Accem's observatories network

Julia Fernandez Quintanilla

ACCEM´S OBSERVATORIES NETWORK

Julia Fernández Quintanilla

General director of Accem
accem@accem.es + 34 91 532 74 78
www.accem.es

Main Headquarters:

Pl.Sta.Mª Soledad Torres Acosta 2.
28004. Madrid. España

Summary: ACCEM is an NGO that works in favour of refugees and immigrants in Spain. Since 1996 ACCEM develops a strategy of observation articulating the national observation with the local observatories. The objective of the local observatories is to improve the services offered to the migrants thanks to a better knowledge of their needs. Using the tools of intelligence territorial CATALYSIS as well as the trees of knowledge.

Since 1996 the Gorion national observatory gathers in Madrid the individual data of migrants from the regional centres and from the different programmes carried our by ACCEM. It provides a wider knowledge of the migrants and their different profiles of demands. It allows a better programming of the actions thus. It is also possible to answer the demands of information of the administration, the economy, the local centres or the action programmes.

In the same way, two local observatories have been developed in Gijon and Siguënza in partnership with the local services and public associations. The objective was to answer in a more global way to the needs of the migrants while establishing and reinforcing the synergies between the services in the respect of the local specificities. They improved in a considerable way the knowledge of the migrant population in their diversity within the communities. They allowed us to put in practice the adapted individual answers but also to improve the well-being of the territorial communities. They developed new observatories "satellites" respectively in Oviedo and in Guadalajara.

Since 2004 ACCEM projects to develop a network of local observatories larger on the basis of these experiences. The objective is to harmonize a common language, to widen the vision of the needs and to improve the joint between the three levels: local, regional and national. In a first time, the CATALYSIS tools has been harmonized to the level of setting the observatories. They are used from now on by two new observatories in Seville , Léon, and Girona.

The project e-gorrion now aims to put on line the tools to make them more accessible and to develop some answers in real time.

Keywords: Observatory, Partnership, Evaluation, Participation, Observation, Immigration, Refugee, Information, Diagnose, Territory,

ACCEM´S OBSERVATORIES NETWORK

1. INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

ACCEM is a nation-wide non government organization that develops its services and programmes in the field of migrations since 1992. The entity is present in ten Autonomous Communities of the Spanish state (in twenty-one counties and twenty-six municipalities).

The main programmes developed by ACCEM are:

- Temporary reception to refugees and Immigrants (Reception Centres)

- Social integration and Labour insertion

- Socio-educational training (language training, knowledge of the environment, social abilities, etc.)

- Awareness raising

- Investigation and Community Development (Development and administration of Observatories).

- Communitary initiatives of Employment and Development of Human resources.

2. BRIEF REFERENCE TO THE CONTEXT OF IMMIGRATION IN SPAIN

Parting from the experience that ACCEM has in programmes of social integration and labour insertion with migrants it has been verified that this community face a vital situation of personal dispersion: cultural, family, social and labour disintegration caused by the disappearance of the social and cultural reference frame.

To approach more attentively and to reach the theoretical and human understanding of this situation, we could say that four phases that we describe next occur:

1. - Idealization, not only at economic level but also at social level of the country where they arrive in opposition to their country of origin, as well as of the attainment of their projections of improvement in an easy, agile and relatively quick way in the reception country.

2. - The expectations of the migration project are unstructured in the arrival process in the reception society.

3. - Internal conflict within the reception society caused by the cultural shocks and for the necessity of adaptation to the same ones.

4. - Gradual process to recompose the environment: cultural, family, social, labour and material-economic within the reception society.

On the other hand from a statistical vision of the context of migration in our country, it is considered a figure near to the four million foreigners; approximately 30% of European origin. The percentage of resident foreign population, around 8.4% is still one of the lowest in Europe. As it already happened in all the western countries, if we maintain our high economic growth the increase of the immigration percentage will continue. And this tendency responds to a rule contrasted by historical experience: the economic growth and the development bear an increase of population coming from third countries.

To outline a growth sustained in Spain it is indispensable to appeal to immigrants. The tendencies mark that immigrant population's increase will be directly proportional to our economic growth and the rent differential that we maintain with our neighbour countries. According to the Municipal Register of the National Institut of Statistics, up to the 1st of January of 2007, the total number of residents in Spain has been of 45, 12 million

persons. Among these persons, 40, 63 million have the spanish nationality and 4, 48 million are foreigners. The last figure includes 1. 7 million nationals of the 26 remaining EU member states. According to it around 2, 800, 000 foreigners from countries outside the European Union of 27 where registered in Spain at that time.

All these realities outline the challenge of creating and structuring social reception and integration policies in our country, a challenge that will increasable be assumed from the territorial and local boarding of the immigration phenomenon, identifying the problems and necessities, proposing at the same time policies and actions guided to generate processes of intercultural cohesion and coexistence among the foreign and autochthonous population.

In consequence, to be able to create actions that may respond to the reality that this population is facing, diagnose processes and sources for gathering the flowing and coordinated information of diverse sources should be established, (Social Services, sanitary Centres, entities, public and private institutions, NGO, NLO, etc.) that allows to design interventions in each based territory, in coherence, with the necessities and demands detected through the information transmitted by the own vulnerable population.

3. ACCEM OBSERVATION MECHANISMS.

ACCEM observation strategy, is articulated through the application of **Permanent Observation Mechanisms** (among all the actors that intervene in the reality, those that operate on the ground and those that plan and take decisions in the social policy) that allows to approach the reality in a scientific way (quantitatively and qualitatively), in order to analyze and to **propose at the same time intervention strategies, and planning of actions,** in consonance with the problems and social necessities that the community of migrants face in our country, a changing problem that requires of dynamic tools of observation and analysis.

ACCEM proposes the creation of spaces of cooperative and participative observation among public entities and the third sector (that work in a direct and transverse way with the immigrant community) that generates an integral knowledge on the social, educational and economic situation of the immigration, and that also facilitates the application of actions and the creation of nets of social support to facilitate the of the migrants' integration processes, especially of those that are in a precariousness and social exclusion situation.

> The objectives that are pursued from the different ACCEM Observation Mechanisms are:

1. To analyze and to evaluate in a dynamic way the socio-economic context in which the migrants live, from a territorial perspective and local development that improves the knowledge of the immigration phenomenon.
2. To establish cooperation processes, and also networking and exchanging of information and good practices among the different local actors that operate in the territory (social and economic agent, public and private institutions, NGOs, etc.) to facilitate an analysis, a combined action and a generation of nets of social support that approaches the problems of the community and of the reception territories
3. To establish participation and accessibility processes of immigrants in the formulation, planning and development of actions.
4. To offer the different actors involved in the processes of planning and execution of the different plans, programmes, projects (educational, social, cultural, economic):

- Tools for the agreed creation of indicators on the community and the area socio-economic situation.

- Information for the establishment of hypothesis that allow to analyze in a more concrete, dynamic and up-to-date way the problems of the community and the territory, in order to facilitate the decision makers the design of their plans, programmes and intervention projects.

3.1. Internal System of Observation: GORION.

Since 1996 ACCEM has implemented in co-operation with the University of Franche-Comte (Besançon, France) and the University of Huelva (Spain) a national information system called Gorion. Gorion is a diagnoses accompaniment and evaluation tool, that allows to know the necessities, to build the profiles and typologies of our target community (asylum applicants, refugees and immigrants), from the different intervention territories where ACCEM operates.

Since 1997, Gorion permited to registered datas (socials, economics, profesional…) from 80.000 people, and from 400.000 interventions.

At the moment we are working on an adaptation and accuracy of the system to the new necessities of the entity, not only conceptual but also technologic, called **E-Gorrion**.

The design of E-Gorrion meant and still means on the one hand a harmonization and update work of the different registration systems and sources of information at internal level (follow-up data base of the target group) and at external level (statistical records, follow-up reports requested buy the Authorities, etc.) used by ACCEM at national level. On the other hand it also bears an adaptation of the technology of the system of information.
The instruments to carry out this internal system of information are as follows:

- **A Harmonized Script of Observation** structured in the different stages and processes that occur in the immigrant integration itineraries (Reception, Orientation, Education, Training, Employment, Housing, Health, Autonomy, Diagnoses and Evaluation).

- **A Conceptual Manual** for the use of the Script which main purpose is to establish a common frame and language at an internal level for the observation

- **A computer program (e-pragma)** on the Internet for the system administration.

Through our system, we can have an analysis, diagnoses, and combined evaluation, not only of the different intervention processes (social, labour, juridical, etc.), but also of the action contexts (ACCEM territories) where our target group is, so that it allows us to guide the strategic and operative politics of our Association, in the designing of future plans, programmes and projects.

All this means for the entity an effort and investment in economic, technological and human resources, since the installation and maintenance of our information system becomes necessary to implement and to systematize internal procedures, not only in the management of the intervention of the different areas and departments of ACCEM, but also in the collection of information among the technical personnel of the association. It also meant the creation and structuring of technical teams for the management and evaluation of the system of information (analysis and treatment of the information, realization of diagnoses, technological adaptation, training and accompaniment to the staff in the entity…).

3.2.- Local Observatories.

As complement to the GORION Internal System of Information, ACCEM carried out in 1998, the creation and implementation in co-operation with the University of Franche-Comte (Besançon, France), the **Immigration Permanent Observatory of Asturias (ODINA) and the Local Obervatory of Sigüenza**.
Both Observatories are based on the principles of **Territorial Intelligence**:

1. Civic participation.
2. Global approach of the territory.
3. Partnership of local actors.
4. Technologies of the information society.
5. Accessibility of the information.
6. Quality of the information.

and in the **CATALYSE** methodology:

1. Better knowledge of migrants and the reception context - identification of necessities through the pursuit and evaluation of their integration projects -
2. Better knowledge of the answers of the actors of the community - to adapt the offer to the demands, to optimize resources and actions -
3. To locate the socio-economic context of action - to identify the necessities of the migrant community in connection with the autochthonous community -

The main purpose of these Local Observatories is to produce knowledge on the socio-economic reality of the community of immigrants, and foster the participation of the local actors in the application of strategies and

actions that facilitate the fight against the precarious and exclusion situations, of the migrant population (refugees and immigrants).

Along their development during these years both Observatories have suffered different transformations and evolutions. Thus, the **Immigration Permanent Observatory of Asturias** (**ODINA**), besides their environment of regional observation, they have consolidated the observation perspective at local level, with the articulation of two Local Observatories, one in Gijón and the other one in Oviedo (2005). On the other hand, one of the impacts of the development of the **Observatory of Sigüenza (OPASI)** has been the creation of other new one at provincial level, the **Observatory of Guadalajara-OPEGU** (2005).

Within this context, and also as a consequence, among other aspects, of the development and institutional expansion of ACCEM, and also the socio-economic changes in the intervention territories (e.g.: the immigrant population's increase) in 2005 start the application of new Observatories in other ACCEM territorial headquarters, constituting a **Net of Local Observatories**.

The localization and implementation of these new Observatories, are carried out in those territories of ACCEM, where there are already a trajectory and experience in the development of network processes and partnership with entities and institutions, from an investigation perspective and action. Therefore we also pretend with this observation strategy to reinforce and to consolidate the actions carried out to implement cooperative nets of intervention in the territory.
The territories where the new observatories are developed are;

- Local Observation Group of Leon (Grupo de Observación Local de León) - GOL (2006)
- Permanent Inmigration Observatory of Seville (2006).
- Permanent Inmigration Observatory of Girona (2007)

So, we can said that a **double development movement** has taken place, starting from the dissemination for the creation of new observatories:

- *Endogenous*: creation of local observatories, starting from the Observatories initially created. That have extended in the intervention territory and that have been divided as cells.

- *Exogenous*: the Observatories created initially have helped to the creation of new observatories.

Thus, and same as in the internal system of information GORION, different instruments and technologies have been structured for the application of this Net of Observation:

- **A Harmonized Script of Observation CATALYSE** for all the partners that integrate the observation structure in the territories. This Script is structured in the different stages and processes that occur in the immigrant integration itineraries (Reception, Orientation, Education, Training, Employment, Housing, Health, Autonomy, Diagnoses and Evaluation).

- **A Conceptual Manual for the use of the Script** which main purpose is to establish a common frame and language for the observation at internal level.

- **Tool 1: Diagnoses accompaniment and evaluation** (software PRAGMA, to key in and for data processing, and its handbook).

- **Tool 2: Repertory of Actors and Actions for the Integration.**

- **Tool 3: Contextual Indicators of Territorial Development** (database and on-line mapping of contextuals indicators).

4. EXPECTED RESULTS OF ACCEM OBSERVATION MECHANISMS.

The results expected in connection with the objectives of ACCEM strategy and their observation mechanisms are the following:

- A more concrete and more dynamic knowledge of the necessities and identified problems of the community of immigrants and their socio-economic environment.
- A reinforcement in the processes of development of the partnership among public, private institutions /entities, social and economic agents, for the mobilization of all the available resources that facilitate dynamic of social integration and labour insertion of immigrants and of the autochthonous community in a transversal way.
- A better definition and planning of the project of the social integration and labour insertion of the immigrants that reside in the territories of implementation of the mechanism.
- Complementarity of resources and actions among the public entities and the third sector.
- Accessibility to the information for immigrants and people in general.
- Improvement of the participation and decision taking processes of immigrants in the planning and development of programmes and projects of social integration in the reception society.
- Reinforcement of the coexistence between the foreign population and the reception society, through mechanisms and mixed participation spaces.
- A better knowledge (quantitative and qualitative) of the immigration phenomenon from an integral and cooperative perspective, and from a territorial and local boarding.
- A more precise, dynamic and optimized visibility of the available social resources in the territory to assist the necessities of the community.
- An improvement of the processes of exchange of the information, data, studies and publications on the knowledge of the community, among other actors of the investigation field.
- A combined planning of the actions guided to favour the processes of integration of the community, starting from a cooperative diagnoses among the entities and institutions involved in the Observation Mechanism.

5.- MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION TEAM OF THE OBSERVATION MECHANISMS.

To confront application of the different Observation Mechanisms, a Team of Work has been constituted in ACCEM in charge of steering and to negotiating the different processes of application. This team is divided into different work groups according to their functions and tasks;

- **Strategic Follow-up Group**; formed by directives of the entity (ACCEM Directress and Subdirector, Territorial Responsible) and coordinator of the Observation Mechanisms from the University Francht Comte of Besançon in charge of carrying out the follow-up with regard to the dimensions and strategic objectives of the System.

- **Senior Group**; this formed by technicians of different territorial headquarters of ACCEM, mainly of the areas where the application has been carried out that is to say the first Local Observatories (Gijón and Sigüenza) and the first experimentation of the Territorial Management System of Social and professionals skills (Gijón, León and Sigüenza). Their key functions are those of to designing conceptually and to implement the Instruments of Observation, at the same time that they carry out an appropriate formative transfer from these to the members of the Junior Group (ACCEM technical staff coming from territories that incorporate the Observation Mechanism).

- **Junior Group**; formed by technical staff coming from the different territorial headquarters of ACCEM. The group is constituted by technicians whose main function is being the technical reference of the Observation Mechanism (E-Gorion and Observatories) for their intervention territory (application of the Observation Instruments).

6.- CONCLUSION.

- The *endogenous* and *exogenous* development of the observatories has generated a modification of the organization. With the endogenous development, the senior ones are requested for new local responsibilities.
- The objective is the integration of this observatories in the global policy of the territories, to develop a real territorial responsibility and implication.
- A Monitoring Group is in march, to reinforce the articulation of the seniors and juniors in a net, with a virtual and cooperative work space.
- The first next step is to form the permanents referents (technical / partnership promotion) in order to respond to the demands in real time and to coordinate training and accompaniment actions.