

PROBLEMS OF MEGACITIES: SOCIAL INEQUALITIES, ENVIRONMENTAL RISK AND URBAN GOVERNANCE

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27. URBAN SOCIAL INTEGRATION THROUGH HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT. THE MADRID METROPOLITAN REGION EXPERIENCE*

*Manuel Valenzuela Rubio** , Carmen Vázquez Varela**
and María de Jesús Lago***

Introduction

The social exclusion problem is not a new issue within the Madrid Autonomous Region; however along the last decade the process of socio-economic dualization has increased. As everywhere, the exclusion is the result of property and employment lack. Being the unemployment the most important aspect of social isolation, the social integration is achieved mainly through participation in labour market. Starting from this point, the exclusion gets visible through specific problems related with wealth, education, culture, housing, etc. As a logic conclusion, in the fight against the social isolation and the marginalization, the best way for reintegration should rest on the labour reincorporation which is within the production system. This process must run parallel with the housing, neighbourhood, city and community assimilation; that is the integration as a whole.

The minimum income program (IMI)¹ is a project devoted to people and households excluded from the normal standard of living conditions and suffering from poverty within the limits of the Madrid Autonomous Region. The IMI tries to cover the gaps inside the normal social system benefits. The knowledge of deep social inequalities, including the most extreme poverty, shapes the starting point of different action lines dealing with the goal of smoothing the dramatic situations of the social exclusion. On another hand, the IMI program has an obvious component: the economic subsidy, the minimum income assured by the social services for the excluded in the Madrid Autonomous Region, for those who are under the poverty line. But the minimum income itself is not enough to integrate the people, although it is obviously a determining factor. An joined society should assure a job for everybody instead of a minimum income. The employment in our post- industrial societies, despite its apparent shortage (never so many people work so much and so hard as nowadays), is an unavoidably the key for the integration.

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¹ IMI: Ingreso Madrileño de Integración.

Social exclusion. A national wide approach

A starting point for this contribution is the difficulty of getting an right figure of the population included under the concept of exclusion. The normally used methodology (Rodríguez *et al.*, 1994:1541) relies upon the information coming from the people included into the minimum income public programmes. Being the unemployment the most important aspect of social isolation, the exclusion gets visible through the difficulty of access to wealth, education, culture, housing, etc. Under these bases, the exclusion is tightly linked to the most severe poverty situations and the lack of possibilities to leave it.

At national level, following the FOESSA report (1994), even if one fifth of the Spanish population is under the poverty level (around 8 millions people), the lowest or severe poverty² only includes about fourth per cent of the whole population (1.5 millions) (Juárez and Renes, 1994:294). Nevertheless, the exclusion census considered in this paper get even lower, being reduced to those people favoured by the minimum income programmes at present developed by the regional governments. As a whole, the social salary in Spain is earned by around 50,000 people (1993), that means 0.43% of the households, with a total spending of 18,405 millions pesetas (Aguilar *et al.*, 1995:75).

The distribution by regions does not reflect the importance of the real exclusion but the level of social sensibility for this problem or even more the financial capacity of local or regional administration to solve it. As it is shown in Table 1, the weigh in relation with the total households scarcely overstep the 1% (Basque Country). But been provided that more financial resources could be channeled to this kind of programmes, the rate of the total household to be covered by the programme will get up between 1% and 3%, that is the population considered excluded at regional level (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Even so, it is a very heterogeneous population, because the group considered is composed by persons living alone, single parent families, young and old people, inner and overseas immigrants, ethnic minorities, among others. From spatial point of view, they are present all over the country, mainly the biggest cities, where their overweight is particularly clear in the inner and peripheral slum areas; the important rate of excluded people in one place is normally considered a sign of being a problematic zone, needing of special public polices to be devised (Valenzuela, 1996).

² One fourth of the average income.

Table 1. Minimum income receivers by autonomous regions (1993)

S u b s i d i s e d		
Autonomous regions	Population	% households
País Vasco	11,786	1.93
Navarra	1,460	1.0
Madrid	10,996	0.78
Castilla-La Mancha	2,391	0.47
Canarias	1,683	0.43
Cataluña	7,000	0.39
Castilla y León	2,495	0.31
Andalucía	5,000	0.27
La Rioja	205	0.27
Galicia	1,476	0.19
Murcia	500	0.18
Comunidad Valenciana	1,873	0.16
Extremadura	441	0.13
Cantabria	100	0.07
Aragón	106	0.03
Baleares	-	-
Ceuta y Melilla	-	-
Totals	48,887	0.43

Source: Aguilar, *et al.*, 1995:75.

As a matter of fact, the major tool for fighting against the exclusion is, at national level, to the access to a regional government grant; however, for getting a minimum income grant some minimum stipulations are required, very similar in all the regions, apart from being between 25 to 64 years old. In any case, we can appreciated some common outlines among the minimum income receivers:

- The household rate headed by a woman is much higher than in the rest of the population.
- The average age is very low as shown by the fact that two over three of them are under forty five years old.
- Single parent families arrived to 35-40% and even the weight of persons living alone can get between 22-30% from the total.

- Separate and divorce persons are more frequent than in the population as a whole and the single rate is even very high too.



Figure 1. The autonomous communities of Spain.

Social exclusion in Madrid Metropolitan Region

We take into account in our approach only the population subsidised through the minimum income policy (IMI), the goal of which is to solve the most extreme exclusion situations leading to the marginalization but not to remove the inequalities. IMI targeted population do not fit exactly with the official poverty definition, that would include about 20% of the total Madrid population, but the 3% who undergoes a severe poverty. Even reduced to this level the group concerned, the Madrid population who potentially can be IMI's beneficiary could arrive to 20.000 family units; as a matter of fact, the IMI receivers have never exceeded simultaneously 10.000 persons; some major features of the madrilian IMI receivers are shown in the **Table 2**.

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of IMI's receivers in Madrid Metropolitan Region

SEX	Male	32 %
	Female	68%
AGE	> 65	2.8%
	43-64	33.6%
	25-42	55%
	16-24	8.5%
HOUSEHOLD	One-person family	23.2%
	Single-parent family	35.8%
	Others	41.1%
CIVIL STATE	Single	33.2%
	Married	34.1%
	Divorced	25.3%
	Widowed	7.3%
	Others	0.2%
HOUSEHOLD SIZE		
1	22.6%	
2-3	41.3%	
4-5	23.85%	
6 and more	12.5%	

Source: FOESSA Report, 1994:1543.

In Madrid, as in any other western big cities (Fainstein, 1996), the causes leading to the exclusion are similarly generated. The legal background, the unfair social behaviour and the market laws appear to be the structural bases over which the exclusion is built. Besides the structural there are other socio-demographic features concerned, such as age (elderly people), familiar status (single-parent families) sickness, loneliness and being unskilled or member of a minority group (ethnic or linguistic).

Although there is a wide range of exclusion modalities produced by the interaction of the above mentioned indicators, they can all be summarised in three main exclusion forms, depending on how they appear: training,

employment and housing. The three elements are close related and altogether strictly linked to personal position within the labour market. That is why when the IMI program was put into practice the main attention was paid to the economic situation (personal and household computed), bearing in mind that the revenue as economic indicator summarises the different kinds of income sources (labour, unemployment, subsidies, rents, etc.). The basic idea is that economic exclusion is the ground on which other forms of exclusion grow up.

The social economy enterprises as a tool for integration

Let us remember once again that the two most efficient tools in order to struggle against the social exclusion are housing and employment. The IMI program has focused on the labour integration for the excluded groups (Vázquez, 1995). At present, the information over the integration projects launched during the first period of the program development (1990-1995) allows us to sketch the profile of those enterprises born to fight against the exclusion from the economic side (Comunidad de Madrid, 1994). The integration enterprises must try to combine in a balanced way the entrepreneurial rationality with the social commitment; the working conditions have to be similar to those which have the standard enterprises although they must bear in mind their main goal: the social integration of the excluded people. That is why it is necessary that these enterprises face the work from an integrating and personal perspective. As a consequence it is convenient that they must be provided by the public administration with subsidies in order to grant the social assistance work they develop with the excluded people and the loss of productivity they have to assume because of that.

Even so, the Madrid experience with the creation of integration enterprises clearly shows how difficult is for the normal enterprises to accept excluded people into their staff and therefore it has become a huge endeavour to reach a normal integration at work for them. That is why the entrepreneurial projects launched within the IMI program framework are those named as "social economy system" that means they share social and trading characteristics. In terms of legal structure they operate as associations or foundations normally linked to the social and non governmental movements even there can be found other integration enterprises supported by municipalities and trade-unions. When we analyse the last available reports, those of 1995, we can remark that, among the 44 integration projects developed, 32 of them (72.7%) were promoted by non profit private associations while the remaining group received the support from town councils (4 integration projects,

9.1%), neighbourhood associations (4 integration projects, 9.1%), trade-unions (3 integration projects, 6.8%) and a specialised public agency, the Consorcio para la Población Marginada (1 integration project, 2.3%).

Our balance cover the 44 integration projects created within the program framework along the early five years. During the three first ones (1990-1992) 23 integration projects have been subsidised with a global amount of 271,5 millions pesetas and 685 IMI receivers as an average have entered the projects. The enterprise answer has been acceptable even though the IMI receivers have been quite reluctant to an enthusiastic participation. Only 15% of the IMI receivers initially involved in an integration project have finally get incorporated and only 9% of the total IMI beneficiaries arrived to finish successfully the selected project. Globally only 12.4% of the IMI people between 1990-1993 have been linked in same way with the projects, mainly the youngest (the average age is 31) and the women (60%). This profile can be explained due to the fact that 45% of the projects focused on women and 30% on young people; nevertheless, there are other social groups targeted as priority groups of the integration project such as the gypsies (18%). Other projects have become specialised on groups even more problematic such as third world immigrants, long term unemployed, homeless, etc. If we focus now on the latest available data, those related to the year 1995, we can check that for the 44 integration projects started the profile of the IMI beneficiaries keep being led by women, who are the targeted group of 14 integration projects (standing for the 31.8%). The unemployed people follow them up with 9 integration projects (20.5%) and the young people score the third place with 8 integration projects which gather the 18.2% over the total amount of projects. As regards the sharing out the integration project typologies those labelled as "labour projects" are the more relevant covering the 62% of the whole. When we combine the profile of the IMI receivers involved with the different project typologies the conclusions are as follows:

- The "labour projects" are especially dressed to women (44.4%) and unemployed people (25.9%). In the case of integration enterprises established by women it is worth to highlight three of them which deal with specifically excluded groups as ex-prostitutes and ex-convicts women.
- The "training/pre-labour projects" take care preferably of youngsters (50%) and unemployed people (25%).

- As far as the "social integration projects" is concerned we can point out that the 50% are devoted to immigrant families and 25% homeless people.

If we rely on the collected data about the IMI receivers who have joined some integration project along 1995 they amount to 1,281, among them only 870 were able to accomplish the project. That is to say scarcely the 67.9% of this group reach the last stage of the program; however it must be kept in mind that we are talking about people who undergo severe exclusion levels and consequently a wide set of problems preventing their participation in the IMI projects; anyway, the improvement of the situation if we compare the year 1995 with the first period above detailed is undeniable. As far as the reasons to resign a project are concerned, the most common is the participant's giving up with a 51.8% (unjustified reasons, sickness, familiar problems, profile unsuitability of the IMI beneficiary, removal and others), followed up by the labour integration with a 32.4%, in the main after having found a job working for somebody. To be expelled from the project explain the situation behind the third group who resign during 1995, a little percentage of 8.7%, due mainly to the lack of attendance.

The labour outcomes far from being fully satisfactory allow us to keep a moderate optimism when we face the integration possibilities of the excluded groups. Along 1995, 554 jobs were created, 404 (72.9%) of them subsequently occupied while the remaining 150 (27.1%) kept waiting unoccupied. In the main we are talking of jobs on a temporary basis (50.5%) followed up by those on self-employment basis (12.5%). On the other hand the unoccupied jobs meet some or several of the following reasons:

- the participants did not overcome the compulsory trial period,
- the unsuitability of IMI professional profiles to the required specialised skilled jobs,
- the lack of motivation for the labour integration due to incomes coming from marginal activities which combine with a dependency on social benefits,
- personal features having an influence on the attitude towards the work and revealing the lack of abilities, skills or availability needed to meet the demand level of the labour market.

The 61% of the IMI projects have been carried out in Madrid municipality, but only four of them cover the whole municipality, the remaining 23 projects focus on one or more districts. The district which benefits from the biggest number of projects is Puente de Vallecas (6 IMI projects) going

together with the highest rate of IMI receiver families (the 17.4% over the whole Madrid municipality). The metropolitan ring follows up with 7 integration projects which entail the 16% over the Madrid Autonomous Region. And last but not least the projects covering the whole Madrid Autonomous Region scarcely 5 but taking up the 21.84% of the total expenses, due to the fact that they are almost fully subsidised by the Madrid Autonomous Administration (Figures 2 and 3).

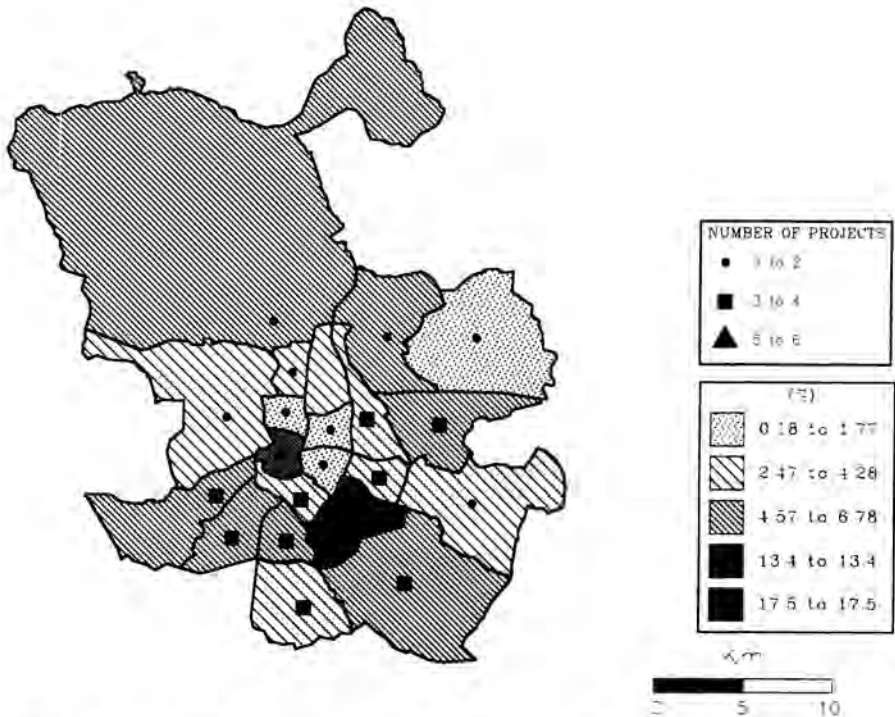


Figure 2. IMI beneficiaries and number of integration projects. Madrid districts.
(Source: CAM, Consejería de Integración Social.)

Housing policies as an integration key against social exclusion. The Gypsy's case

Everyday it is more obvious that housing policies are an integration tool against social isolation. We must remark that the main economic effort in a personal budget is always the acquisition of a dwelling and few families have enough incomes to get one. The two social groups that suffered mostly the problem are:

a) Those families who have lost their jobs or whose incomes have been reduced because of the labour market changes, (they live in slum areas and only through housing policies they could get access to a standard apartment).

b) Those, who have been traditionally excluded from the private housing market and from the regular social system (ethnic minorities who live in shacks).

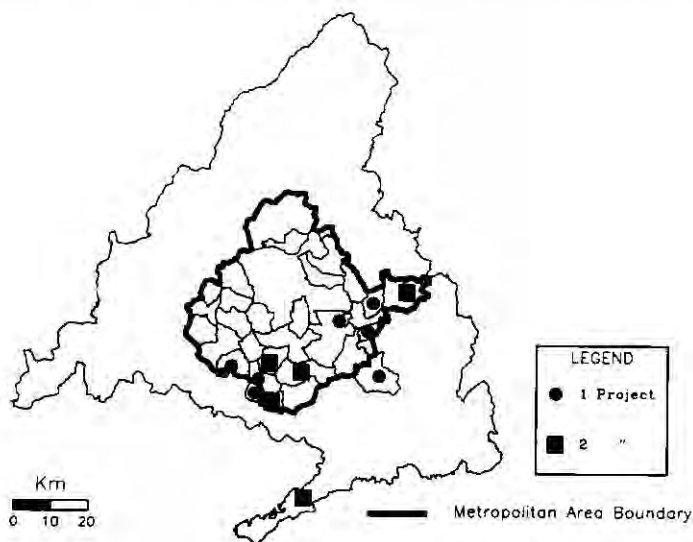


Figure 3. IMI integration projects in metropolitan and outer rings.
(Source: CAM, Consejería de Integración Social.)

The first group represents a new kind of exclusion resulting from economic problems but not from social issues. However the second symbolises a severe poverty level and their members suffer an outstanding social isolation. There are two official housing policies for both groups:

1. A housing policy for those not suffering social isolation: they are the beneficiaries of the general housing policy with two options:

A. A general program, the beneficiaries of which have to fulfil the following requirements:

A.1. Not to be real state owners.

A.2. Not to reach up a certain income level calculated on relation with the family members. However they must afford the payment of housing expenses (rent or mortgage) and the condominium maintenance charges.

If they fulfil all those requirements they will be included into the general program and in the official census for public housing.

B. A special program, whose beneficiaries must belong to one of these household status typologies:

- B1. Single parent families, with children under 14 years old.
- B2. Large families with low incomes.
- B3. Families who have no incomes or any real state property.
- B4. Families who live in a slum house.
- B5. Families with a disable member.

The families included into the general program can get a public apartment by paying a monthly rent or a mortgage (monthly payment). The special programs beneficiaries, depending on their economic situation, either they pay a minimum monthly rent (a percentage of their incomes), or they get a free apartment paying only the condominium maintenance charges and other individual utilities.

2. Public housing policies for social isolated families: There are special programs for social excluded people. The only possibility for them to access to those programmes is the fulfilment of the following requirements:

- A. To live in a shacks settlement.
- B. To have been included into the shacks official census.
- C. To belong to a social segregated group.

The different public housing modalities considered in this program are:

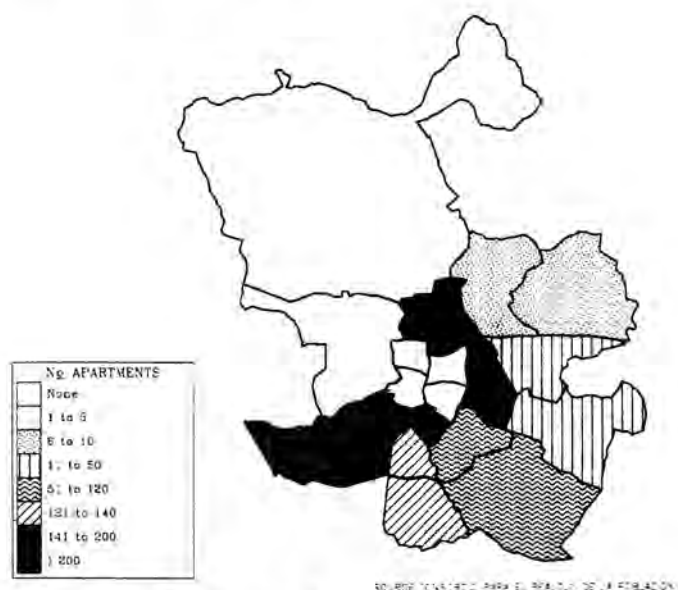
- Apartments: built for socially integrated families who due to their labour characteristics do not need a house provided with yard.
- Final dwellings: semi-detached houses built for those socially integrated families that because their labour characteristics and duties need a house with a yard (**Table 3**).
- Provisional dwellings: prefabricated houses built for socially segregated families who need a temporal period to get used to live in a standard appartment (**Table 3**).

In 1986 the total amount of families living in shacks in Madrid reached up 2.674. After ten years of program development 556 families still lived in this kind of settlements and 1050 new shacks have been built. At present, in the Madrid municipality, 1.908 integration dwellings have been allocated to beneficiary families; these dwellings have been built in different locations through the city, as shown in the **Figure 4**. These are 1.152 apartments, 347 final dwellings and 409 provisional ones (prefabricated houses) (as shown in **Table 3**).

Table 3. Public housing settlements for gypsy population

Provisional dwellings	Houses	Final dwellings	Nº Houses
CAÑAVERAL	82	LA QUINTA	83
LAS LIEBRES	76	LA CELSA	96
SAN FERMIN	74	LA ROSILLA	88
JAUJA	83	PLATA Y CASTAÑAR	80
CAÑADA REAL	56		
LA MIMBRERA	38		
TOTAL	409	TOTAL	347

Source: CPRPM. Ownwork. 1996.



A first balance of this program stresses the relative success of a reallocation settlement known as "*Plata y Castañar*". This settlement, or special overspill unit, was built in 1989. It was the first big program that started in 1986, for those living on the verge of the "normal" society with no possibi-

lity to access to a standard dwelling in the private market. The unit is located in the "Villaverde" district, in the South of central city, and it comprises 80 semi-detached houses. The tenants, all of them belonging the gypsy ethnic minority, lived previously in an overspilt prefabricated settlement called UVA (*Unidad Vecinal de Absorción*), located in the same district. They gathered in the UVA in 1974 coming from several Madrid shack settlements scattered over the peripheral ring. The fact to be living in a prefabricated houses during 15 years was an important adjusting process to a standard dwelling and a very positive point in their social integration progress (all the children attend to the school and the parents have entered the labour market).

At present, the 37% of the tenants work in informal retail jobs, the 20% are pensioner, and the remaining are scrap iron salesmen. They have given up selling drugs and other illegal activities and they accept their duty of sending their children at school, even those under 4 years old, with a very low rate of absentism. In every unit the social assistance services have developed literacy campaigns to teach people reading and writing, and some of the gypsy families have been trained in learning a trade. Their high level of social integration had made possible they use all the public services of the district. They have changed their labour behaviour from marginal jobs to normal ones. Because these new jobs do not need a house with yard (in order to store merchandises) probably the tenants will be moved from the semi-detached house to an apartment. The houses left free after the removal will be reoccupied by families from provisional settlements. The change from shacks to provisional settlements and from those to semi-detached houses represent a evolution process that, as a consequence, get important progress in the social integration. The tenants forget their traditional behaviours rejected by the society as a whole and they get used to live in a standard house. The social integration improvement reached by the families from *Plata y Castañar* proves that the housing policies are an important tool against social exclusion.

Concluding remarks

The subjects dealing with in this paper show the difficulty to reach a clear and easy solution to the urban social exclusion, even the public effort during the last years has get some interesting and succesfull results. Nevertheless, the central point why those programs find the biggest difficulties in the solution of this socially important problem are mainly the short of economic resources and the lack of a real social support. The housing issue shows how the public policies for specific social groups, such as gypsies, have failed

due partly to the rejection of the neighbourhoods close to their settlements. Similarly, the integration enterprises need, for a minimum success, an understanding and encouraging local environment. Even more, the social integration, being considered a global process, includes many different aspects of the every day life from the employment to the leisure; all of them have to be involved in any integration programme going further than the simple charity attitudes formerly accepted as the only way to solve the exclusion.

Consequently, our proposal is oriented to the local scale as the social-spatial context where the policies should be devised, bearing in mind that the complex programmes must include as many partners as the integration process needs: public institutions, social organisations, economic agents, etc. Taking into account that all of them operate on territorial bases, it is there where the coordination effort must be stressed. In the same way, the spatial approach can provide a functional background for an efficient management of the social integration problems. Does not matter the origin of the programmes (local, regional, national or transnational), the small scale areas, where people live (neighbourhood unit in the case of big cities), will provide a very useful operational level where the partner system could be put into action for finding out some kind of solution for social exclusion.

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