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## Regional inclusion policies in Spain: new approaches and keys to their effectiveness

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# Regional inclusion policies in Spain: new approaches and keys to their effectiveness

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## ABSTRACT:

Inclusion policies involve programmes and services of different types and nature. This diversity has been an obstacle to analyze in a comparative way these actions, not only in Spain but also in Europe. The economic and employment crisis shows the ineffectiveness of many of these policies. This article presents new approaches that seek to adapt these actions and are key to their effectiveness. For this, five autonomous regions of Spain will be taken as a case study. The results presented are part of the INCLUSIVE project (CSO2014-51901-P) funded by MINECO.

**KEYWORDS:** social services; social inclusion; employment services; regions.

**JEL CLASSIFICATION:** P36.

## Las políticas de inclusión regionales en España: nuevos enfoques y claves para su eficacia

## RESUMEN:

Las políticas de inclusión engloban programas y prestaciones de distinto recorrido y naturaleza. Esta diversidad ha sido un obstáculo para profundizar y analizar de manera comparada estas acciones, no solo en España, sino también a nivel europeo. La crisis económica y del empleo evidencia la ineficacia de muchas de estas políticas. Este artículo presenta los nuevos enfoques que buscan la adecuación de estas acciones y las claves para su eficacia. Para ello se toman como estudio de caso cinco comunidades autónomas de España. Los resultados que se presentan son parte del proyecto INCLUSIVE (CSO2014-51901-P) financiado por MINECO.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** servicios sociales; inclusión social; servicios de empleo; regiones.

**CLASIFICACIÓN JEL:** P36.

## 1. INTRODUCCIÓN

The last FOESSA report (2018) warned of the social cohesion loss in Spain. Even in the phase of economic recovery, 4.1 million people are in a severe exclusion situation, an amount that increased by 1.2 million since 2007. These figures are the consequence of high unemployment rates and the worsening of Spanish households' living conditions. In the first phase of the crisis, the exclusion processes were

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motivated by unemployment, the lack of stable employment or the high costs of housing. However other problems emerged such as the loss of physical and mental health or the deterioration of social relations. Everything indicates that these situations reduce the possibilities of accessing a job and overcoming exclusion, making necessary longer and more expensive inclusion processes (Martínez Virto, 2014).

The surveys confirm that the crisis did not affect the entire population or all the territories with the same intensity. Exclusion dynamics concentrated more in households with young people and children. Single households and the ones with children or elderly face more difficulties to overcome exclusion (Foessa, 2014). High unemployment rates and the increase of the minimum income beneficiaries warn of serious economic exclusion in territories such as Extremadura or Andalusia (Epa, 2018). These processes demonstrate the current consequences but also the future effects in these households, where poverty and precariousness are inherited (Flores, 2016).

Inclusion policies in Spain have a strong territorial component. The decentralization of competencies in social assistance began the first years of the democratic stage. The result was a very diverse map among territories and different approaches and intervention methodologies. The scenario left by the crisis posed a challenge for inclusion policies in Spain, not only because of the volume of households in need but also because of the complexity of the exclusion. How did the different territories respond? What obstacles are there to reduce the inequality gaps left by the crisis?

Comparative analyses of inclusion policies have traditionally placed interest in minimum income policies and their impact on poverty reduction (OECD, 2017, Atkinson et al., 2010). Studies that seek to examine the keys of territorial inclusion models are generally scarce (Reuter, 2012). This is partly due to the lack of consensus on the delimitation of the study object, as well as the lack of data that allows comparative academic production (Klein et al., 2014). Nevertheless, there is a long history of comparative regional studies on welfare models (Titmuss, 1981; Esping-Andersen, 1990). These results support the convenience of contextualizing inclusion policies within a broad framework that explains its scope and effectiveness. Among them, the ideology and dominant values, the economy and labour market policies, the weight of the different welfare providers such as the public sector, market, family or the role of the third sector, etc. stand out.

The INCLUSIVE project was born with the aim of initiating a study line that compares different models of regional inclusion in Spain and the factors on the construction of inclusive territories. The challenge is not simple, especially in the crisis context in which responses to increasing needs could be formulated with different interests (austerity, new approaches, etc.). Despite these limitations, the results contribute to advance in comparative research and take strong steps towards the consolidation of this social policy field. This article presents the specific results of this study: the factors that explain the limitations of these policies and the new approaches implemented after the economic crisis. Five Autonomous Communities of Spain took part in the case study: Andalusia, Navarra, Castilla y León, La Rioja and the Region of Murcia. From the results, the keys that could contribute to the efficacy and consolidation of these policies were extracted.

## **2. INCLUSION POLICIES, ONLY A MATTER OF MEANING?**

Inclusion policies in Europe were driven by different plans and community objectives that, like the current H2020, have recognized social inclusion as an added value of modern Europe. Starting with the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, inclusion policies aimed at favouring the social participation of people. This approach had the conviction that, regardless of the European territory where these policies are promoted, it is necessary to reconcile economic growth and social cohesion.

A great heterogeneity of approaches, measures, and even recipients started to develop. But the majority of them joined efforts in three lines of intervention: the access to the labour market, the income guarantee programmes that protect the people who were left out of employment and social services to solve

family problems (European Commission, 2008). In addition to these lines, member states also included other actions related to the education system, housing, health, and even culture and leisure. However, the aforementioned three points constituted the core of inclusion policies.

The concept of social inclusion in Spain began around the year 2000 as a result of the European mandates and strategies that encouraged National Inclusion Plans. Although the term had previously been used in minimum income regulations and other programmes to fight social exclusion, it was from that decade onwards that the concept aligned with the European mainstream. On its first steps, the term included general actions to assist people with social needs and strategies to combat poverty. However, within its wide range, there were actions of very different nature (Pérez Eransus, 2016).

It is almost impossible to understand inclusion policies in Spain without an analysis of each territory that allows grasping the different trajectories developed in every region. These factors not only influenced the spirit and financing capacity of autonomous governments, but the approaches, terminologies and management times were inclined by the governance of each region. Factors such as regional and local participation, trade unions, third sector entities or companies also influenced the movement (Subirats, 2004).

The first common inclusion action of these autonomous communities focused on the development of the Minimum Income benefit. Legal regulations in each territory took different timings, giving rise to diverse benefits in terms of economic protection or duration (Ayala et al., 2018). The first benefits had a strong activating character. In recent years, some territories have tried to promote other forms of attention through access to protected housing or the encouragement of participative actions.

Despite the momentum these actions had in the last two decades, the impact of inclusion policies in Spain continued to be very limited, fundamentally, due to two reasons: the low coverage of their programs in relation to the unemployed population and the diversity of their actions.

Therefore, the difficulty to delve into the study of inclusion policies is not only a matter of definition, not even of a financing or political will. The fragmentation of the actions, the diversity of approaches and nature of their programs have slowed down comparative studies in Spain. Also in Europe, where part of these limitations are shared.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The analytical methodology to compare the regional development of inclusion policies in this study is based on four aspects: the conceptualization in the planning and legal documentation, the execution and management of the policies, the adaptation of the actions to the social needs of each territory and social innovation (Pérez Eransus, 2016). Each of these analytical categories allowed not only designing the research methods (content of the interviews, discussion groups and life histories) but also proceeding to its categorical analysis. The examination of these four groups allowed identifying the characteristics of each territorial model and, from there, observing the challenges of these policies.

The first category was identified as the conceptual one and the following categories of analysis were recognized: location of the term in the legal documentation, description of the planning and implementation of the policies, discourses that motivate the actions, the explicit purpose of the measures, delimitation of the target population and social actor's responsibility. The management category took into account the participation, effective distribution of responsibilities in the design, monitoring and evaluation of inclusion policies among the public, social, labour, private, business or third sector actors. The adequacy of the policies was based on the identification of the territories' social needs, the correspondence of these with the resource content, the limitations and situations of need not covered. Finally, the social innovation category was identified based on strategies and positive experiences detected in the regions.

The research was developed in five territories of Spain (Andalusia, Castilla y León, La Rioja, Murcia and Navarra). The empirical work had two different phases. The first one was focused on the analysis of legal and documentary sources. The categories related to the institutional commitment, philosophy and terminology of the first block were identified. The second phase absorbed the qualitative empirical work analyzing the next categories: management, adaptation and innovation. In each of the territories, between 5 and 6 in-depth semi-structured interviews, 3 discussion groups and 4 life histories were carried out. In total, the available empirical material on which these results are based is: 28 semi-structured interviews in depth (8 policy makers, 8 technical managers, 8 social workers, 4 third sector professionals), 13 discussion groups (4 social service professionals, 4 employment technicians and 4 of the third sector) and 18 user life histories (9 men and 9 women of which 3 are of Romani ethnicity and 3 of foreign origin). All the empirical material was recorded and partially transcribed. The analysis process was thematic, based on the categories presented.

#### **4. A NEW CONTEXT, OLD DEBATES: FACTORS THAT EXPLAIN THE INEFFECTIVENESS OF INCLUSION POLICIES**

In recent years, a definition of social exclusion was extended as a multidisciplinary, heterogeneous and processual phenomenon (Laparra et.al., 2007). This approach was not only taken as the basis for the definition used in 2009 by the European Commission but surveys such as Foessa measured social exclusion with a multidimensional approach since 2007. In spite of this, social inclusion policies struggled to legitimize their actions, since they were often linked to exclude sectors with stigmas of passivity and chronic poverty. As a result, both in Europe and in Spain, inclusion policies traditionally had a strong focus on job activation.

In 2013, the unemployment rate reached almost 26% of the active population in Spain (Epa, 2013). Together with low employment opportunities, in the first quarter of 2018 Spain had a total of 1,363,800 unemployed people for two or more years. This data represented 35.9% of the total unemployed citizens. Many of these people had exhausted their benefits, and in the absence of job opportunities, they became potential beneficiaries of a minimum income.

The labour scenario showed several leanings that escaped inclusion policies. The volume of need and the environmental opportunities for inclusion affected its effectiveness. In Spain, inclusion policies' lack of effectiveness was explained by three basic reasons: a weak and fragmented system of minimum income, very precarious employment, sometimes plunged into an irregular economy and the high price of housing.

On the one hand, the contributory nature of our protection system against unemployment presented little effectiveness against poverty (Fernández, 2015). The benefits did not protect the groups with more needs, but just to those who were able to contribute. The capacity of contribution depended on the type of employment, its stability and the salary since the benefits had an amount and duration depending on the contribution. Therefore, the income guarantee system protected, inconsistently, those who had longer work trajectories and quality jobs compared to those with more difficulties to achieve income. That is why, paradoxically, many unemployed people were not entitled to benefits or had exhausted them. Thus, in 2017, 43% of unemployed people were not entitled to any benefit (Ministry of Employment and Social Security, 2017).

Second, Spain has a high presence of a shadow economy that has usually been approached from the anti-fraud perspective. This structural unawareness interfered with the effectiveness of inclusion mechanisms. The difficulties to access a basic income lead many families to opt for these means of survival. The residential model of Spain is expensive, and the loss of housing is a quick trigger for the most severe exclusion processes. Therefore, the fragmentation of the most recognized benefits (unemployment benefits and pensions) besides the difficulties of employment or housing access left Spain far from efficiency in the fight against poverty.

Inclusion policies were created and spread out in a scenario with strong structural fractures. The variety of regional actions sometimes lacked stable financing hence causing legitimization difficulties. The analysis carried out in the five case studies showed that these factors affected the effectiveness of inclusion policies. However, there were also other reasons that could favour the inclusive capacity of policies. The adaptation of the actions to the territories' needs, improved coordination between departments involved, and a culture of social participation that can promote inclusion policies to reduce inequality gaps. The results obtained confirmed territorial differences in the design, management and implementation of these policies. These strongly influenced the inclusive capacity of policies, and therefore, their effectiveness.

#### **4.1. THE LACK OF POLICY ADAPTATION TO NEW SOCIAL NEEDS**

The way back into the labour market has been an inclusion policy priority since the 1990s. The potential of having a job was not just inclusive per se but also the "counterpart" and the "merit" of social assistance. This criminalization of poverty due to the benefit received was not only present in the social and collective imaginary. This study shows that public inclusion resources also belong in the culture of forced activation and inspection.

Among the most common inclusion actions in social services are: the management, processing and monitoring of economic benefits and social emergency. Further, social insertion programmes ran under the conviction that protected employment was useful not only as a mechanism of the labour market and income access but also because it allowed working habits, attitudes, relationships and motivations closer to standardized employment (Perez Eransus, 2009). However, in practice, this normative and professional approach found difficult to materialize, especially in those groups farthest from employment. This dissonance is still more evident today. The employment crisis does not guarantee that the activation strategies will overcome poverty or achieve the vital stability that promotes the social participation of people.

Although the work of social services in terms of inclusion overcomes these responses, due to its function of support and family crisis containment, the management of minimum income and inclusion programs is the main mechanisms of response. In spite of the professional qualification to attend these social emergency situations, the management and overload in the services do not offer opportunities to develop it. These strategies would also be more effective than the economic response or the referral to a different service (Bywaters, et al., 2011). For this reason, the reality of public social services in Spain had to deal with efficiency problems that not only regarding the adequacy of the law but with a new organization and care methodology that promoted more effective responses to the excluded population.

The activating component of the policies increased in the first stages of the crisis. The regulatory progress in some territories such as Castilla León and Navarra allowed dilution of the labour component towards a broader inclusion approach. La Rioja and Murcia, on the other hand, maintained the traditional distinction between "employable" and "non-employable", and Andalusia gradually abandoned some of its community intervention tools. However, the crisis and the unemployment, despite offering a fractured labour market, paradoxically brought out the active orientation and the search for quick exits towards the social service beneficiaries

The current context is not optimistic for many of the unemployed groups. The technical and political managers interviewed verified the territories' concern about exclusion and poverty. However, the distance between the design of the laws and the opportunities for inclusion offered by the territories continues to be one of the major barriers that hinder the effectiveness of inclusion policies.

#### **4.2. FRAGMENTATION AND LOW COORDINATION BETWEEN PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS**

Responsibility for inclusion policies has generally fallen into the social service system. However, the definitions of inclusion exceed the social need, involving the areas of employment, housing, education, income guarantee, etc.

In the same way, the regional and local capabilities implied different promoters who, either from the local or from the autonomous communities undertook inclusion strategies that were not always aligned in the same horizon.

Both put on the table the risk of the public network fragmentation, an issue found in all the territories studied. The greatest advances were made in the field of employment service coordination. These entailed not only collaboration in joint cases, but also the design of inclusive employment policies, the budget for incorporation projects and shared work approaches. Coordination initiatives in this area were found in all the analyzed territories, but none managed to reach the scope of the service integration. The lack of an institutional involvement strategy in this field resulted in sporadic coordination attempts and experimental practices that fail to consolidate.

Politicians, technicians and professionals recognized that this fragmentation was one of the pillars in the search for effectiveness in these policies. Ambivalent mandates, financing strategies with sometimes-contradictory objectives also implied a lack of coordination and inefficiency. Overcoming the fragmentation of the public network is a desire in which all the people interviewed could identify. Nevertheless, the performed attempts did not have any convincing effects. Some examples such as the Inclusion Plans in Navarra or the regional strategies contributed to the mainstreaming of these actions, however, the leadership continued to fall exclusively in social services.

In order to overcome these barriers, the fieldwork carried out showed that Autonomous Governments should offer the guidelines to promote inclusion in their territories. While they must respect the opportunity that local authorities have for close work, they should lead in terms of focus, philosophy and horizon. The second of the conclusions raised the lack of agreement on how other departments in areas such as education, housing, income guarantee, health or employment should respond to exclusion. They also agreed that only having a shared responsibility would be able to promote inclusive environments. This fragmentation was especially visible in the crisis, due to the fact that a large part of exclusion situations were due to the absence of basic needs (food, housing, etc.). Therefore, this unfavourable economic context brought to light the ambiguous delimitation of responsibilities in terms of social inclusion; contributing to a greater inefficiency of the resource map.

### 4.3. THE POOR CULTURE OF PARTICIPATION AMONG THE ACTORS INVOLVED

As a legacy of the old *social assistance*, the third sector, charities and other actors of the social network developed key roles in the promotion of social inclusion. The extension of social services granted public recognition to exclusion situations, not only from minimum income policies but in the treatment of the most serious and complex situations. However, despite this presence of multiple actors in the traditional attention to poverty and exclusion, the degree of participation was very different in each territory. This is the case of the third sector that, although it played an important role in the different territories, in some cases their actions were limited to the provision of services. This was the case in Murcia or La Rioja, and in others, such as in Navarra or Castilla y León, it was the engine of regulations, plans and even guidelines.

Participation in inclusion policies was necessary from the design phase to the evaluation of its implementation and results. The absence of collaborative networks among actors slowed down important initiatives for inclusion. This was exemplified by the two unsuccessful attempts to approve the Autonomous Inclusion Plan of Murcia (2001 and 2009). On the contrary, the pressure and social participation in Autonomous Communities such as Navarra led to important results that still survive today. For instance, The I Inclusion Plan of 1998 was a pioneer in the state and the result of coordinated work and participation of public and private actors. Moreover, the strong pressure exerted before the cuts in the Social Insertion Income (2012), prompted up to 5 partial modifications that were expanding their coverage until finally dismantled in 2016. More recently, the movement for a correct delimitation of the right to social inclusion allowed an effective exercise of the subjective right. Also, Castilla y León or Andalucía had active participation of the Third Sector. Coordination spaces within the framework of innovation

experiences were created such as EASI Project, and a big network to pressure decision-making institutions like the Andalusian Permanent Commission of Dialogue with the Bureau of the Third Sector.

Besides the Third Sector, the role other actors played in the territories -even before the creation of public social services- was key to understand the trajectories of regional models. The social actors involved included political parties, business organizations, large companies, unions' initiatives and civil society. These experiences of co-responsibility included the creation of centres resulting from the public-private partnership. Some examples are the Social and Labour Integration Centers of Navarra (CIS) or IDEMA in Andalusia, from where social and labour integration opportunities were promoted for people away from the traditional labour market.

In short, the level of participation and involvement of the actors in the territories was very diverse. These initiatives were crucial examples to promote ways of collaboration and co-responsibility to build inclusive territories. However, the culture of participation was still scarce, despite the great potential shown by some territorial experiences. The analysis showed that the pressure exerted by the actors was the stopper of many initiatives in the field of inclusion, demonstrating their leading role in social policies. The five case studies highlighted that pressure-free territories, where public leadership allowed the participation of other actors, made more progress in terms of social inclusion. On the contrary, the areas of greatest pressure, with a strong orientation towards the commercialization of services, had a strong restraint for possible political patronage. These two ideas harvested interesting conclusions for the inclusion trajectory assessment, recognizing the governance in social policies as a decisive factor for comparing regional models.

## **5. NEW APPROACHES: A COMMON HORIZON FROM DIFFERENT TERRITORIAL POSITIONS**

The inclusion policies' limitations in Spain were a common concern between territories. The lack of purpose definition, the gaps in traditional social protection systems, the heterogeneity of the needs to be addressed, the distance between regulations in different areas, the design of policies and real intervention or the fragmentation of the public network were key to understand the unsuccessfulness of these actions. Despite this common worry, the transfer of a large part of responsibilities to the territories gave the opportunity to initiate, since the 1980s, different response models.

The latest evidence of inclusion policies' ineffectiveness in Spain dates back to the first years of the crisis when the GINI inequality index increased from 32.4 to 34 points between 2008 and 2017 (INE, 2017). This was influenced by the demand volume and austerity policies, but also the structural elements of design, such as the fragmented income guarantee system, which both leaned on the adequate response to exclusion.

The territories reached the economic crisis from very different positions. Some, such as Navarra or Castilla y León, had an advanced regulatory development; others such as Andalusia were influenced years earlier by the reorientation of their community model towards employment. Murcia had strong private management and La Rioja maintained its profile distinction linked to employability. However, despite these different positions, the first reactions to the crisis had common elements. The increase in social needs and recipients brought by the crisis was answered by cost containment measures. The coverage rate of these policies was limited and it ended up generating strong social inequalities. This poor response, at a time of great social need, equalled the decline of different territorial models. However, years later, levels of social inequality confirmed the terrible effects of these measures. Therefore, since 2015, there were some changes that could move towards another horizon.

The research carried out identified two changed symptoms in inclusion policies: a progressive advance in terms of the laws and a new focus on the definition of inclusion that overcomes activation and recognizes the multidimensionality of exclusion. Although the progress was very different in each territory, the reorientation of the debates was present in a good part of the fieldwork carried out in the five territories. Both



changes were aligned with debates in Europe, where part of the scientific and political discussions remain focused on activation as a paradigm and social investment as an alternative. Despite this, Frazer and Marlier (2014) defended that public policies must maintain a triple effort that guarantees economic, labour and social well being through greater access and minimum income coverage, the promotion of employment opportunities and quality social support. This viewpoint is also observed in the new approaches detected in Spain.

### 5.1. FROM THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE DOUBLE RIGHT

The autonomic legislation reviewed in this study showed how the territories shared a similar path in the evolution of their inclusion regulations. Although they started from very different places, the transition from social assistance to public responsibility had important milestones that made it possible to advance in the right recognition.

In the first stage, the territories regulated their minimum income and inclusion programmes with a special focus on social needs and conditionality. Throughout the 90s, territories such as Navarra or Castilla León advanced in the path of subjective laws. All of them maintained their conditionality to employment and required inclusion commitments for their perception. This progressive evolution was common in all the territories until the last decade progress was made towards guaranteed models.

As time went by the response to the crisis in almost all the territories was a clear setback. The needs increased and austerity policies responded to the crisis with fear. The reactions tended to reinforce the benefit access requirements in order to contain the demand, balancing down the regulations. Noteworthy was the 2012 change in the minimum income regulation in Navarra. The consequences were devastating for many excluded groups and were strongly contested socially, reaching 5 partial modifications until its cancellation in 2016.

The new winds and approaches in terms of minimum income benefits are blowing towards the recognition of the double right. This means the implementation of formulas that allow combining the perception of income with income from work. The highest degree of this right's recognition was active since 2016 in the Autonomous Community of Navarra, as in previous years in the Basque Country. Both communities followed the European recommendations and recognized the double right to economic protection and social inclusion as two differentiated rights, thus overcoming the counter-traditional nature traditionally linked to inclusion. In the same way, both incorporated the employment stimulus to encourage incorporation in the context of high precariousness. Although other analyzed territories did not achieve this double right, they made progress in the regulatory review of their minimum income. More flexible access formulas and reduction of conditionality requirements were implemented, for example, the case of the Citizenship Income of La Rioja in 2017.

### 5.2. FROM ACTIVATION TO MULTIDIMENSIONAL FOCUS

The responsibility of the regional inclusion programmes falls mainly in the social service system. Through their regional laws, they promoted social services portfolios, regulatory decrees and strategic plans as a key tool for the citizens' rights recognition. These programmes have the mission to systematize public action in the matter, offer tools to professionals and inform the public about their rights. To date, only Navarra (DF69 / 2008), La Rioja (D31 / 2011) and Castilla y León (D58 / 2014) among the territories analyzed, have a portfolio of services. Andalusia has it ready for approval. In general, they emerged in the last decade. However, they have been an important step in the right to social care. Regional inclusion plans made it possible to lay the foundations for less fragmented inclusion policies and with cross-cutting government involvement. Navarra is a pioneer in these plans (since 1998) and Castilla y León has a strategic plan since 2005 that includes these issues.

In recent years, the territories made important efforts to define the object of inclusion policies. Either in their laws, portfolios or plans, they tried to define the concept and link it to concrete actions that allow

exercising the right to citizenship. All of them progressively overcame the employment centralism of the minimum income benefit and recognized the multidimensionality of the inclusion field.

The first reactions to the crisis stood as a setback in the field, but with the outbreaks of recovery, these debates did reborn. The new Social Service Law of Andalusia (2017) took up the community work philosophy and incorporated inclusion itineraries with perspectives beyond employment. New approaches awakened in the Region of Murcia, where the participation of actors such as the third sector, new political formations and professionals, led since 2016, a Coordination Protocol to improve the insertion of people. Castilla León promoted the Network for the Protection of Families and has strong participation of the actors involved. Navarre implemented two important changes in 2018, the revision of its Social Services Portfolio and the approval of the Decree 26/2018 that develops and defines the right to social inclusion. All these actions came hand in hand with a new conceptualization of inclusion.

The need to aim towards activation approaches was motivated by the dissonance between the design of the norms and the real intervention capacities. The work carried out in the different territories tried to measure the impact of the inclusion policies analyzed through the testimonies of the users. Exclusion situations and the reported living conditions confirm a strong social and emotional vulnerability derived from the lack of job opportunities, the absence of resources or the barriers to access some of them. From these testimonies, the distance between the activating orientation of the policies and the opportunities of the users is observed. Likewise, the technical personnel interviewed warned of the limited success capacities of their actions due, fundamentally, to the management and bureaucratization of their work time, low offer and strong activating focus of the majority of their programmes. Leaving behind that vision and acknowledging other welfare dimensions contributed to the fight against social exclusion. Traditional control actions gave way to other flexible support models that identify integral and preventive interventions for the human and emotional deterioration of the users.

The regulations, portfolios or inclusion plans are of great help to reorient the action from the services, but a new form of organization is also necessary. With this objective, Navarra and Castilla León began working on the identification of profiles and prioritization of needs that offer an agile, effective and efficient response from social services. With this Pilot project, in addition to the economic and labour spheres, health, housing and even social participation are recognized as fields in the treatment of social exclusion. Although these new forms of social service organization are very recent and still in the pilot phase, they represent important steps towards the adaptation of policies in Europe and the promotion of more innovative forms of intervention. Of particular interest are new programs such as *the One-stop shops* in rent guarantee, The Housing First programme or other collaborative forms in health, community or education (Reuter, 2012). These approaches move towards a more active role in the design and coordination in the fight against the exclusion of public institutions. Many of these resources rethink the role of the government, but also of excluded people or other social actors (Siis, 2016). Standing (2009) claimed that in the new global era of employment, it was important to build social inclusion pathways that, through occupation and high social value, generate recognition and well-being for people with few opportunities to access the labour market. These new debates started to implement diagnostic and social intervention approaches along these lines. Although the employment subject is still very present in Spanish inclusion policies, the field shows a low integrating potential of the labour market. Therefore, the commitment to other multidimensional approaches and new forms of participatory management represents important steps towards the construction of more inclusive societies.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS: KEYS TO THE EFFECTIVENESS AND CONSOLIDATION OF INCLUSION POLICIES

Social exclusion affects the cohesion of territories and is a social and political concern. The public attention to this field struggled with stigmas of criminalization and passivity, generating strong problems of social legitimacy. The conditionality of the benefits and their activation emphasis was, for decades, the

key to access social support. However, the distance between the policies and the opportunities for inclusion was unable to overcome the social fracture.

Many social actors are involved in the design, implementation, financing, regulation, management and evaluation of inclusion policies. The third sector and other private entities inherited the social assistance treatment of poverty. The social nature of inclusion involves community networks; and the recognition of public responsibility incorporates governments, local entities and other social protection systems such as employment, health, housing, income guarantee or education.

This text analyzes very useful aspects to understand inclusion policies in Spain. The main challenges in the comparative analysis have their origin in the lack of definition consensus and the absence of data that allow the comparison between territories. The public commitment of these policies also remains a challenge, since sometimes the capacity of development in the different territories is inversely proportional to the levels of exclusion.

The comparative analysis of the five regions put on the table three factors that acknowledge severe territorial differences in terms of inclusion: (1) Actors' participation degree and commitment (social, professional and political). (2) Coordination of actions and multilevel cohesion of public actors. (3) The adequacy of policies and approaches to social needs and opportunities for inclusion in each territory.

The inclusion model in Spain was built on a low efficient base against poverty and exclusion. The gaps in the income guarantee system; the housing difficulties or job insecurity not only affected the dynamics of exclusion, but also the environmental ability and public services. For example, with a less fragmented income guarantee system, a large part of the demand that currently reaches social services would not be a user of these systems, as the experience of other European countries shows. In the same way, a good housing policy or inclusive activation would have limited the needs related to residential or labour exclusion processes.

In this context, the economic crisis added new consequences for these policies: an increase in potential beneficiaries and new profiles of need. This new scenario led to rethinking the response formulas. At first, a differentiation of groups based on activation, and later with new approaches that expand the concept of inclusion to other horizons of social participation. However, despite these trajectories, inclusion policies in Spain continue to be built on a fragile basis, marked by limitations of traditional protection systems, but also by the absence of a consensus that sets a common horizon.

The results show that inclusion policies in Spain do not face, as the main problem, territorial diversity. However, the key to its effectiveness is the funding, political and institutional commitment. The new approaches identified in the fieldwork showed important steps in the right recognition and the definition of its object, however, it still requires more steps in its consolidation.

A fundamental key that illuminates the results is the search for greater effectiveness in inclusion policies. The importance relies on adapting the design and approach to spaces with inclusion opportunities. The research evidenced the employment's loss of inclusion capacity so that inevitably the transition to care models that overcome the labour centralism must be faced. Other approaches of social investment, prevention of exclusion and social participation can help reduce situations of exclusion in the territories. Likewise, the search for efficiency must overcome the public fragmentation of the network. These difficulties are not recent but are present from the first stages of exclusion. However, coordination attempts between public, local or regional levels continue to be insufficient to overcome the crumbling public network.

Another important aspect for its consolidation is related to the social legitimization and stabilization of policies. The political and social absence of a consensus is extremely vulnerable to ideological and financial changes of inclusion policies. In fact, the absence of a stable line of funding offers no guarantee in the exercise of neither the right nor a coherent orientation from the social intervention. Professionals do not have tools beyond a budgetary exercise and the public is unaware of the allocated resources. In Andalucía and Murcia, the guidelines and requirements changed on a number of occasions annually to

adapt to external financing channels. Therefore, the lack of agreement and commitment is one of the great barriers in the consolidation of these policies.

Finally, a decisive factor for the future is linked to their result assessment. The task of evaluating and planning policies for very dynamic social situations has a complicated starting point and undoubtedly requires continuous and frequent revision. Coordinated strategies that involve the participation of the actors or innovative formulas that connect public policies with their environment, could contribute to this. Not only the adequate, agile and stable response from the public policies are at stake, but also the social cohesion of a territory, the dignity of its citizens and the efficiency of the resources invested.

This research faced from the beginning a substantial complexity in the comparative research: the difficult delimitation of its object. However, the results allow us to explore the factors of different territorial trajectories, as well as highlighting the challenges they must handle. This is expected to contribute both to the comparative regional research and to the consolidation of inclusion policies, setting a horizon that will help the different territories to move towards a common goal: the social cohesion.

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