaming this lack of support and confidence as one difficult barrier. Roberto tells us how in his secondary school path, he did not receive much support from the teaching staff. The claim suggests that there was a clear selection about who had chances and thus got more attention and who did not raise expectations and subsequently was not encouraged.

*Because I wasn't motivated (...) Apart from the fact that there were subjects that didn't motivate me such as, for example, math, which I didn't like at all, and science issues which I didn't find remarkable either; the **motivation became non-existent when they didn't support you, if you were valid, ok and if not, nothing** (SYM3, 17, 27-28)³¹*

As a participant tells us in a discussion group, sometimes these practices intensify themselves. If teachers considered that students were not performing as well as they thought it was necessary, they would reproduce situations of marginalization once again, resulting in demotivation for continuing studying.

*The motivation, I don't think that they motivate you at all. And on top of that **if you don't do things the way they want it's even worse because they discriminate you** a little too: they put you at the back of the class and so on (GY1, 17, 15)*

Nerea, who finished the compulsory secondary school, argues how at times there is stigmatization processes for certain profile of students. In this respect, she explains how in his teens, she has gone through hard moments that led her to defiant attitudes towards adults. This implied the teachers' labelling her as a difficult student, resulting not in educational practices of success, but in the opposite.

The fact that they label you, for example, there are people who in their adolescence, it's harder for some people to and for others not so much. And the ones who it is most difficult for you go through a time when you are very rebellious, and you rebel against everything... and in some way they label you too (GY1, 17, 15-16)

³¹ *Porque no estaba motivado (...) porque a parte de que había asignaturas que no me motivaban como matemáticas por ejemplo que no me gustaba nada y el tema de las ciencias y eso tampoco es que me llamara mucho, pues luego la motivación era nula que no te apoyaban, si valías bien y sino pues nada (SYM3, 17, 27-28)*

Susana also has suffered from this stigmatization due her attitude in secondary school. She did not have support and no useful alternative was exposed which could motivate her continuity in the educational system. In this way, the relationship established between teacher and student was based on low expectations with the negative consequences of her abandoning the basic educational system.

What marks you used to get?

I didn't arrive to 5, I failed at almost everything, but not because... It was just like that I didn't care, I was a "rude girl". I was like that in those days. Then, it was just like that.

But there is something that you say: if the teacher would have said this... or if somebody would have told me that, so now ... you get me? do you feel like this?

Yes because there are teachers that always told me that there was "nothing" to do and that also...

It doesn't help? isn't it?

On the contrary... you become more against them!

You rebel against them even more? don't you?

Sure (SYF4, 17, 119 -130)³²

Streaming practices of ability grouping and clear segregation between students

Other practices that show the educational barriers young people find in the educational system is the streaming and the ability grouping. Nerea shows, in her explanations, how in her secondary school centre, classes were organized in homogenous levels. Teachers were the ones responsible to decide about those classes of students with better performance and about those classes of students with lower level of achievement. This implied that students that were placed in the classes with lower level, perceived it and their self-esteem and expectations around education would be vanishing.

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. (GY, 17, 79)

³² ***¿Qué notas sacabas?***

No llegaba al 5, las suspendía casi todas, pero no por...es que pasaba... era por era una gamberrilas, entonces era si...

(...)

Pero hay algo que dices: si este profesor me hubiera dicho esto... o si alguien me hubiera dicho lo otro pues ahora estaría...sabes lo que quiero decirte? Tu sientes esto?

Si también, porque hoy profes que siempre me decían que nada...y eso también..

No te ayuda, no?

No al revés...te vuelves mas contra ellos!

Te rebotabas mas

Claro (SYF4, 17, 119 -130)

Susana was kicked out of the classroom, continuously, without offering her an alternative for having an educational path of success. Far from it, options were explained which subsequently have led to labour exclusion, such as the social guarantee programmes.

In the afternoons?

And they said to us that if we didn't want to get our ESO (Compulsory Secondary Education certificate) that we could do a PQPI (lower certificate) so at least we would have something to go to work with and so on, and for that reason I signed up.

And did no-one encourage you to continue to study when you were at high school?

No, I was a lost cause, haha.

But they gave you, they adapted the curriculum for you, they didn't put you into a special class or take you out of the classroom?

Yes, they did take me out of the classroom loads of times, I was expelled, no baccalaureate. (SYF4, 17, 74)³³

3.3.2. Transformative components

Educational credentials contribute to self-confidence and improve job opportunities (Employment)

Diplomas are improving the self-confidence of young people as stems from the analysis carried out. For instance, Ernesto gave up the educational system before finishing the compulsory secondary school. He used to have bad marks. Later, when returned to the secondary education in an adult school, his marks changed causing a positive impact on his professional and life path. In this respect, Ernesto has increased his **self-confidence** for success in the labour market: having an official credential in his resume does contribute to it but also the fact of having developed specific abilities and skills:

*How? Well... first starting with the CV, ok? We start with the cv, that you have something to fill out. This is the first step, then at a practical level, I think also... I don't know, it has happened to me too, that well, **you become more secure, more confident and, then you put into practice in your work.** This is what I think at least in my case, this is what I have noticed. I have noticed it and then this is why I want to continue. (SYM2, 8, 139)³⁴*

³³ ***¿Por las tardes?***

Y nos dijeron que si no queríamos sacarnos las ESO que hiciéramos un PQPI que por la menos nos sacáramos algo para ir trabajando y eso, y por eso me apunte.

Y en el instituto nadie te apoyo a seguir continuando a estudiar?

No, ya era yo un caso perdido....jejeje

Pero te ponían, te pusieron, te adaptaron el curriculum, no te pusieron en alguna clase especial o te sacaban del aula.

Si sacarme del aula uno montón de veces, expulsada...nada de bachillerato (SYF4, 17,74)

³⁴ *¿Cómo? Pues... a ver, primero empezando por el curriculum, ¿vale?, empezamos por el curriculum, que tienes algo que rellenar. Ése es el primer punto; y luego, a nivel práctico, creo que también porque... no lo sé, a mí también me ha pasado, que bueno, coges quizás más seguridad, de confianza y... bueno, pues la pones en*

All the interviewed young people are conscious of the existing link between educational diplomas and the access to the labour market. For instance, a Roma young woman who has participated in a focus group sees that **in time of crisis, as the current, education and credentials constitute a priority for accessing to the labour market.**

(...) right now with this crisis we are aware of how necessary Studies are, and not only for personal development but because today it is true that it is much more difficult to find a job with good conditions with studies than without them. (GY1, 8, 38)³⁵.

In case of Lucía, a girl of 19 years old, who gave up the educational system in the secondary school stage, the achievement of a course of professional training, has been a guarantee for her access to the labour market. **This course that responded to a labour market specific need and has changed her labour path**, which was characterised by temporality and deprivation, such as jobs of few days or tasks badly paid related to the cleaning sector. Thanks to the obtained certification, her contract of employment is permanent and her labour situation has been transformed.

And how have you started to thing well, I am going to finish, or I will start secondary education, then I will...

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)³⁶

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)³⁷

práctica a la hora de trabajar. Yo creo que, por lo menos en mi caso, yo lo he notado. Yo lo he notado y por eso quiero seguir. (SYM2, 8, 139)

³⁵ *(...) ahora mismo con esta crisis nos damos cuenta de que es muy necesario lo de los estudios, y ya no solo para un enriquecimiento personal sino porque hoy en día sí que es cierto que es mucho más complejo encontrar un trabajo en condiciones con estudios que sin estudios. (GY1, 8, 38)*

³⁶ ***Y como has empezado a pensar venga va, voy a acabar, voy a empezar la ESO, después voy a hacer...***

Porque he visto que este título me ha abierto muchas puertas, en el sentido de que me han cogido fija, estoy trabajando. Entonces claro, si te sacas otro título, pues entonces claro, mas puertas abiertas tendrás, no se, no es lo mismo. Por mucho que tú quieras estas, si te sacas el de enfermería, enfermeras tiene que haber. (SYF5, 8, 138-139)

³⁷ *No, yo me case, y una vez que me case yo buscaba trabajo, no encontraba, o a lo mejor duraba dos a tres días, no duraba más... me entere del curso, lo hice y ya del curso ya he empezado a trabajar. Tengo un título y ya es más fácil empezar a trabajar.*

De que trabajabas antes de tener este título?

Pues de charcutera, de canguro.... Limpiando, pero no es lo mismo que de monitor, pasas con un título y ya es diferente. (SYF5, 8, 40-42)

High expectations from teachers (Education)

Also, in the educational field, it has been proved that certain educational actions are improving the path of the more vulnerable young people. For instance, Roberto that had left the compulsory secondary school, has been successful in his access to higher education and has started an History degree. This is mainly, **due to the high expectations transmitted by the teaching staff and fellow students of the educational centre where he got prepared for the access to university**. Roberto realizes that without this motivation, it would have been much more difficult.

*Because I had this feeling of wishing to study history and to get the history degree, which was what I liked. And I found myself in a moment when I was motivated, I was passionate about it and I rushed into it. And beyond everything, **here, people motivate and support you a lot, your fellows, teachers... and encourage you a lot more and you continue** (SYM3, 18, 42)³⁸*

When teachers transmit to young people the high expectations they lay on them, students can verbalize the **benefits of this dynamic within their educational path**. They **end up believing in their possibilities of educational success** and in their possibility to change their situation of exclusion.

They assume that you are going to get it and you finally believe it.

A: yes, yes.

D: it is an equal to equal relationship. Isn't it?

B,C: Yes

D: An equal to equal relationship including respect and the admiration of saying "classes are given here to me, so maybe..."

A: of course that they are university professor...

C: and they are here out of the goodness of their heart, 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 for motivating you, they come for nothing.

D: I think it is one of the best experiences I've ever had, at an educational level (GY1, 18, 102- 110)³⁹.

³⁸ *Porque tenía la espina esta de quieres estudiar historia y sacarme historia, que es lo que me gustaba a mi. Y me he encontrado en un momento en el que estaba motivado, tenía ganas y me he lanzado. Y encima aquí te motivan y te apoyan un montón, los compañeros, los profesores y tal... y te animas mucho mas y tiras (SYM3, 18, 42).*

³⁹ *Y eso, que dan por hecho que los vas a conseguir y que te lo acabas creyendo que tu vas a aprobar*

A: Sí, sí

D: Es de un igual a igual, ¿no?

B, C: Sí.

D: De un igual a un igual y con el respeto que eso también te conlleva, y la admiración de decir "ahh, me está dando clases aquí, que a lo mejor".

A: Claro, que son profesores de la universidad y tal, es que...

C: Y están aquí por amor al arte, y nos están dando clase y apoyándote todos los días, y tu dices "madre mía, si esto no me sirve para estudiar"

Extending learning time (Education)

Another successful action which has had a positive impact on young people's life is related with the extension of the time of learning. One of the participant young women in the discussion group argues the benefits of having an **additional support after school**, as this strengthens the learning process; having therefore, an opposite effect than segregation.

Without this sort of limitation, and then to look for individual needs, because it is true that for whatever reason, for your family situation or emotional feeling, not every one has the same speed to learn something. Then, well, it is possible that I need more time to learn the lesson than Tania, but well, if I need more hours or more help, in a specific way, you give them to me, but not outside the classroom (GY1, 18, 125)⁴⁰

Positive peer support and heterogeneous grouping promoted by teachers (Education)

Previously, we have already mentioned the positive impact on Roberto, when teachers have high educational expectations in their students. Another educational action which has allowed him to be successful when returning to the educational world is the class organization in heterogeneous groups and the interaction/support amongst equals. Helping each other, encouraged in the centre where Roberto has prepared his access to university, is a tool which has generated him a great motivation for learning. According to Roberto, this help, allows that the pace of learning wouldn't decrease and that the different kind of students would be able to learn in a faster manner. This way of working in classroom has allowed him to obtain a good mark in the university access exam and to, currently, be studying a university degree.

A: *Y para motivarte, sabes, ha venido ha hacer algo porque sí.*

D: *Yo es que creo que es una de las mejores experiencias que he tenido a nivel educativo. (GY1, 18, 102-110)*

⁴⁰ *Sin ese tipo de limitación, y luego buscar necesidades individuales, porque sí que es cierto que por h o por b, por tu situación familiar, por tu situación emocional, por lo que sea, no todo el mundo tiene la misma rapidez para aprender algo. Entonces bueno, puede ser que yo necesite más tiempo para aprender la lección que le voy a dar a Tania, pues bueno, si yo necesito más horas lectivas, o más ayudas, de una forma específica dámela, pero no sacándome de la clase (GY1, 18, 125).*

Apart from the support of the teachers and fellows, the environment of a big family, you know, and you are invited to participate in one thing or another, and I don't know, you get involved a little bit more... I don't know, It was like having a lot of motivation, you know, I was really looking forward to it you know, I was here last year and fail, but this year was great... (SYM3, 18, 93)⁴¹.

Because if, at a certain moment, you ask your fellows, I don't quite understand it and "pum". That's it. When you explain it and maybe, in that moment you understand it better compared to how it was explained to you. You don't have to give explanations. There are things, that, maybe you didn't understand but you feel embarrassed from delaying the class, don't you?. A fellow explains it to you and you say well, it is true (...). I don't know, being a group, to be with ones or others (SYM3, 18, 122)⁴².

3.4. People with disabilities

3.4.1. Exclusionary components

Legislation that does not penalise companies which do not contract (Employment)

The current legislation in Spain, obliges companies to contract a specific percentage of workers with some kind of disability (BOE 1982)⁴³. **In view of this legislative reality, some interviewed people with disability report the fact that this law is not always being applied.** This can be observed in Roger's words. Roger is a young man, of 34 years old, who remained tetraplegic due to an accident, and that currently lives in a residence for people with disabilities. His situation has made him realized about the difficulties of this collective and about the existent barriers for its personal and

⁴¹ *Hombre a parte del apoyo y tal de los profesores y compañeros, el ambientillo que hay por aquí que es como una gran familia y tal sabes, y te dicen para participar en una cosa o en otra, y no se como que te involucras un poco más... no se como que tenía mucha motivación sabes, yo tenía con muchísimas ganas, yo el año pasado estuve aquí y suspendí, pero mira este año me ha ido genial... (SYM3, 18, 93).*

⁴² *A ver porque en algún momento con tus compañeros preguntas, oye mira esto no lo entiendo bien, y pum, punto lo explicas y a lo mejor en ese momento lo entiendes mejor de como te lo han explicado sabes, que no tienes que ir con explicaciones, hay cosas que a lo mejor no las has pillado bien y te da un poco de cosa retrasar la clase, no? Te lo explica un compañero y dices, pues oye mira es verdad (...) no se el hacer piña, el vas con unos u otros... (SYM3, 18, 122)*

⁴³ Boletín Oficial del Estado. (1982). *Ley Contratación de personas con discapacidad*. 13/1982. Título VII. Artículo 38.1.

professional development. Roger considers the lack of sanctions the reason for not obeying the law, and thinks that it would be necessary to change the hiring dynamic of the companies.

It is complicated, because... I think that the companies have to keep a percentage for people with disabilities, OK. There is no law that obliges them that if you don't hire somebody you get a fine or a sanction, so many companies don't do it. (SDM4, 5)⁴⁴

Lack of accesability in work and public places (Employment)

Another barrier of the people with disability very related with the lack of facilities in public spaces. In case of people with a physical disability, like Roger, this fact makes difficult for them to enjoy certain rights. For example, they find themselves prevented to work in many places due to the fact that wheelchair accessibility does not exist, mainly in small spaces such as shops or offices. **These physical barriers become barriers for their labour insertion.** In this sense, Roger argues that the real insertion of people with disabilities will not be possible while there the physical spaces are not adapted to their needs.

***No matter how much the companies wish to offer you a job, the company is not prepared to offer it to you.** There are shops that have 100 square meters, but, of course, nobody talks about the small shops, you go to a shop in your neighbourhood, a bakery. And it is not accesible because they have less square meters and then they are not obliged to and then it is as always. If we want to encourage the integration of people with disability, it has to be in all shops, from 0 square meters to infinite (SDM4, 5)⁴⁵*

At the same time, these barriers also limit the accomplishment of specific procedures that are very necessary for these people in their daily life. In the case of Roger, the fact of enrolling himself in university has become an embarrassing situation as he had to be attended on the street due to the fact that the university was not physically accessible.

⁴⁴ *És complicat, perquè penso que les empreses tenen que guardar un percentatge per persones en discapacitat, vale. No hi ha cap llei que obligui que si tu no contractes a una persona et posen una multa o una sanció, llavors moltes empreses no ho fan. (SDM4, 5, 34)*

⁴⁵ *Per molt que les empreses et vulguin oferir un treball, no està l'empresa preparada per oferir-te això. Són botigues que tenen 100m², però clar no et parlen de negocis petits, tu et vas a una botiga de barri, a una panaderia. I no és accessible perquè són inferiors a aquests metres quadrats i llavors no tenen obligació, i llavors és com tot. Si volem fomentar la integració de les persones amb discapacitat, des de botigues a 0 metres a l'infinit. (SDM4, 5).*

The only point where I felt discriminated was when they had to see me in the street, since I wasn't available to access to the offices. Because it is a university, It should have to have like, a place physically accesible (SDM4, 17)⁴⁶.

Stigmatization of students (Education)

In the educational field, certain situations of stigmatization are given, of students with some kind of disability. **Occasionally, they perceive that there is no egalitarian treatment, compared to the one of the rest of the students.** Furthermore, a lack of empathy from fellow students is also reported by some of the interviewees **who feel how non disabled students sometimes avoid interacting with them.** For instance, Marina is a woman of 49 years old who did not have the opportunity of attending school when she was younger. She reports that during Franco's dictatorship the fact of being a blind person made things much more difficult, since her fellows and teacher saw her as "weird case".

Fellows and teachers didn't understand that a person with visual or other kind of problems, (because I also have bone-marrow problem), could have, a normal life (SDF2, 17, 13)

Marina has determined to get back to education and prepared herself for obtaining the secondary school certificate. In spite of her efforts for going on and overcome discrimination, still she finds herself in situation of discrimination where her presence in class is viewed as something unusual.

It is not easy to live with a disability, really. I mean especially when people are watching when you are going to school, and are watching and are watching in a bad way. You think, well, shall I go ahead or backwards. And you have to go ahead with a cheerful face and say – Hey, I am here, eh! I don't know ... (SDF2, 17, 39) .

⁴⁶ *L'únic punt en que seria més discriminat, em van haver d'atendre al carrer, pues perquè no podia accedir on tenien els despatxos. Ja que és una universitat que hauria de tenir com un lloc físicament accessible. (SDM4, 17).*

⁴⁷ *De cara las companys o de cara las professors no entenien que una persona amb problemes visuals o problemes d'altres tipus perquè també tinc problemes medul-lars o d'altres tipus, pogués fer una vida normal diguéssim (SDF2, 17-13)*

⁴⁸ *Es que no es fàcil viure amb minusvalia, la veritat, vull dir sobretot quan se't queden mirant quan vas a l'escola, i mira mira a part de no veure i mira malament penses bueno tiro endavant o tiro endarrere, i has de tirant endavant i amb cara alegre i dir ei estoy aquí eh!!, no ho se... (SDF2, 17, 39)*

In a similar situation is Berta, a woman of 65 years old that became blind when adult. Berta is widow, she has four daughters and always has been a fighter. Since disabled, she has participated in different social entities developing educational activities. Currently, she also has been registered in university doing courses related to gender. In this area, like Marina, she has found herself involved in different situations of discrimination. For instance, her fellows didn't sit beside her.

If an older woman with a walking stick comes, it is said: why is she coming? for what? and I seat down and during the first day nobody sat beside me, maybe they were afraid (SDF5, 17)⁴⁹.

3.4.2. Transformative components

Involvement in NGOs, helps to advocate for social rights (Participation)

As we have corroborated in WP15 **NGOs role is being a key element for the people with disabilities. There are becoming spaces for claiming respect for human rights and for elaborating proposals with objective of transforming their daily life.** We have observed, through the field work done, how Roger, after becoming tetraplegic, decided to found an association that would work to improve the situation of these social group. 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 non-disabled people aware of the difficulties faced by people with a disability.

While I was in Sant Feliu de Llobregat 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)⁵⁰

⁴⁹ *Si veuen entrar una dona gran i amb un bastó, deuen pensar i aquesta a què ve? I m'assento i el primer dia no es va assentar ningú al meu costat, no sé si perquè li feia por (SDF5, 17).*

⁵⁰ *Mentre jo vaig estar a Sant Feliu de Llobregat jo vaig crear amb un company una associació, vàrem buscar una ajuda, vàrem crear una entitat i a partir d'aquí doncs això volíem lluitar contra les barreres arquitectòniques, lluitar per la inserció social i laboral de les persones amb discapacitat i una mica donar a conèixer aquests col·lectius, doncs bueno que hi ha gent amb cadira de rodes i no som rars, i que tenim una minusvalia i que tu pots estar un dia caminant i l'altre dia estar amb cadira de rodes, i llavors pots tenir una mica de sensibilitat amb aquest tema i intentar donar entendre una mica tot això. (SDM4, 15, 72)*

Roger's awareness about his collective's reality has also implied the knowledge of other experiences that are giving positive results. **This is the case of residences for people with disability which are managed by people with disabilities themselves – constituted in NGO's.** These type of practices are responding to the needs and interests of this social group:

*You can tell right away if the management is a physically normal person or, as is the case in Girona, an association that has made a residence and people with disabilities are doing the management. **This is always valued much more than the other.** (SDM4, 10, 58)⁵¹*

Social networks help adults with disabilities to go back to education

Social networks, generated in educational centres where people with disability participate, are transforming their educational reality. In addition, it is seen as **an increase in the participation in cultural and educational spaces of this collective.** For example, this is the case of Mireia, a 56 year old woman, with a mental disability, who wanted to obtain the secondary school diploma. She, therefore, began to attend an educational centre for adult people where her condition was not taken into account and teachers acted indifferent towards her. After this experience, she started to take part in an educational centre based on democratic management, where it is the very participants who decide about the sort of education they wish to receive. The high expectations that the staff had about her possibilities allowed her to obtain the secondary education diploma. At present, Mireia, is a volunteer in this same centre thanks to the fact that a teacher encouraged her to participate, and Mireia decided to come with a friend also with a disability, to help her with her literacy process.

No, Maria Angels asked me if I wanted to participate and I said ok.

So the school encouraged you to participate, right? And what did you say?

Yes.

Yes, and why?

Because I liked.

Very good. And why do you like it?

Because I learn more. (SDF1, 16, 149-155)⁵²

⁵¹ *Es nota molt quan la direcció és una persona físicament normal o quan hi ha, que és el cas de Girona, que una associació ha fet una residència i són persones minusvàlides les que porten la direcció. Sempre miraran molt més per això que per lo altre. (SDM4, 10, 58)*

⁵² - No, la M^a Angels em va dir de si volia col·laborar i jo vaig dir vale. - **O sigui que l'escola et va animar a col·laborar, no? I tu què vas dir?** - Sí. - **Que sí, i per què?** - Perquè m'agradava. - **Molt bé. I per què t'agrada?**- Perquè aprenc més. (SDF1, 16, 149-155)

3.5 Women

3.5.1. Exclusionary components

Sexism in schools promotes social exclusion of women (Education)

Most of the interviewees declare that when they were younger they felt discriminated in school. In many cases they perceive that teachers give more relevance to boys' than girls' education. This aspect has had a relevant impact on their educational trajectories as they left school or finished the regular courses without having acquired in many cases a basic education. For instance, Isabel is a 52 year old woman who stopped studying at the age of 14 as her family context needed her to start working, so she did. She went back to study in an adult school ten years ago, and currently she is involved in the management of this same school where she is a voluntary in the secretary of the school attending the phone and the students. Isabel's words, among others, confirm that **sexism in education generates discrimination in women's life.**

Well, I would say that more in my old times, that we were more discriminated as now, yes. You see for example, at home, right? My mother, she was much more worried about if the boy learnt than about a girl (...) and she would complain about the boy that didn't want to learn and the girl who knew too much already! (SWF2, 17, 73-75)⁵³

And the education was much more efficient and comprehensive for a boy than for a girl. (SWF2, 17, 117)⁵⁴

In the same vein, another woman confirms the discrimination that many women suffered in the near past in Spain particularly regarding education. Trinidad is now 72 but she left school at the age of 9 without knowing how to read nor write, she was discriminated by her teachers and left at a corner doing calculation and mathematics but not given the chance to reading literacy.

But then in your school, when you were small, what happened that not... was it difficult for you or what?

They excluded me and didn't teach me anything, nothing... That of putting someone in a corner (...) with numbers and things; it used to happen very often and take into account that at the end of the year I will become 73. I was born in 1937 (...) but they didn't want to let me have my holy communion because I could not read nor write (SWF1, 17, 30-31)⁵⁵

⁵³ *Hombre yo diría más bien en mi época antigua, que entonces estaríamos más discriminadas que quizás ahora, eh, hombre, sí. Tú notas por ejemplo, en casa, no? Que siempre a mi madre, le le, interesaba mucho más, que supiera el niño, que no la niña (SWF2, 17, 73)*

⁵⁴ *Y la preparación era mucho más eficaz y mucho más completa para lo que el niño, que no para la niña. (SWF2, 17, 117)*

⁵⁵ *- Pero entonces en tu cole, cuando eras pequeña, que pasaba que no...te costaba mucho o qué? - Que me tenían arricononada y no me enseñaron a nada, a nada... Aquello que arriconanan a una a esto a un lado...solía pasar mucho antes y cuenta que a final de año hago 73. Nací en el 37 (SWF1, 17, 30-31)*

Higher risk of discrimination for being women, for being immigrant and for being low educated (Employment)

There are gender-based inequalities in the access to the work-place due to the fact that people who are responsible of enterprises often think that women could not devote so many hours to work or because they might abandon their work-place and devote their time to their family. Women interviewed also state that **sometimes men have preferences to access to any work-place because of being men**. It is a story that Mercedes can confirm from her own experience. She is now 52 years old and she finished the Bachelor's in Sociology 2 years ago. However, prior to this, she had been working many years in a man's world, in the technology and computer industry where she has faced clear discrimination on the fact of being a woman. The company **decided not to support specific training that allowed her to improve her status in the company, as the management stated that as a woman she would not devote 100% to her future post.**

OK, I will tell you only one anecdote and so you will see the discrimination... Happened that, well, only for being a woman, in the company I worked for... I wanted to be a programmer, I did it, went... But they didn't want to give the course in programming because, well, they told me that a women gets married, has children, leaves the profession... So of course to train a programmer who later won't work 100% of the time, they didn't agree... So I had to pay for this course, later I managed to achieve that they paid me part of this training about different programming languages... But well because I am a woman this is what my boss said to me then. (SWF4, 5, 18)⁵⁶

The participants in a discussion group confirmed the **fact that** many times in the job market a man is preferred over a woman without a solid argumentation. *Depending where you went sometimes the work was for the men, the women, or let's say **a man was always preferred over a woman.*** (GW1, 5, 52)⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Bueno te comento, solamente no una anécdota y así verás tú la discriminación...pasa que bueno, pues por el hecho de ser mujer en una empresa para la cual yo trabajaba...yo quería ser, quería ser programadora, lo hice, fui,...pero no me querían dar cursos de formación, en programación, porque bueno me decían una mujer después se casa, tiene hijos, deja la profesión...entonces claro, formar a una programadora para que después digamos no le dedique el cien por cien del tiempo al trabajo, pues que no convenía,... me tuve yo que pagar la formación, con el tiempo pude conseguir que me pagaran un porcentaje de esa formación en diferentes lenguajes de programación, ... pero bueno por el hecho de ser mujer, así me lo dijo mi jefe en aquél momento. (SWF4, 5, 18)

⁵⁷ Según a donde ibas a veces el trabajo era para los hombres, la mujer como, va, o sea siempre tenía preferencia de puntuación a una mujer (GW1, 5, 52)

It is the same case that Pilar history. Pilar es una mujer de 64 años que trabajaba en el ámbito textil. For many years she had been working in the same company and she faced situations of inequality and discrimination due to the fact of being a non academic woman. Men had a better salary and in spite of her claims of more equality, she met barriers that prevented her from improving her situation. She also felt ashamed from her low educational level which made her uncomfortable at her job trying to hide this fact away from her colleagues.

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 (SMF5, 18, 127)⁵⁸

3.5.2. Transformative components

Acquisition of Internet and ICT skills as a way to improve access to social benefits (Health)

Learning to use computer and Internet constitutes a transformative practice providing access to information on a wide range of issues. **Women who participate in adult education explain in the focus group discussion their experiences of using ICT in the realm of health.** They have acquired the computer skills through adult education and are now able to search for additional information on illnesses and medications that doctors prescribe them.

Yes, this yes, I am searching in Internet what is prescribed, what are the effects, what it does. Yes, I am doing that because I like to find out what effects they have. (GW1, 2, 243)⁵⁹

Having access to more information constitutes an empowerment as they can take better informed decisions regarding their body and health. Internet is also opening other possibilities, like arranging a visit to the doctor without going directly to the hospital or health centre. Women value very positively this option and how they have learned these kinds of skills through adult education. Maria is a 53 year old woman que dejó de

⁵⁸ *En el trabajo si porque siempre priorizan más a los hombres, y yo a veces he tenido muchas discusiones con mmm, con la jefa que tenía, con la ...que les plantaba cara y decía, pero no me valía de nada, porque al final el sueldo estaba, se diferenciaban, no no no éramos, no eran iguales. Aunque protestaba y le discutía, pero no no, ahí no adelantaba, y discriminado por la educación, hombre yo me sentía, mmm, me sentía mal, lo que pasa es que a ver, yo lo disimulaba mucho (SWF5, 18, 127)*

⁵⁹ *Si eso si, busco en Internet lo que me manda, que efectos tienen, lo que te hacen, eso si que lo hago yo, porque me gusta enterarme de que efectos tienen. (GW1, 2, 243)*

estudiar en la adolescencia y se puso a trabajar a los 16 años. She has recently passed the exam to enter university, but before her success, she had been following different courses as a way to be inserted in the labour market. Besides, she reports how Internet has also provided her with tools in different domains including health. Her words show how the exchange of information that is generated in the net through social networks is also having benefits. This sort of practices are an evidence that a **good use of technology can provide an improvement in lives of the vulnerable groups.**

I did a small computer course, but of course when you don't know you ask – listen, to make an appointment to the doctor or to do this or that, and they told you – ah, yes, look, sign up or look in this address, or this address will lead to another one or whatever. What I want to say is that nowadays with the Internet it is fantastic. And if not you ask the others, and you say: "Listen, does anybody know how to say this?" And there is always somebody who tells you the things. (SWF3, 2, 94)⁶⁰

Increase of women empowerment through dialogic learning. (Health/Employment)

When women participate in **educational activities which are characterized by equal dialogue it constitutes a process of empowerment which gives them more self-confidence and communication skills.** For instance, Pilar cuando era pequeña only follow school during three years and migration from her place of birth (Seville) to Catalonia, and the need to help her mother at home, prevented her to further study. She actually got back to formal education and the age of 30 when she started literacy classes and she obtained secondary education degree. Pilar is now currently involved in the management of associations that are working in the adult education centre where she studied. She has participated in many conferences and has talked to important personalities like politicians and scientific authors. **Her process of empowerment accomplished through the approach of dialogic learning in adult education** has many impacts where she refers to. For instance, in a situation when her father was ill and she was able to communicate with the doctors and to understand what they were telling her. For Pilar it was very important that she had the self-confidence to ask doctors for additional explanations if she couldn't understand something.

Knowledge about things, apart from what I have learned here as I probably was more open to all kind of learning, so I have had something like a... mm, more in the moment when I was confronted with the illness – to be able to talk to the

⁶⁰ *Hice un pequeño curso de ofimática pero claro, cuando no sabes como, pues preguntas: oye para pedir hora al medico, o para hacer tal cosa y tal, y te decían: ah si pues mira apúntate, o mira esta dirección, o esta dirección de manda a otra, ósea que quiero decir hoy en día por Internet es fantástico, y sino pues preguntas a los compañeros que estas agregado, y dices: ¿oye alguien sabe como se dice esto? y siempre hay alguien que te dice, pues tal cosa. (SWF3, 2, 94)*

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?" (SWF5, 4, 575)⁶¹

The empowerment developed through dialogic education has contributed to make her more aware and more secure before the doctors and their instructions, before illness and how to tackle it.

In the same vein but regarding another domain Pilar emphasizes the fact that before her process of training she would have not been able of such a thing. She reports how the **confidence she has gained with the support and solidarity she got at school has allowed her to overcome difficult situations of exclusion also at work.** For example when at her job she was asked to take early retirement, Pilar claimed her rights as a worker to be taken into account so that she could decide herself about her future.

"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!" "Don't you want to give me my compensation or what?" I have this, I mean, this security to face it...(SWF5, 6, 595)⁶²

More ability to manage house and administrative issues (Housing)

Overcoming educational exclusion helps women to better manage issues related to a wide range of areas. **Having more knowledge about mathematical literacy and issues related to financial.** For example, Maria she has recently finished an adult education programme to enter university. Maria gives an example of how continuing studies has helped her to resolve a problem with a bank that had done a mistake with her data.

⁶¹ *Conocimientos de de cosas, a parte de la que he aprendido aquí como ya tenía posiblemente más abierta a toda la formación, pues ya he tenido como un...mm, más a la hora de enfrentarme con la enfermedad, de poder hablar con los médicos, de saber lo que me estaban diciendo y si no le entendía decir "Oye, eso que quiere decir?" pues quizás me hubiera callado y hubiera dicho o decir "Oye, esto no lo digáis a mi padre porque no quiero, eh?" (SWF5, 4, 575)*

⁶² *"Como tu estás a punto de jubilarte, que te falta poco, pues te vas, porque la empresa cierra, y vas a salir más ganando si te vas voluntariamente y te acoge y ya está." Entonces yo me plante y les dije "Oiga, ustedes piensan que soy tonta! Yo voy a hacer lo mismo que van a hacer mis compañeras. Si la casa cierra nos iremos todas, y si no cierra con el dueño que venga nos quedaremos aquí." Y me decía "Ah, pues vas a salir perdiendo! Y le dije "Eso es cosa mía, problema mío" "Pero es que no me queréis dar la indemnización o qué?" Yo tengo, quiero decir, esa seguridad de enfrentarme...(SWF5, 6, 595)*

*It happened to me once with one bank that they had used my data and after a couple of years offered me a credit what I had not requested. And what do I have to do now, they are charging me for this credit from my account, they charge me for a credit card what they say they have sent to me and what I haven't received. So you start to search and say – Listen, what do I need to do? You call the bank and they tell you – Do this here or this. But until it happens to you don't know all what could happen (...) **Of course, it gives you more confidence and an ability to react and... obviously, to write something – you can do it yourself, right? And of course, with education, because if not. I remember that I solved it alone, with complaints and so. And you you don't step back because you say... they have to give me back what is mine and after that we can start again.** (SWF3, 12, 100)⁶³*

Maria emphasizes on the one hand the obtained instrumental skills to compose a document, and other the self-confidence in the communication with the bank. She has developed these abilities through the dialogic learning in an adult education school.

Peer and teachers support guarantees women educational success (Education)

Support of the teachers and the interactions with the fellow students are actions that are improving women's learning. In fact they explain the positive effect these elements have had on their educational paths. For instance, Maria explains that these interactions have been the most useful in her academic life and that have led her to having greater success and expectations about her educational future.

*The school helps us a lot, for instance they direct you, I don't know, **you find a support and then, this sort of actions are the ones that help me the most** (SWF3, 18, 30)⁶⁴*

Of course, because we in the classroom, each one of us, if maybe one of us does not understand a concept...then he or she explains the other person and sometimes it is not anymore what the teacher explains but more how another student explains it, because maybe you hadn't understood that concept and then you understand it better (...) and working in groups (...)we were convinced that this year we would make it (SWF3, 18, 60)⁶⁵

⁶³ Yo a mi me paso un caso con una entidad bancaria que habían utilizado mis datos, para al cabo de un par de años ofrecerme un crédito que no había pedido, y yo ahora que hago, o sea me están cobrando un crédito en mi cuenta, que a saber como han cogido mis datos y o sea me están cobrando por una tarjeta de crédito que me dicen que me han enviado que no he recibido y entonces empiezas a investigar y dices oiga, que tengo que hacer, o sea llamas a las entidades y ellos te informan: pues haga esto aquí o esta cosa, pero hasta que no te pasa, no sabes todo lo que te puede ocurrir (...) Si que te da mas seguridad y te da una capacidad de reacción y...evidentemente de redactar un escrito lo puedes hacer tu mismo, No? y Entonces claro, con educación, porque sino (recuerdo que lo resolví yo sola, en reclamaciones y tal, y no remueves mas porque dices...total, que me devuelvan lo que es mío y luego volvemos a empezar. (SWF3, 12, 100)

⁶⁴ La escuela, pues tu ayuda mucho, por ejemplo te dirigen, no se, encuentras un apoyo y entonces, este tipo de actuaciones son las que yo creo que más me han ayudado...(SWF3, 18, 30)

⁶⁵ Claro, porque nosotros en clase, cada persona, si a lo mejor uno no entiende un concepto...pues se lo explica al otro, y a veces ya no lo que te explica el profesor sino como te lo explica un alumno, pues a lo mejor no habías captado ese concepto y lo entiendes mejor, o sea no es que no lo sepan explicar sino que te faltaba

The solidarity, cooperation and support they report as key in their personal process of overcoming exclusion is common to reflections made by some of the other representatives from the vulnerable groups included in this report, as we have already pointed out.

3.6 Gender dimension

There are some actions identified throughout the analysis which are directly linked with women's situation. The results show some evidences which are connected to the exclusion that they are suffering and the actions that are helping them to overcome their situation.

3.6.1 Health

Women are living some discriminatory situations in the area of health. We want to highlight these situations which are affecting above all women who are more vulnerable within women's groups, like migrant women or women without academic background. In the case of **migrant women they sometimes feel uncomfortable in health services due to racist prejudices that professionals from hospitals or health services are transmitting**. On the other hand, women without an academical background find some barriers from health professionals to receive all the information concerned they health or relatives' health. Both evidences show the vulnerability of women in that kind of situations which are driving them to the exclusion.

On the other hand, we have also identified **transformative actions** which are making possible overcome difficult situations in health services. For instance, **some women interviewed argue that their mental and physical wellbeing have improved thanks to participate in democratic adult education centres**. These women who have suffered some difficult situations in the past, like the death of their husbands, are overcoming their depressions and not going so frequently to the medical checkings. At the same time **this involvement in education activities have empowered them to**

aquella palabra o aquel matiz para poder captar y en grupos de trabajo (...) estábamos convencidísimos de que además este año aprobábamos. (SWF3, 18, 60)

face this difficulties connected to health, like talking to doctors about relevant illness of their relatives or partners.

3.6.2 Employment

Women from all the vulnerable groups (people with disabilities, migrants, cultural groups and young) have found some barriers in the labour market for different reasons. **Many of them have found barriers only for being women** because enterprises or companies favour men than women when they have to be contracted. In other cases, **their discrimination is triple because they are migrant, members from a cultural minority and have low levels of education.** In the case of being migrant or member from a cultural minority, women find some racist prejudices and difficulties to access to labour market. This exclusion is a similar situation that women with any disability are living. On the other hand, young women who not have obtained secondary education credentials also have problem to find a job.

From the transformative perspective, **we have found that education, and get education credentials, are giving a key role in women's labour conditions.** For instance, migrant women who have learned to read and write into Spanish have improved their situation in the labour market. For young, roma women and women with disabilities get an educational certificate have implied to have more possibilities in this area.

3.6.3 Housing

Migrant and Roma women are suffering discrimination in housing issues. **The racism from the landpersons and neighbours are an aspect that they usually find in this area.** They should face these racial prejudices that are making more difficult the overcoming of social exclusion. In that sense, establish a good relationship between neighbours is an element that can help to improve this situation.

The transformative aspects which have been identified in this area are connected with the key role of education. **Women who started a literacy processes or migrant women who are learning Spanish are empowering their skills to understand and face problems connected to housing:** invoices, rent contracts, landpersons relationship, etc.

3.6.4 Political and social participation

Most vulnerable women to be discriminated in political and social participation are migrant women. **Sometimes the lack of language skills and the xenophobic prejudices from the people of the community are making more difficult women's involvement in any participative initiative.** On the other hand, voices from women with low levels of education or illiterate are sometimes not taken into account in decision-making processes.

On the other hand, referring to actions that lead to success, we identify **that women (in most of the vulnerable groups) start to be engaged in any NGO's or entity when exist a democratic environment where their voices are taking into account. Their involvement in decision making processes is also highlighted as a key element that increases their participation.** Finally, it is also relevant to point out that those women who begin to attend an adult education school where their participation is promoted, after that they transfer their compromise to other issues connected to the neighbourhood.

3.6.5 Educational

Exclusionary educational practices are a common issue that we have identified as a barrier that women from different vulnerables groups are finding in the educational area. So, **practices like streaming or tracking are making more difficult the women's success in the educational system.** Another negative aspect is connected with discriminatory attitudes. **Migrant and roma women find a lot of racist practices in the schools for being from non hegemonic cultures (an example from Moroccan women is because of wearing veil).** On the other hand, women with disabilities feel also discriminated from their colleagues for being different.

In the educational area there are several aspects which are helping women to overcome their exclusion. On one hand, **the different elements identified that lead to success are making possible their access to university or job opportunities.** On the other hand, there are specific improvements considering women's profiles. **Non-academic women who are involved in education and get any credentials is giving sense to their life and changing their own expectations.** Finally it is also relevant to report how migrant and roma women enrolled in any kind of educational provision are acting as a reference to girls and adolescents from their community. They will continue studying and follow the example of their relatives or colleagues.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Reversing trajectories of exclusion of vulnerable groups in Europe requires including their voices and experiences in the research. In doing so, key moments or events in their story may be identified. End-users' beliefs and interpretations from their *lifeworld* (Habermas, 1987) shed light upon the factors that had influenced their trajectories in social exclusion processes and also inform about some turning points to reverse them. Both processes have been analysed in this report using the critical communicative methodology: identifying the barriers (exclusionary dimensions) and the opportunities (transformative dimensions) for social inclusion of vulnerable groups. This shows, on the one hand, the complexity of the reality in every life story avoiding what would justify a dimension as entirely exclusionary or transformative. On the other hand, this analysis provides key information to identify effective ways that overcome the barriers expressed by people's life interpretation, in dialogue with the scientific knowledge provided by researchers (Gómez, Puigvert & Flecha (forthcoming)).

Processes of social exclusion experienced by people interviewed have entailed deprivation from educational and social benefits in different areas. A common barrier is referred in different life experiences and groups interviewed. Suffering situations of **racism, sexism, prejudices or stigmatization has emerged as an important barrier in their life story**. These experiences show some particularities related to the different vulnerable groups and also to the impact in their exclusion in different social areas. Educational experiences have been characterised by labelling or stigmatizing Roma students, youth and people with disabilities. Even being subtle in the schools, lack of positive support and teachers' and peer's perceptions about some students who are thought of not being capable to do better in classrooms for different reasons (ethnic prejudices, disability, gender, etc), have been decisive in educational exclusion of interviewees. Particularly, in the case of women, sexism is still embedded in education maintaining gender inequalities by reproducing stereotypes and leaving behind girls who did not have access to higher levels of education. Some educational practices promote this ethos of discrimination: **streaming** has been especially relevant to **segregate Roma children and youth** in secondary education.

The educational exclusion fostered by these practices prevents them from having the opportunity to access high quality education and achieve educational success, which the subsequent **precariousness in the labour market**, with particularly worrisome consequences in the case of youth.

Racism and prejudices identified as hindrances in schools have a reflection **in the other areas of society**. Roma and migrant people are encountering serious problems to find good **housing** due to a **twofold discrimination suffered**. On the one hand it refers to the rejection and **social prejudice** they face, from neighbours and other community members. On the other hand the fact of having followed a path of educational exclusion implies the **lack of important and useful skills and abilities** that have an impact on the exclusion they face. **Limited access to health** services and poor health status are other consequences stemming from their situation of exclusion again as the result of lacking particularly relevant skills, which are necessary to properly understand medical prescriptions and other health related issues. The presence of vulnerable groups in **society and their active participation** is hindered by the existence of **physical, institutional or social barriers**. In this regards, people with disabilities for instance are prevented from participation due to the lack of policies tackling their particular reality, but also for the presence of physical barriers reflecting the institutional and social oblivion they denounce. In the case of migrants, limitations for participation in social life and social networks are often linked to prejudices from neighbours and community on the one hand, and institutional barriers such as requesting citizenship for participation, on the other.

Struggling with educational and social barriers encountered in the mainstream society, there are people from vulnerable groups that have experienced trajectories of overcoming the difficulties, becoming transformative social agents (Freire, 1997). It is particularly relevant to identify key moments in these successful trajectories to provide a deep understanding about those processes that became a turning point in reversing a trajectory of exclusion. Following this analysis, an educational provision that contributes to educational inclusion of the vulnerable groups requires to be grounded on **high expectations and positive beliefs and values about the possibilities of success that all individuals have**. This element is particularly important in educational experiences of vulnerable groups. Prejudices and stigmatization they have been suffering for long time has been reversed when they have encountered **schools where teachers and peers have believed in them**. These transformative educational spaces promote dynamics of **solidarity and positive peer interactions** which becomes especially relevant with migrants, minorities, women and youth. Replacing segregation practices, such as streaming that was one of barriers identified, by working in **heterogeneous groups promoting supportive interactions between peers**, inclusive dynamics are promoted. This kind of educational provision benefits educational trajectories of vulnerable groups and transforms teachers' and peers' beliefs.

In the same vein, this sort of educational provision has been identified in adult education schools that became a key moment to promote educational inclusion of vulnerable groups, even so when they had been excluded for a long time. In this case offering **lifelong learning programmes which respond to the demands of cultural groups**, promoted more possibilities of inclusion into the labour market of Roma people. These demands correspond -as reflected by their contributions- to the educational provision that guarantees the attaining of educational credentials, as a contribution both to self-confidence and to widening job opportunities particularly in the case of vulnerable groups. Cultural groups as well as migrants benefit from a kind of educational provision that is connected to a democratic and participatory culture. Adult education schools and organisations that were most referred as a turning point in their lives, **promoted their involvement in school management or school activities and within decision-making processes**. 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).

Connecting these educational actions with social networks may lead to more effective interventions in promoting social inclusion. Some social movements were particularly important in reversing trajectories of exclusion for migrants, cultural groups, people with disabilities and women. Joining migrant associations emerged as a starting point to a greater social and political engagement, **particularly those were the voice of the end-users is taken into account in decision-making processes**. This kind of social network was also **based on mutual support, and solidarity in the case of Roma associations**. The role of these movements was key for people with disabilities who not only were **engaged in social participation** for their rights but also contributed adults to **go back to education, overcoming a twofold situation of exclusion**.

Training and acquisition of skills was a decisive aspect in all of the moments described. Those skills empowered them to deal with exclusion in other areas like housing where in particular, adult women emphasised they gain **more skills to manage housing and administrative issues contributing to improve their condition**. In the case of cultural groups and migrants, even having been acquired more skills a cultural dimension was particularly important for improving their access to health services and fostering further education. The promotion of cultural referents in health systems has been identified as being key in order to **promote culturally aware dynamics in hospitals and similar institutions**. On the other hand, cultural referents are a critical element in

school that **fosters further education of minorities and breaks stereotypes among mainstream society.**

Successful trajectories in overcoming social exclusion of vulnerable groups have shown the importance of particular key moments in their lives. Common elements and dimensions which **promote learning and empowering processes** have been identified as they **enhance more opportunities to overcome educational and social exclusion of those more vulnerable in Europe.**

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