



# THE MAIN CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL INCLUSION IN SPAIN

Rodrigo Fernández

Economist / Policy Analyst

Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD

29 September 2023

Publication available at <http://oe.cd/spain-social-inclusion-2023>





# Outline

---

1. Methodology to identify barriers to social inclusion
  - Definition of target population
  - Identification of barriers
  - Characterisation of populations
2. Challenges for social inclusion
  - Overall approach to address social exclusion issues
  - Coordination mechanisms
  - Adequacy of resources
  - Monitoring and evaluation



# Outline

---

1. Methodology to identify barriers to social inclusion
  - Definition of target population
  - Identification of barriers
  - Characterisation of populations
2. Challenges for social inclusion
  - Overall approach to address social exclusion issues
  - Coordination mechanisms
  - Adequacy of resources
  - Monitoring and evaluation



# Whose barriers?

## Population of interest – options for defining it

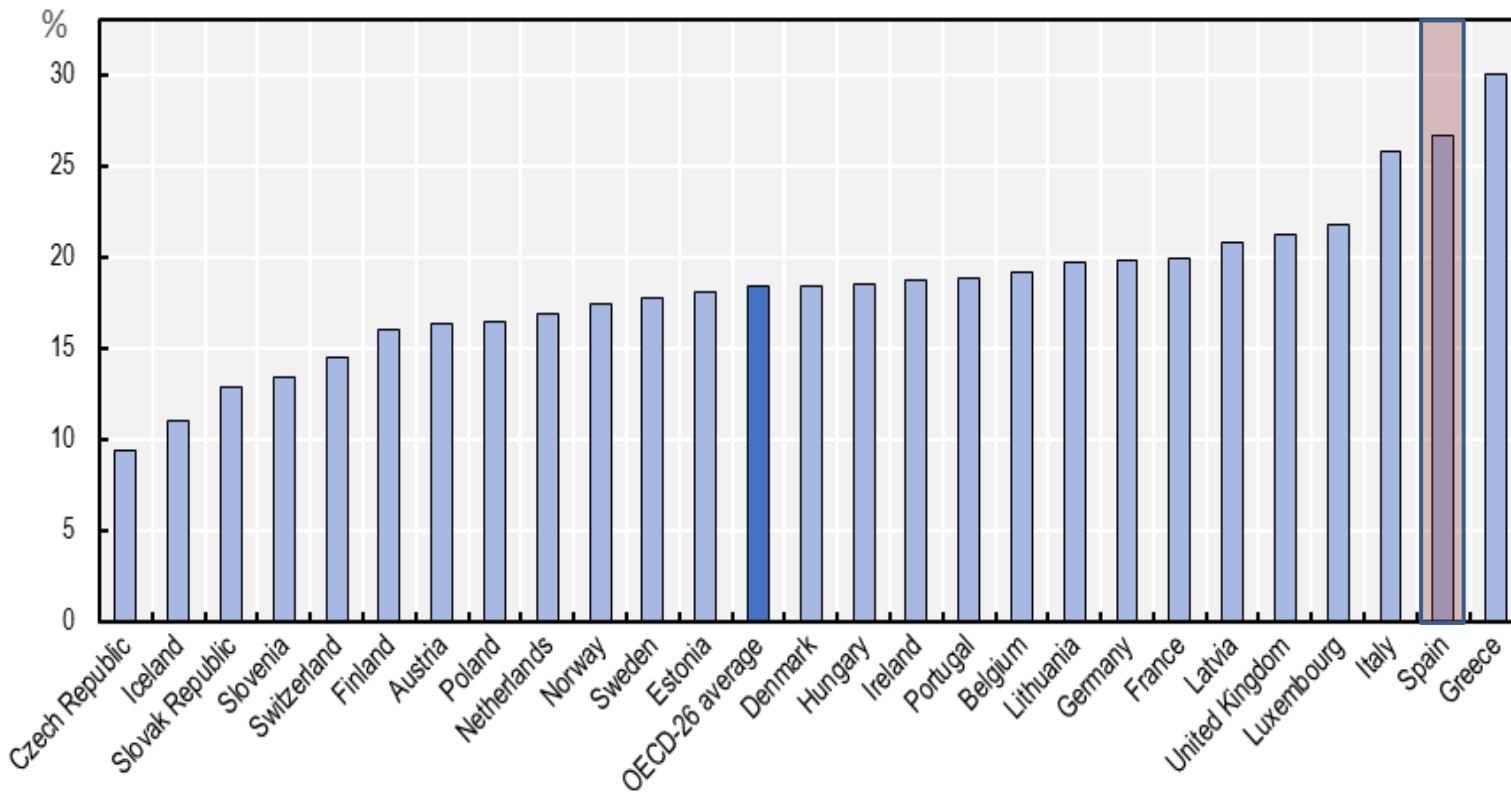
---

- There is no universally accepted definition of *social exclusion*
- Reasonable consensus that it is not limited to monetary poverty
  - Multidimensionality
  - Non-participation
  - Account for dynamics, persistence
  - Multi-level
- Operationalise to make informative in practice
  - Can be implemented with chosen data source (EU-SILC)
  - Informative in the Spanish context (agreed with MISSM)
  - As simple as possible and directly applicable to policy analysis
  - Applicable across years

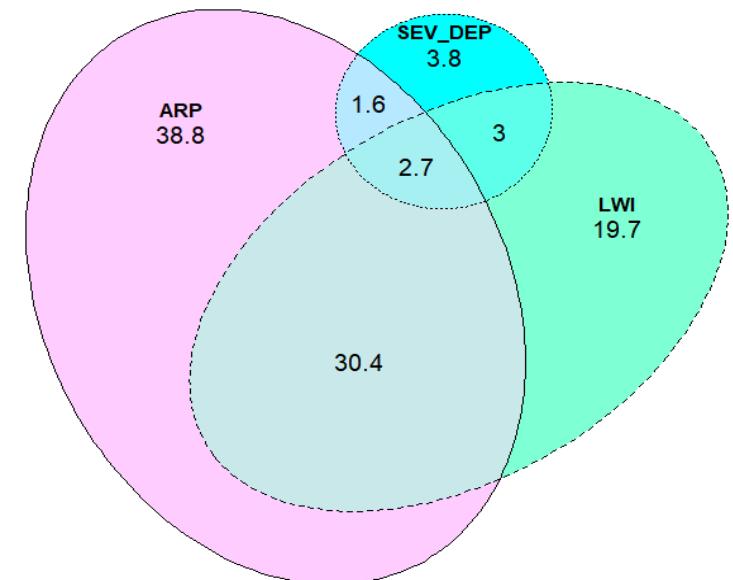


# How to identify socially excluded in practice? The AROPE indicator

Share of AROPE among working-age population in selected OECD countries



Example - Finland, 16%



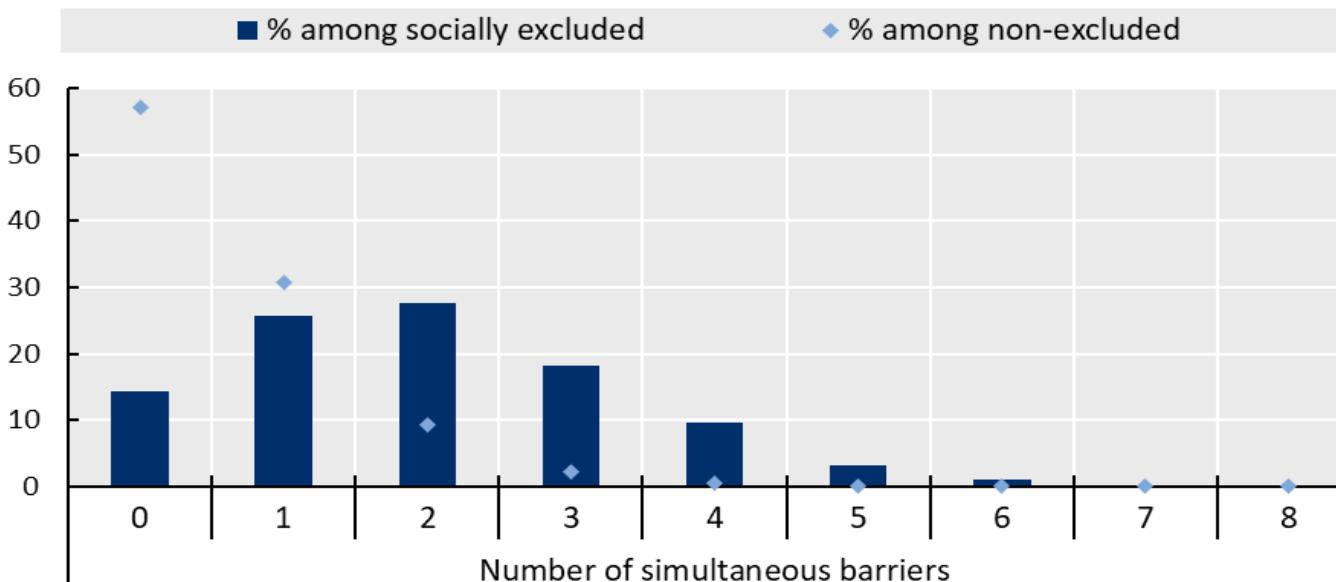
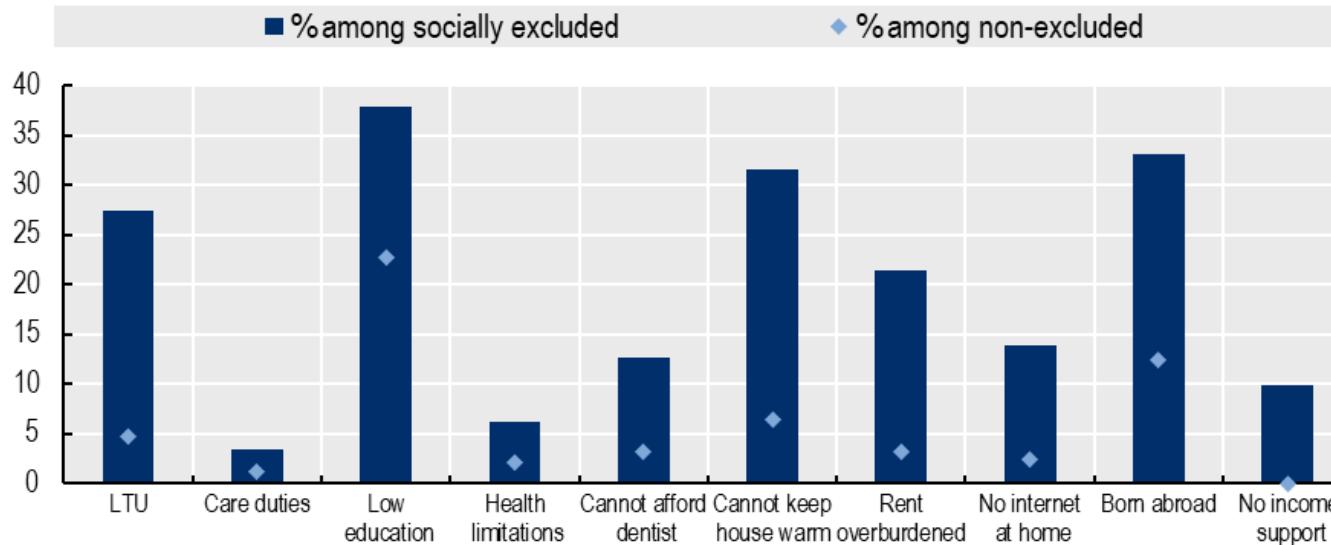


# Example of barriers to social inclusion - mapping

Variable		Relevant policy areas
<b>Long-term unemployed</b>	- ALMPs - Lifelong learning	- Social Integration - Income Support
<b>Care duties</b>	- Childcare services - Income support for caregivers	- Long-term care services
<b>Low education and not in education</b>	- Lifelong Learning - Remedial education	- Policies for NEETs - Prevention of absenteeism
<b>Strong health limitations</b>	- Access to health care - Disability benefits	- Long-term care services
<b>Difficulties affording dental treatment</b>	- Access to health care	- Income support
<b>Can't keep house warm</b>	- Energy-related cash transfers	- Income support
<b>Rent overburdened</b>	- Social housing - Housing benefits	- Family benefits - Accompaniment for persons/households under emergency housing situations
<b>Born Abroad</b>	- Legal and administrative support (to access to social services and benefits)	- Language classes
<b>No internet at home</b>	- Digitalisation policies	- Specific cash transfers
<b>Severe material deprivation or ARP plus no income support</b>	- Income support	- Access to social work



# Barriers to social inclusion - Frequencies



- **Top panel**
  - LTU, low education and lack of monetary resources are the most frequent barriers
- **Bottom panel**
  - About 15% of target population do not face any (of these) barriers.
  - Many face **multiple barriers**

→ **Clustering** to identify sub-groups with similar profiles



# Outline

---

1. Methodology to identify barriers to social inclusion
  - Definition of target population
  - Identification of barriers
  - Characterisation of populations
2. Challenges for social inclusion
  - Overall approach to address social exclusion issues
  - Coordination mechanisms
  - Adequacy of resources
  - Monitoring and evaluation



## Challenge 1 - Lack of a holistic approach to inclusion

---

- As of end-2021, **less than half AACC have a Regional Plan for Social Inclusion**
- In most AACC, the **social services department** is the main – and often the only – actor **in charge of inclusion policies**
- Across AACC, there is a trend towards (further) **integration of employment and social services**
- But **integrated services** approaches, considering social integration as a whole, **are still rare**.



## Challenge 2 - A need for formal coordination mechanisms

---

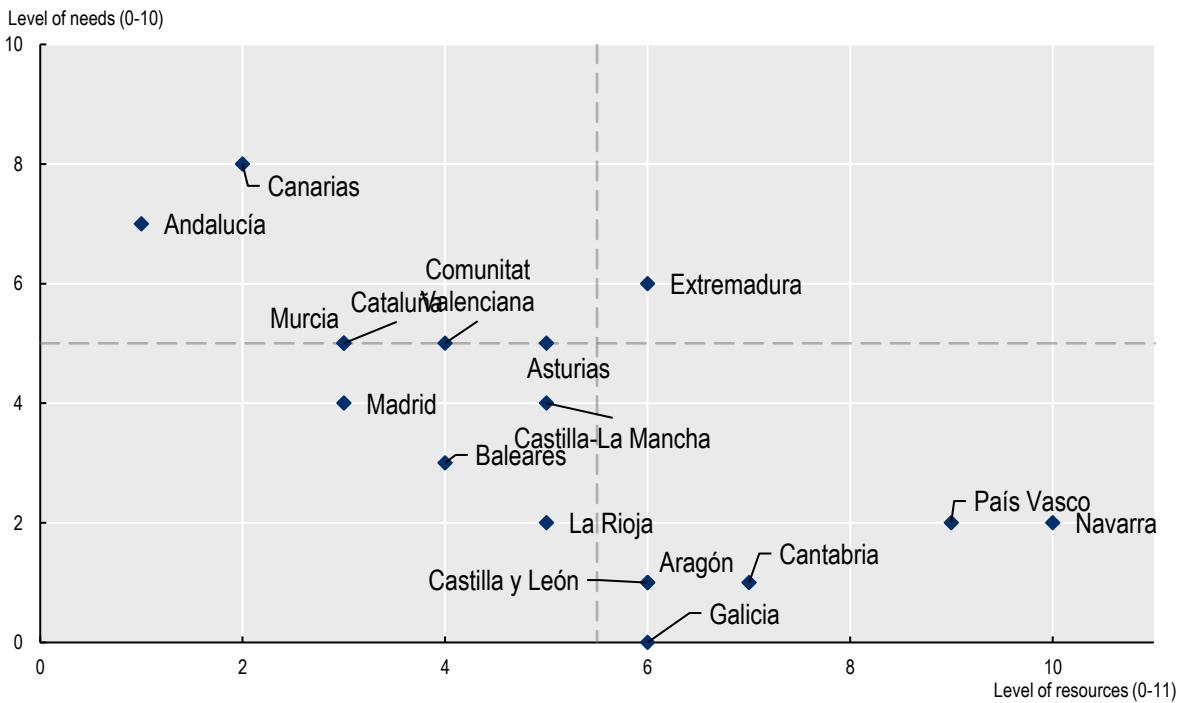
- Horizontally, **interdepartmental bodies and coordination protocols** can enhance within-government communication but not available in all AA.CC.
- Vertically, **need for more bidirectional communication** between local entities and regional governments
- At the local level, there is a strong need for formal coordination mechanisms in a majority of AA.CC., notably **referral protocols and institutionalized working groups**
- **Data-sharing** between various administrative bodies is also beneficial for coordination



## Challenge 3 – The adequacy of resources

- Few AACC show a **level of resources** that appears in line with support needs
- Challenges include **waiting lists** (health, long-term care) and **staff/client ratios** (social services, health), as well as **low investment** (social housing) and **benefit levels** (minimum income schemes)

Ranking of Spain's AACC based on their social inclusion needs and resources





## Challenge 4 - A need for a monitoring and evaluation framework

---

- In most AACC, there is **limited continuity of social inclusion plans across planning cycles**
- Evaluations not being incorporated into new frameworks, interrupting the policy feedback → **long-term evidence-based policy design becomes difficult**
- Lack of systematic **involvement of users/clients**



# THANK YOU

[Rodrigo.FERNANDEZ@oecd.org](mailto:Rodrigo.FERNANDEZ@oecd.org)

Publication available at <http://oe.cd/spain-social-inclusion-2023>

 <https://oecd.org/els>