Social Innovation Initiative

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Ready for work

Impact Assessment Report

Spain

Autoocupació
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DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OF KARDITSA - AN.KA S.A.

EUROPEAN MICROFINANCE NETWORK

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Executive Summary

This report presents the impact assessment of the Ready4Work volunteer mentoring programme delivered by Autoocupació in Barcelona and surrounding municipalities, part of a two-country initiative (Spain and Greece) funded under the European Social Fund+ Social Innovation+ Initiative. The programme supports young persons not in employment, education, or training (NEETs) to define a career path and improve their transition into the labour market through one-to-one volunteer mentoring. This assessment evaluates whether the intervention responded to beneficiaries' needs and was delivered effectively, drawing on both quantitative self-assessment data and qualitative interviews with mentees and mentors.

The evaluation uses a mixed-methods, repeated-measures design. Quantitatively, by July 2026, 108 beneficiaries completed a Pre-programme survey; 35 of these also completed the End-of-programme survey, and 23 completed the full Pre → End → Post (3-month) triad. Annex 1 presents the updated data collected by October 2026. Ten composite psychological scales (covering self-efficacy, resilience, proactive coping, social trust, prosocial behaviour, wellbeing, and related constructs) were tracked across all three timepoints, alongside employment status and income. Every comparison was cross-validated using both a paired t-test and a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, supplemented by Bayes factors, bootstrap confidence intervals, and permutation tests, to ensure conclusions did not depend on the choice of statistical method. Qualitatively, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 7 mentees (selected to include negative, average, and positive mentoring experiences) and 4 mentors, analysed thematically to enrich and contextualise the quantitative findings.

The clearest evidence of impact comes from employment and income outcomes. Among the 23 respondents with a complete three-wave record, at the beginning one in two respondents were employed. At the end and post intervention three out of four respondents were in a form of contract employment. The unemployment rate fell from 52.2% at Pre to 17.4% at End and held at 17.4% three months later; permanent contracts rose correspondingly from 13.0% to 52.2%. A similar pattern held in the larger, matched 35-person Pre→End group, with unemployment falling from roughly 60% to 20%. These gains were sustained rather than temporary, as they persisted through the 3-month follow-up.

By contrast, none of the ten Psychosocial composite scales showed a statistically significant change at any timepoint, and this null result was consistent across every method applied, the paired t-test and Wilcoxon test agreed in all 30 construct-comparisons tested, and Bayes factors for several scales, including Prosocial Actions, provided positive evidence for stability rather than merely an inconclusive result. This pattern is attributable in part to a ceiling effect: respondents entered the programme already scoring highly (7–8.5 out of 10) on most scales, leaving limited room for measurable improvement, and in part to the small sample available for the full three-wave comparison, which gives this assessment adequate power to detect only medium-to-large effects. A representativeness check found the 23 full-triad completers scored consistently at or slightly above the wider 108-person population on all ten scales, most clearly on Proactive Coping and Self-Efficacy, indicating a mild

positive-selection pattern among those who stayed engaged through follow-up, although the relative ranking of scales was preserved between the two groups.

The qualitative findings both reinforce and add nuance to the quantitative picture. Mentees described the mentoring relationship itself, more than any specific technical content, as the active ingredient of change: credibility grounded in the mentor's own lived experience, and a safe, non-hierarchical relationship in which personal struggles could be disclosed. Reported change centred on working on the self rather than the CV, overcoming self-undervaluation, building a sense of agency, and learning to reframe setbacks, with practical job-search skills serving mainly as a vehicle for this inner shift. At the same time, participants were candid that individual gains repeatedly met structural barriers the programme could not remove, including migration and credential-recognition regimes, job precarity, and unaffordable housing, and they described their own change modestly, as reinforced rather than created, and shared across multiple sources of support rather than attributable to mentoring alone. Mentors, interviewed separately, echoed confidence-building as the central mechanism of change while describing the emotional weight of holding mentees' frustration against barriers they could not lift.

A process cost calculation by Autoocupació puts the cost of a six-month mentoring cycle at €518 per participant including an impact assessment, or €420 with an evaluation only, against €903 or €805 for individual coaching and €467 or €435 for group training. Mentoring is cheaper than coaching because the relationship is provided by volunteers, and its main advantage appears when support has to continue for longer: once outreach, onboarding, training and matching are done, six more months of mentoring add about €27 a month, against €103 a month for coaching. Since the findings suggest that participants below the income ceiling and in temporary work need support beyond six months, mentoring is the most affordable format for a differentiated, longer intervention.

Taken together, the evidence indicates that Ready4Work achieved its clearest, most concrete impact on employment and income outcomes, with unemployment more than halved and a substantial, sustained shift towards permanent contracts among programme completers. The absence of measurable change on the Psychosocial scales should not be read as evidence of no effect: it reflects a combination of an already high-scoring baseline population, a small completer sample, and outcomes that may simply be harder to move on a bounded self-report scale than employment status is. The qualitative data corroborates a genuine, relationship-driven shift in mentees' sense of agency and self-worth that the quantitative scales were not well positioned to detect. Because respondents were not randomly assigned and there was no comparison or waitlist group, these gains cannot be causally attributed to the programme with certainty; the findings should be read as strong, convergent, but observational evidence of impact, sufficient to inform programme design and continuation decisions rather than as a definitive causal evaluation.

1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the context, purpose and underlying logic of the impact assessment. It begins by outlining the context in which Ready4Work operates, using national and European labour market statistics to highlight the particular challenges faced by young persons in Spain when transitioning to employment. It then outlines the purpose of the report, situating the assessment within the European Social Fund Plus Social Innovation Plus initiative that funded the programme, and clarifying what the evaluation aims to establish, who delivered the programme, and the nature of the partnership involved. Finally, the chapter presents the programme's theory of change: the logic model that links the project's activities and outputs to its short-term outcomes and longer-term impact. The report is split into three sections, and these sections frame the questions that the rest of the report sets out to answer. The questions are: did volunteer mentoring succeed in supporting young adults in transition into the labour market, and how did it do so?

1.1 Background

This programme serves young persons at risk of employment vulnerability, including persons who are Not in Employment, Education or training (NEET). However, as this report shows, the risk extends beyond the standard NEET definition (a person not in employment, education or training), as it encompasses wider categories. The programme took four criteria into account when defining at risk youth and vulnerable situations. These are situations:

- of unemployment;
- at risk of unemployment;
- of underemployment with less than 30h of work per week;
- of underemployment with view towards a mismatch of qualifications in relation to the job requirements;
- of engagement in informal work;
- of lower income than the minimum wage.

These criteria were considered relevant information to be included in the target group when onboarding participants.

The following information presents the country's status regarding employment and temporary work among young people. The available statistical data is organised by age brackets that include minors, for example 15–18 year olds. Ready 4 Work uses this data to provide background and context for the broader population, since the project itself only works with young people aged 18 and over.

The National Statistics Institute of Spain shows (see table below) that young persons (15–24) in Spain face substantially higher unemployment than their EU27 peers at every level of education, though the size of that gap narrows as education increases. In 2025, unemployment among the least-educated young women

reached 38.6% in Spain, compared with 21.7% across the EU27, a gap of roughly 17 percentage points. Young men in the same education bracket faced an 11-point gap compared to their European counterparts. That gap shrinks at higher education levels: among women with tertiary education Spain's rate of 21.0% sits about 8 points above the EU27's 13.0%, while for men with tertiary education the gap narrows to under 5 points (17.2% vs. 12.5%). Although education helps young persons to access jobs, there is still a high level of unemployment among highly educated population.

Unemployment by age and level of education (%), 15-24 years age group, 2025			
	Prep school, primary and 1st stage of secondary education (level 0-2)	**2nd stage of secondary education (level 3-4)**	**Higher education (level 5-6)**
Women			
UE27_2020	21.7	13.2	13.0
Spain	38.6	23.4	21.0
Men			
UE27_2020	20.9	13.1	12.5
Spain	32.0	21.7	17.2

Table 1: Unemployment by age and level of education; INE data (n.d-a, 2023 figures).

Underemployment and job precarity, either due to seasonal work contracts or part-time employment represent additional risk factors. In Spain, temporary employment consistently contributes to job vulnerability, with persons aged 16 to 24 facing the highest rates of temporary employment.

Temporary employees by age (%)	2024	2023
Total	15.9	17.2
From 16 to 24 years	44.3	48.7
From 25 to 34 years	22.7	24.0

Table 2: Temporary employees by age; INE data (n.d-b, 2023 figures).

Also, compared to other European countries, Spain has the one of the highest proportion of temporary contracts for persons aged 15–29. In 2024, this age bracket represented 32.2% of the temporary employment from the total active population in the country.

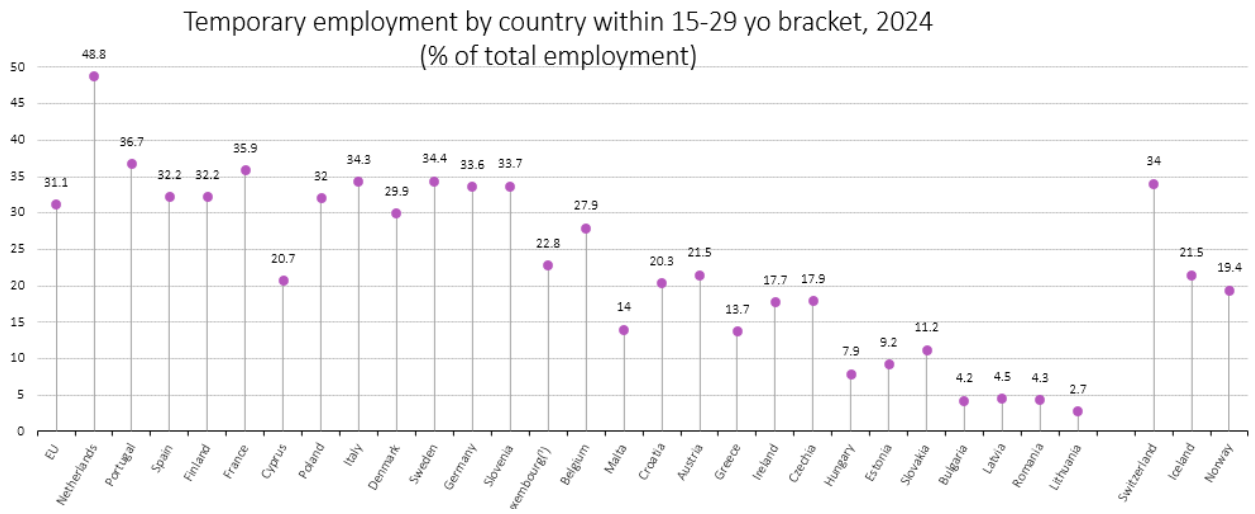


Figure 1: Temporary employment by country for persons between 15-29 yo bracket, 2024; EUROSTAT (n.d, 2024 figures).

Autoocupacio has recognised the pressures faced by young persons as they strive to build a sustainable livelihood and has developed a mentoring programme to complement the traditional training, job integration and business development initiatives available in Barcelona and in the region. The mentoring initiative provides long-term support to diverse populations, ranging from young persons to entrepreneurs and freelancers, to strengthen their capacity to make decisions about their own development. The initiative ensures that all target groups are accompanied by mentors throughout their journey towards achieving their goals.

The holistic approach of the mentoring programme, to addressing mentees' challenges while giving them the freedom to set their own agendas, has been widely successful with these different groups. Building on this success, Ready 4 Work has adopted the same approach. However, the programme required some adaptation, including greater readiness on the part of mentors to address mentees' more specific personal development needs, such as building confidence, agency and self-efficacy.

This approach can more thoroughly address issues created by long-term disengagement from the labour market, unemployment or underemployment, helping young persons to develop the capacity to face and overcome the barriers they encounter when searching for jobs. To address the specific needs of mentees, Autoocupacio, despite having a large pool of highly trained and experienced mentors, allocated time and capacity to attract mentors with the required profiles. Furthermore, once identified, the mentors received specific training in working with young persons in transition.

1.2 Purpose of this impact assessment report

The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) Social Innovation Plus (SI+) initiative, titled 'Social Innovations for Upskilling of Vulnerable Youth, Especially Young Persons not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEETs)'

(ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01), aimed to develop the skills of young persons in vulnerable situations. This included those who were unemployed, underemployed, or at risk of unemployment, by encouraging them to engage in learning again and helping them transition into the labour market. The initiative aimed to boost their employability by addressing skills gaps and equipping them with the necessary skills for the labour market in the context of the green transition. Initiatives financed under the call were required to take an innovative approach in at least one of the following areas concerning young persons: effective outreach to target groups; enabling learners to develop labour-market-relevant skills through appropriate models, environments and arrangements; and skills validation and activation.

This report presents the findings of an impact evaluation carried out to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the interventions offered by Autoocupació in Barcelona and the surrounding cities as part of the Ready4Work programme. The intention was to establish whether the intervention responded to the specific needs of the beneficiaries and was delivered efficiently. The programme aimed to support 90 young people in Barcelona and the surrounding areas, primarily those who are unemployed, underemployed, or at risk of unemployment, in defining their career or employment path through volunteer mentoring, and in improving their transition into the labour market.

The Ready4Work programme, funded by the ESF+ Social Innovation Plus initiative through the European Social Fund Agency, aimed to:

- test and adapt volunteer mentoring support for 180 young people across the two implementation countries (Spain and Greece), with the help of 120 volunteer mentors;
- adapt the volunteer mentoring methodology to the needs of young people transitioning to employment, building organisational capacity to implement it;
- assess the impact of the new volunteer mentoring offer for young people, and disseminate the results.

The programme was coordinated by Autoocupació (Barcelona, Spain) as the lead partner and was implemented in partnership with ANKA (Karditsa, Greece) and the European Microfinance Network AISBL (EMN) in Brussels, Belgium. Autoocupació and ANKA collaborated with associated partners Barcelona Activa and the Thessaly Region Managing Authority to onboard and refer young people to the programme.

The mentoring methodology was based on Autoocupació's mentoring programme and adapted for the Ready4Work target group, meeting the needs of young people transitioning from education or unemployment into a career or job. It is being implemented in Catalonia, Spain, by Autoocupació, supported by Barcelona Activa; and in Thessaly, Greece, by ANKA, supported by the Regional Managing Authority. The EMN provided mentoring and impact assessment expertise and led dissemination and knowledge transfer at the EU level.

This report should be read within the context of the project's impact assessment framework. It aims to provide credible evidence of the success of volunteer mentoring in helping young adults in transition to integrate into the labour market.

1.3 Theory of change

The programme follows the logic model of activities to outputs, short-term outcomes and long-term impact. It is presented below bottom-to-top, in the order change is expected to build: activities at the base, rising through outputs and short-term outcomes, to long-term impact at the top.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES	• Increased solidarity and helpfulness: Fostering a culture of helpfulness and generativity (the intrinsic motivation to share experience with the next generation and young persons in transition to work) • Increased community involvement: through mentoring and other community activities strengthening social cohesion • Mentoring interventions are accepted as complementary service for more traditional employment policies because of their impact and efficiency.
↑	
SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	• Engagement in new forms of learning; broadened skills and knowledge base • Improved partner and mentor capacity in implementing a new methodology • Soft-skills gains: self-esteem, confidence, self-efficacy, proactivity • 70% increased job-seeking motivation and success • Increased cooperation between public and private sectors in serving young persons transitioning from education or unemployment towards the labour market
↑	
OUTPUTS	• Tested mentoring offer & manual; tested impact-assessment framework • 120 mentors, 180 mentees (60 mentors, 90 mentees per country) • ~90 mentoring relationships per country • Impact-assessment report; 3 public dissemination events
↑	
INPUTS/ ACTIVITIES	• Outreach, selection & training of beneficiaries and mentors • Matching; ongoing mentoring-relationship monitoring • Mutual-learning workshops • Impact assessment

2. Intervention

This chapter describes the Ready4Work intervention as it was designed and delivered in Barcelona, establishing the context against which the later findings should be read. It moves from the population the programme set out to reach, through the characteristics of the beneficiaries actually enrolled, to the mentoring methodology itself. The first section situates the target group within the wider evidence on young people in transition, and explains why a mentoring approach was considered suited to a population that conventional employment interventions often serve less well. The second section profiles the 108 beneficiaries engaged by Autoocupació on the basis of their entry data, covering age, gender, education, study status, employment, income, housing, and care responsibilities. The third section sets out the intervention methodology, describing how the mentoring offer was adapted from Autoocupació's existing programme, how mentees and mentors were recruited, matched, and prepared, and how the mentoring relationships were structured and monitored over their minimum six-month course.

2.1 General characteristics of the beneficiaries

The transition from education to employment can present young people with a range of challenges, particularly those who are unemployed or inactive in the labour market. This group tends to require support that goes beyond what is usually provided by conventional interventions. For young adults aged 19 to 29, the risk of unemployment remains persistently high. Parola et al. (2021) highlight the importance of addressing emotional capabilities alongside labour market outcomes, including self-worth, personal skills, attitudes and aspirations. Based on this, they caution against evaluating success in absolute terms by whether or not a person enters employment. Behavioural gains such as proactivity, self-efficacy and resilience represent valuable progress towards the labour market, even if employment does not immediately follow.

Ready4Work set out to support 180 young people aged 19 to 29 as they transition into the labour market, with Autoocupació committing to support 90 of them. The target group is defined broadly to encompass those who are unemployed or underemployed, either because their work does not match their qualifications and skills or because they work fewer than 30 hours per week, as well as those whose situation leaves them at risk of unemployment. This programme pilots mentoring as a means of supporting young people as they re-engage with the labour market. It is intended to complement existing services rather than replace them. The gap it addresses lies in the nature of the most commonly available support: interventions such as training and coaching tend to be comparatively short-term and give learners little influence over the agenda. Mentoring, by contrast, enables participants to design their own learning and development plan focusing on the areas that matter to them. It takes a holistic view, addressing professional and personal needs alike, and focuses on empowerment by building self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, soft skills and social capital.

In practice, Autoocupació engaged 108 beneficiaries in Barcelona, comfortably exceeding its commitment of 90. Engagement was higher than anticipated, reflecting the level of interest in the support on offer. The initial questionnaire captured the overall characteristics of this group, which are described below.

Demographic characteristics of the beneficiaries

Based on the initial data provided by the onboarded beneficiaries, the following table present the main demographic characteristics, relevant to the programme:

Characteristic	Profile
Mean age	25.5 years
Gender	69 female (64%) / 39 male (36%)
Education	69% hold a university or postgraduate qualification (38% Master's, 31% University degree; see full breakdown below)
Currently studying, at the beginning of support	32 respondents (30%)
Housing situation	56% live with family of origin; 24% share a flat with non-family; remainder independent/partner households
Main income source	43% contracted work; 28% family/partner support; 13% social benefits; remainder informal work, savings, scholarships or none

Table 3: Demographic characteristics

Highest level of education completed

Two out of three respondents have a high level of education. This suggests that, from an educational perspective, only one in three participants fits the typical profile of a NEET individual, who is usually considered to have lower educational attainment. However, given the high risk of unemployment and underemployment among young adults of all educational levels, as stressed in the background section of the report, the implementing partner deemed the programme highly relevant to those facing transition.

Education level	N	%
Master's degree	41	38%
University degree	33	31%
Advanced vocational training	16	15%
Upper secondary / high-school diploma (Bachillerato)	6	6%
Intermediate vocational training	4	4%
Foreign university degree (not yet officially recognized)	3	3%
Basic vocational training	2	2%
Compulsory secondary education (ESO)	1	1%
Advanced vocational diploma ("Diplomado")	1	1%
Non-official academy diploma (Graphic Arts, EscolaJoso)	1	1%

Table 4: Education level

In education or training when starting the programme support

Respondents were also asked whether they were studying when they joined the programme. Just under a third (32 out of 108, or 29.6%) were in education or training of some kind, while the remaining 76 (70.4%) were not. Of those not studying, 40 were unemployed.

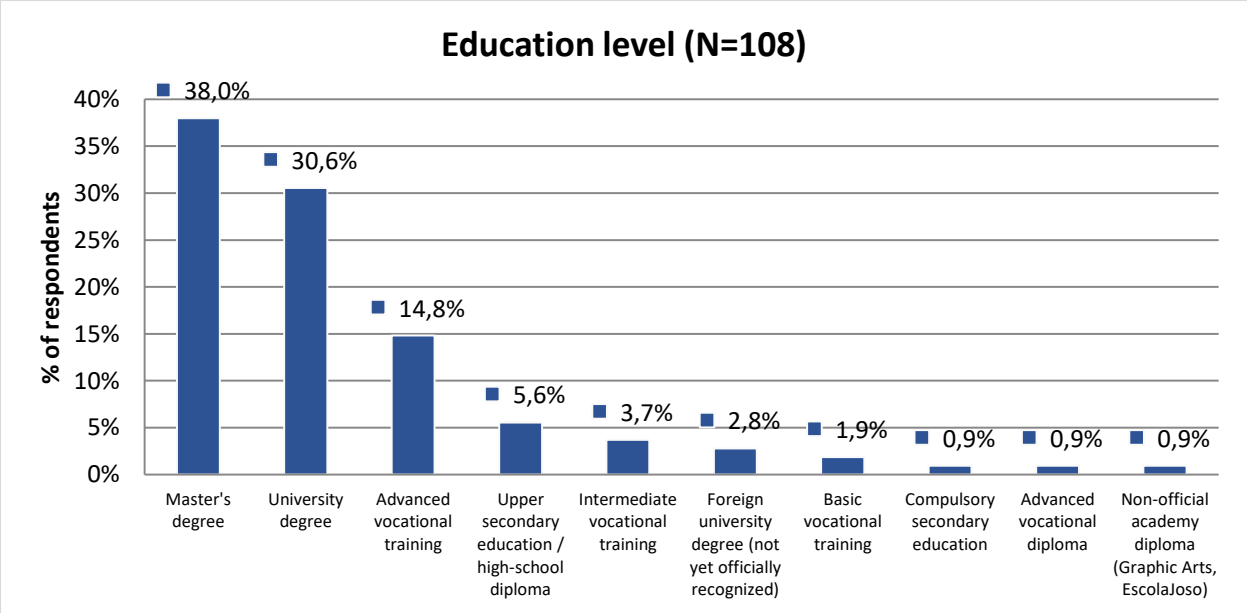


Figure 2: Education level, n=108

Figure 3: Respondents in education, n=108

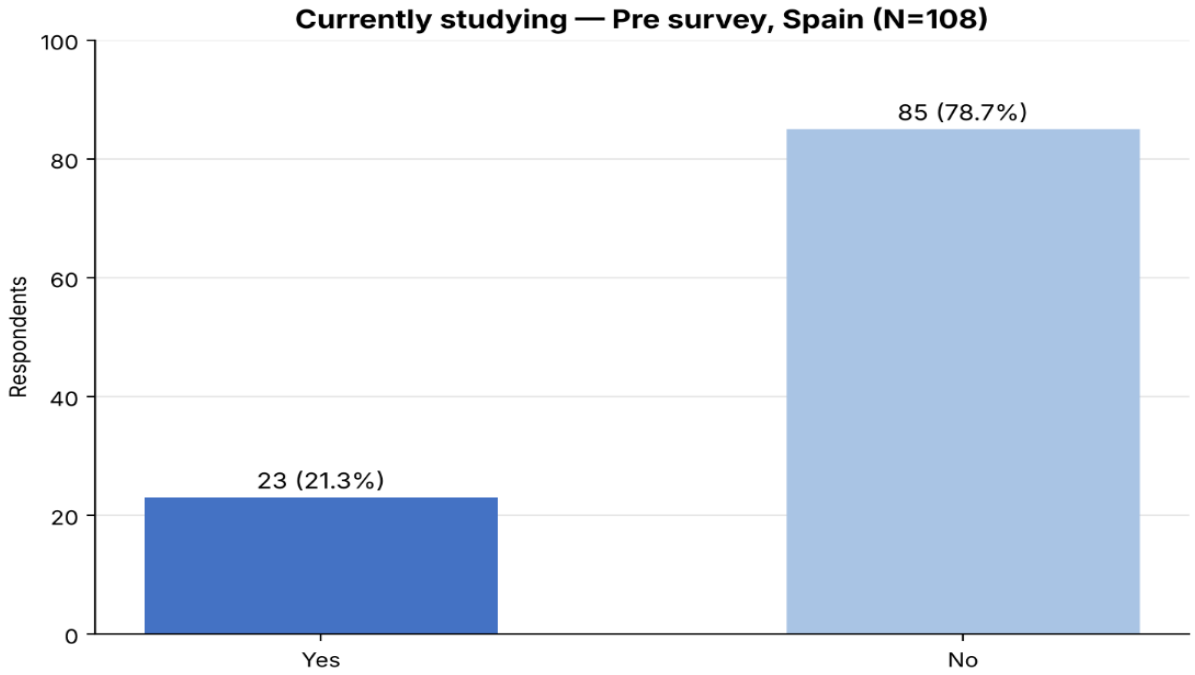


Figure 3: In education

Fewer than a quarter of respondents reported being in education when the support began. While this status might suggest they were not at risk of becoming NEET, a closer look at where they stood in their educational pathway shows otherwise. These respondents were either completing long-term formal education (15 respondents) or enrolled in short-term education programmes (8 respondents), which places them at the point of transition out of education and into potential unemployment. In practice, they were on the verge of becoming NEET rather than protected from it, at risk of unemployment.

Employment status

Of the 108 respondents, 58 stated that they were unemployed when they began to receive support. Informal, temporary and seasonal employment indicates underemployment and low pay, which can lead to vulnerable conditions. Only 18.5% of respondents were in permanent employment, meaning that four out of five respondents were not in a secure employment situation.

Employment status (Pre)	N	% of 108
Unemployed	58	53.7%
Permanent contract	20	18.5%

Employment status (Pre)	N	% of 108
Temporary contract	14	13.0%
Seasonal contract	10	9.3%
Informal work (without contract)	2	1.9%
Self-employed	2	1.9%
In education or training	2	1.8%

Table 5: Employment status

Distribution by nr of worked hours/week	N=49	%
Working < 30 hours/week at Pre	22	44.9%
Working ≥ 30 hours/week at Pre	27	55.1%
Total (all Pre respondents with hours-worked data)	**108**	**100.0%**

Table 6: Distribution by nr of worked hours/week

Among the employed respondents, 44.9% work less than 30 hours per week, indicating a risk of underemployment. Additionally, out of the persons who work less than 30 hours per week 86.4% have tertiary education, indicating employment in temporary or low-skilled jobs, indicating a mismatch between the employment opportunities and the education level of the respondents.

Highest Education Completed	**N=22**	**%**
Master's degree	8	36.4%
University degree	6	27.3%
Advanced vocational training	3	13.6%
Foreign university degree (not yet recognized)	2	9.1%
Tertiary total	**19**	**86.4%**
Upper secondary	1	4.5%
Intermediate vocational training	1	4.5%
Basic vocational training	1	4.5%
Non-tertiary total	**3**	**13.6%**

Table 7: Distribution by education among respondents with less than 30 hours worked per week

This distribution indicated that even among the employed population, the persons involved in the project face risk of underemployment.

Income

Monthly income distribution show that nearly three in ten persons report having almost no independent income. Including the '€200–499' bracket increases the total to 44 respondents (40.7%) who live on less than €500 a month. Just under half of the cohort (50 respondents, or 46.3%) report an income of less than €700 per month. There is a second, smaller concentration in the '€1.100–1.299' bracket (19 respondents, 17.6%) before tapering off towards the top.

Overall, approximately two-thirds of respondents (66.7%, or 72 out of 108) report a monthly income below €1.100, highlighting the financial insecurity of this population as they enter the programme.

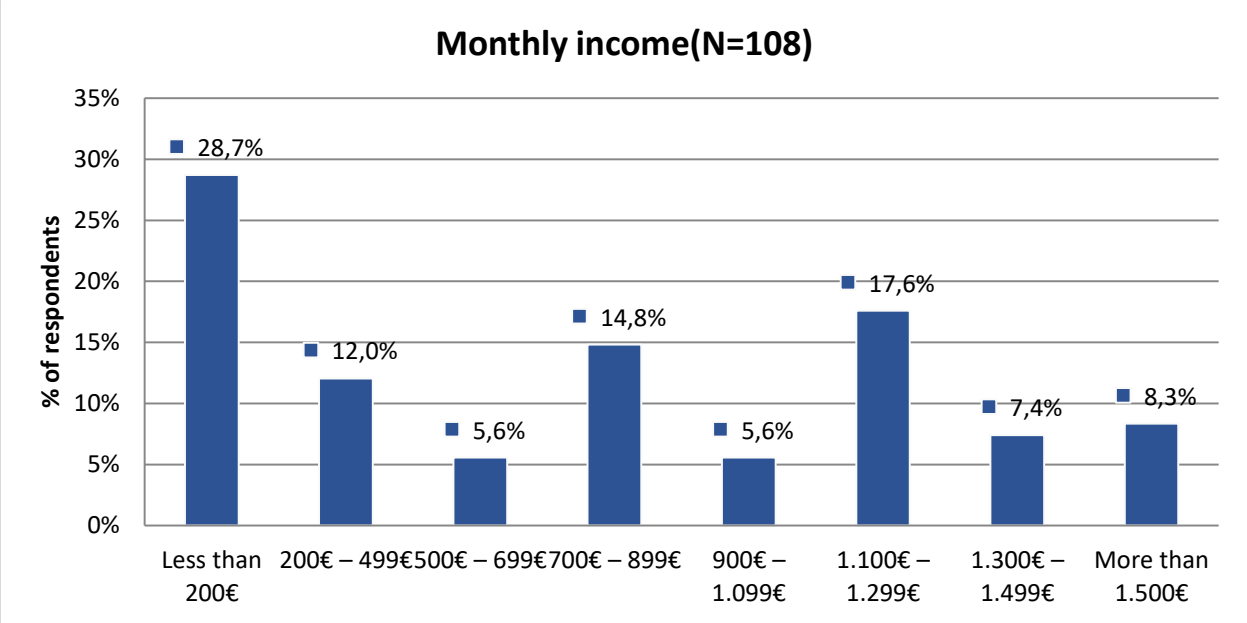


Figure 4: Monthly income, n=108

84,3% (78 participants) are earning at or below the minimum wage. This engenders a precarious situation that places the beneficiaries at risk and in a vulnerable position.

Housing status

More than half of the respondents reported living with family members (parents or grandparents) at the time they entered the programme, and eight out of ten reported shared housing conditions (with family or non-family members). Less than 10% reported living only with a spouse and children, or living alone in an owned property.

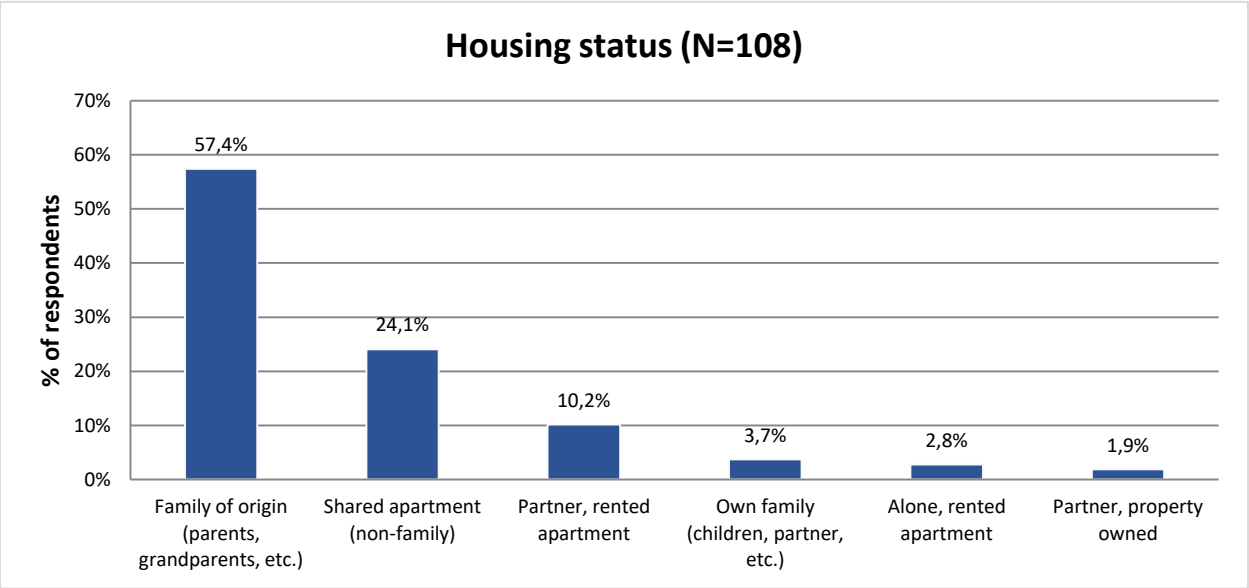


Figure 5: Housing status, n=108

Care duties and financial responsibilities

Care duties and financial responsibilities towards family members pose an additional risk to personal income and the ability to secure full-time employment, thereby reducing the capacity to escape vulnerable situations.

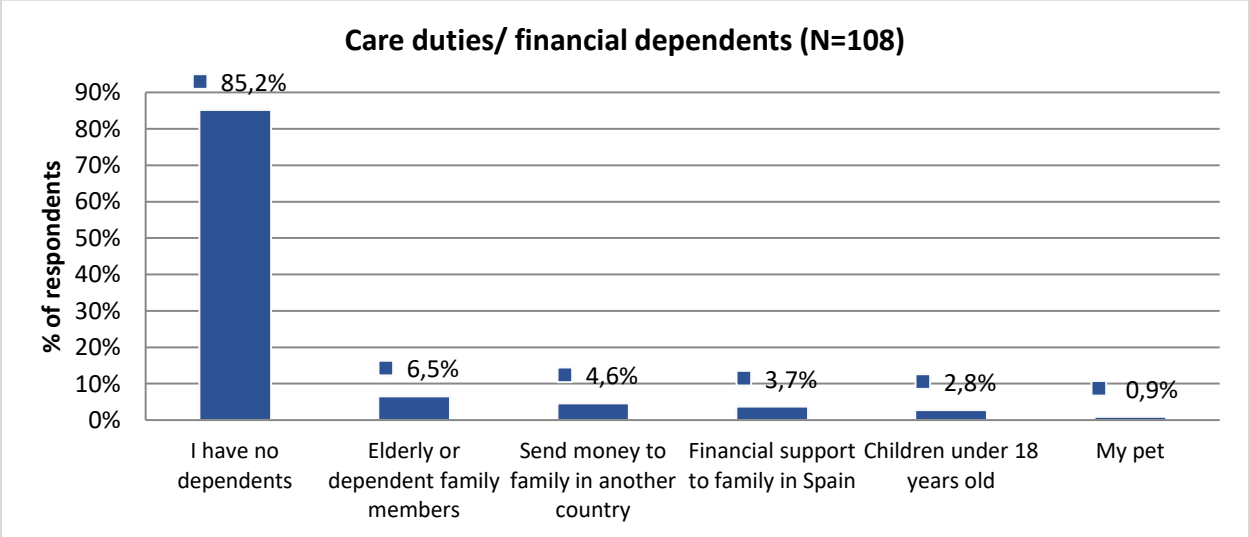


Figure 6: Care duties/financial dependents, n=108

The chart below shows how care duties are distributed. Though they are not highly prevalent among the population served (only 15% report such duties), it is important to acknowledge the additional pressure they represent when young adults enter the labour market.

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2.2 Intervention methodology

The intervention centres on an adapted voluntary mentoring offer, based on the Autoocupació's proven mentoring programme, redesigned to meet the needs of young adults transitioning into the labour market. The offer was co-developed by EMN's mentoring expert together with the mentoring coordinators in Spain and Greece, defining key variables such as the scope and objectives of the programme, the selection criteria for both young beneficiaries and volunteer mentors, and the content, format and ideal group size of the induction training workshops for each.

The adaptation of the mentoring offer was based on 22 interviews with young persons in Barcelona and Karditsa and discussions with the mentoring coordinators of the two implementation organisations. The adaptations addressed the onboarding of the young persons and mentors, the characteristics mentors needed in order to meet the specific needs of the mentees, the format and content of the introductory sessions, contracting, and the monitoring of progress within the mentoring relationships, advanced support and training for mentors and mentees on topics related to specific requests expressed by mentors and mentees and the adaptation of the evaluation of the implementation.

Mentoring relationships were designed to run for a minimum of six months, with the option to extend them where both mentee and mentor saw value in doing so. Individual sessions were planned to last at least one hour, and, depending on the mentee’s interests, could address personal as well as professional objectives. This dual focus was deliberate. Many beneficiaries needed to re-engage with the labour market after a period of disengagement, often the result of frustrating or significant barriers encountered while searching for work. It was therefore decided that personal objectives had to be addressed alongside professional ones, and that the time allocated and the number of meetings should reflect how far each young person stood from the labour market at the outset.

Local partnerships were first established with public and private institutions, such as employment services, training centres, youth associations, companies, and voluntary associations, to enable the referral of both mentees and mentors. In the first implementation year, 30 mentees were enrolled and trained alongside 78 mentors, 51 of whom were new to Autoocupacio's mentoring programme. During the second implementation year, 146 mentees and 36 new mentors were enrolled.

Both mentees and mentors then underwent individual in-depth interviews to assess their profiles, motivation and needs before attending separate induction training workshops to prepare them for their roles. Of these, 30 mentoring relationships were established in the first implementation year, with an additional 78 established until end of June 2026. They then proceeded to work together through structured, non-directive mentoring sessions. Mentoring managers monitored progress throughout this process via monthly questionnaires, mentoring agendas and final evaluation meetings. During the second year, Autoocupacio offered mentors advanced training and ongoing support to help them develop their non-directive leadership skills and overcome challenges arising from their mentoring relationships.

3. Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology behind the impact assessment, detailing the instruments used, the analytical procedures employed, and the factors that influence how the results should be interpreted. As the assessment is based on two distinct strands of evidence — a quantitative strand built on a repeated-measures questionnaire and a qualitative strand based on post-intervention interviews — the chapter describes each strand in turn, explicitly outlining the different logics that govern them. The quantitative strand aims to determine whether and to what extent change occurred and was sustained, while the qualitative strand aims to shed light on how and why change occurred. Neither strand is treated as subordinate to the other, and a recurring theme throughout is how the two strands complement rather than duplicate one another.

The chapter is organised into four parts. The opening section describes the questionnaire and the ten validated Psychosocial scales on which the self-evaluation is based, providing the definition and source instrument for each construct. The section on quantitative data analysis then sets out the analytical approach, particularly the decision to test every comparison with both a paired t-test and a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, enabling the two to be interpreted in conjunction with one another rather than relying on either alone. It also describes the parallel qualitative approach, which follows the reflexive thematic analysis tradition, grounding its rigour in transparency and researcher reflexivity rather than inter-coder agreement. The section on the sample and sample size specifies the respondent groups, explains the basis of the purposive interview selection and reports the representativeness checks run on the matched cohort against the full population. The final section addresses ethics and gatekeeping, covering anonymisation, informed consent and the disclosure of AI use. This is followed by a set of considerations bearing directly on interpretation, most importantly the risks around translation, the limited statistical power of small samples and the ceiling effect arising from high baseline scores.

The available samples are small, and the design deliberately responds to this constraint rather than working around it by pairing two significance tests, checking the matched cohort against the wider population and flagging the conditions under which a flat or non-significant result should not be interpreted as evidence of no effect. Understanding these safeguards enables the results in the following chapter to be interpreted with the appropriate level of confidence.

The questionnaire is described first. Respondents completed it at three points over the course of the intervention: at the outset, at its conclusion, and again three months afterwards. Alongside demographic information, the instrument captured self-ranked Psychosocial scales together with items on employment status, education, intention to return to education, housing situation, and care responsibilities. component down to 35 questions, with the twofold aim of lowering the response burden on participants and thereby strengthening the overall response rate. The resulting self-evaluation is built on validated Likert scales running from 1 to 10, and its 35 items are grouped into 10 composite sections: Self-Efficacy, Resilience, Proactive

Coping, Social Responsibility, Social Trust, Prosocial Actions, Creativity & Problem Solving, Risk-Taking, Quality of Life (Wellbeing), and Quality of Life (Social Inclusion). Each of these is described in turn below, together with the construct it measures and the source instrument from which it was drawn.

3.1 Instruments: questionnaires, adapted validated scales

The quantitative impact assessment is based on data collected via a questionnaire, which respondents completed at three points over the course of the intervention: at the outset, at its conclusion, and again three months afterwards. In addition to demographic information, the instrument captured self-ranked Psychosocial scales, as well as items pertaining to employment status, education, intention to return to education, housing situation, and care responsibilities. The complete questionnaire is reproduced in Annex 2.

The partners collaboratively refined and reduced the Psychosocial component from its initial 68 items to a final total of 35 questions. The objective of this reduction was twofold: firstly, to reduce the response burden on participants and, secondly, to strengthen the overall response rate.

The resulting self-evaluation is constructed on the basis of validated Likert scales ranging from 1 to 10. The 35 items are grouped into 10 composite sections, namely Self-Efficacy, Resilience, Proactive Coping, Social Responsibility, Social Trust, Prosocial Actions, Creativity & Problem Solving, Risk-Taking, Quality of Life (Wellbeing), and Quality of Life (Social Inclusion). The following section will provide a detailed description of each.

In Bandura's (1977) formulation, self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief in their capacity to carry out a given task. Such beliefs have been demonstrated to "determine how much effort persons will expend and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and aversive experience" (Bandura, 1977, p. 194), and across a range of fields, including job search, they have proven a dependable predictor of individual behaviour (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994). The assessment employed a shortened, six-item version of the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), which was developed by Romppel et al. (2013).

Resilience is defined as "a personal capacity that enables one to thrive in the face of adversity" (Connor & Davidson, 2003, p. 77), and it is therefore a considerable asset for individuals dealing with unemployment and the demands of a job search. The CD-RISC 2, a two-item scale developed by Connor-Davidson, was utilised to assess resilience.

Proactive Coping is defined as a psychological disposition that involves the anticipation and preparation for future challenges, as opposed to a reactive approach that is characterised by a response to stress once it has already manifested. This approach is characterised by an existential belief that outcomes are contingent on individual responsibility, as posited by Greenglass et al. (1999). Those who demonstrate high levels of this disposition are characterised by their ability to set goals, gather resources in advance, and take action before

issues have a chance to escalate. The measure applied was the Proactive Coping subscale of the Proactive Coping Inventory (PCI), which was developed by Greenglass, Schwarzer and Taubert (1999).

The concept of social responsibility is predicated on the notion of an inherent obligation to act in a manner that serves society, transcending narrow self-interest in favour of a sense of duty to others and to the wider community. The assessment was conducted using the 8-item scale developed by Berkowitz and Lutterman (1968).

Social trust, otherwise known as generalised trust, is the most significant component of social capital (Putnam, 1993). The concept is comprehensively defined as a general "trust in individuals," which even extends to those with whom one has no personal acquaintance. In this study, the five-item trust scale developed by Yamagishi (1986) was utilised to assess this construct.

Prosocial actions are defined as a consistent tendency towards behaviours that are beneficial to others, manifesting through helping, sharing, cooperating, and empathising (Caprara, Steca, Zelli & Capanna, 2005). The construct is predicated on the premise that, in adulthood, empathic motives are not merely associated with prosocial tendencies but constitute an intrinsic part of them. The measurement of prosocialness was conducted utilising the Prosocialness Scale for Adults, a single-dimension instrument comprising 16 items that was developed by Caprara, Steca, Zelli and Capanna in 2005.

Creativity & Problem Solving captures how capable an individual perceives themselves to be in arriving at workable solutions to everyday difficulties. This is achieved by drawing on a positive orientation, systematic reasoning, and a tendency to avoid impulsive or avoidant reactions when problems arise (D'Zurilla, Nezu & Maydeu-Olivares, 2002). A strong problem-solving capacity has been demonstrated to be associated with enhanced coping mechanisms and improved adjustment in a variety of areas of life, including employment transitions. This section draws on the short-form version of the Social Problem-Solving Inventory-Revised (SPSI-R:SF), developed by D'Zurilla, Nezu and Maydeu-Olivares (2002).

Risk-taking is defined as a person's propensity to engage in behaviours where the outcomes are uncertain or potentially unfavourable (Blais & Weber, 2006). This propensity varies systematically across different domains of life, including career, finance, social life, and recreation. An understanding of these tendencies is directly relevant to career decision-making and to a person's willingness to pursue unfamiliar employment or educational opportunities. The measure comprised a shortened set of items adapted from the Domain-Specific Risk-Taking (DOSPERT) scale of Blais and Weber (2006).

Quality of Life (Wellbeing) is defined as a person's overall cognitive appraisal of their life, taken as a whole, weighed against their own standards rather than against external or domain-specific yardsticks (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). In essence, the concept under scrutiny encompasses the individual's introspective evaluation of the extent to which their actual life aligns with their aspirational life. The

measurement of subjective well-being was conducted using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), a five-item scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985).

Quality of Life (Social Inclusion) concerns the extent to which an individual perceives a sense of belonging, acceptance, and the capacity to engage meaningfully within their social milieu. This concept encompasses aspects such as social interaction, social acceptance, and the quality of interpersonal relationships (Secker, Hacking, Kent, Shenton & Spandler, 2009). The social inclusion of this kind has been demonstrated to be significantly associated with positive mental health and the alleviation of disadvantage or marginalisation. The final dimension was assessed using items adapted from the Social Inclusion Scale (SIS), developed by Secker, Hacking, Kent, Shenton and Spandler (2009).

3.2 Quantitative data analysis

Due to the small population n=23 with repeated-measures responses (Pre-End-Post) and n=35 for two timepoints responses (Pre-End) the recommended tests are paired t-test and Wilcoxon signed-ranked test.

At n=35 (Pre→End) and n=23 (End→Post and Pre→Post), no single statistical test provides a fully reliable picture of programme impact on its own: a parametric test can be misled by non-normal data, while relying on a single non-parametric test provides no check on that risk. To address this, every comparison in this report is analysed with two independent significance tests, a paired t-test and a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and the two results are compared directly. Where the two tests agree, the conclusion rests on much firmer ground than either test could provide alone; where they diverge, that divergence is itself informative and is flagged rather than resolved in favour of either test.

Wilcoxon signed-rank test

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test is a non-parametric test that works on the ranks of the absolute differences rather than the raw values, so it does not assume normality and is more robust to outliers and skew, a realistic concern with small samples of bounded `1-10 self-report scores. It is computed alongside the t-test for every scale and comparison, providing an independent check that does not share the t-test's distributional assumption.

Paired t-test

The paired t-test is a parametric test on the mean of the paired differences (After − Before). It assumes those differences are approximately normally distributed and is the more statistically powerful of the two tests when that assumption holds. It is computed for every one of the 10 composite scales across all three comparisons: Pre→End (n=35), End→Post (n=23) and Pre→Post (n=23).

Reading agreement and disagreement between tests

For each construct × comparison, the t-test and Wilcoxon outcomes are classified as:

- Agree: both significant - both tests find $p < .05$. The strongest evidence of a real change.
- Agree: both non-significant - neither test finds $p < .05$. Consistent evidence of no detectable change at this sample size.
- Disagree (test-dependent) - one test finds $p < .05$ and the other does not. This case warrants particular caution: it usually signals that a result is being driven by distribution shape or a small number of outlier changes, rather than a broad, consistent shift.

The smallest p-value found anywhere in this analysis is .089 (Wilcoxon, SIQoL, End→Post), well above even the uncorrected $\alpha = .05$ threshold, so this correction does not change any substantive conclusion here.

The qualitative strand follows the reflexive thematic analysis tradition (Braun & Clarke, 2019).Under this approach, themes are treated as analytic constructions organised around a central organising concept, a pattern of shared meaning across the dataset, rather than as topic buckets, journey stages, or frequency-ranked categories; prevalence (how many interviewees mention something) is deliberately not treated as a proxy for importance. The analysis is single-coder, so its rigour is grounded in transparency and researcher reflexivity rather than in inter-coder agreement statistics.

The analysis proceeded in stages that are preserved and auditable in the underlying workbook:

- Interview transcripts (translated to English) were coded into consolidated codes grounded in the interview text.
- Codes were organised into an earlier, topical framework (e.g. 'Arriving at a crossroads', 'Routes in', 'Evaluating the programme'), then rebuilt around four mentee organising-concept themes and three mentor organising-concept themes, with a full mapping retained from every code to both its old and new theme/sub-theme.
- One category of material was deliberately carved out of the thematic analysis proper: descriptive entry circumstances and referral routes, reported as context rather than as a theme. Programme-evaluation feedback on design, delivery and reach was initially set aside on the same basis, but was later rebuilt into a fifth theme (NT5, Section 4.3) once a shared organising concept - relationship quality as something programme design produces, not automatic - became apparent across that material.

The analysis is explicitly reflexive about its own limits: the themes are described as the analyst's reading of the material, shaped by their own position and the study's impact-assessment purpose, with other coherent readings acknowledged as possible.

3.3 Sample and sample size

The quantitative analysis presented in the results section comprises 23 analyses covering all respondents across three evaluation timepoints: at the start of the mentoring intervention, at its conclusion, and three months post-intervention. An additional set of analyses is provided for the 35 respondents who completed both the initial assessment and the end-of-intervention timepoint, and the initial 108 respondents who provided responses at the beginning of the intervention. Analysing three timepoints allows the evaluation to assess both whether the mentoring service generated change (a question of effectiveness) and whether any effects were sustained once support had ended (a question of durability).

The qualitative data is based on post-intervention interviews with 7 beneficiaries and 4 mentors. The selection of the mentees was based on the following criteria:

- 2 mentees with a negative mentoring experience,
- 3 mentees with an average mentoring experience,
- 2 mentees with a good mentoring experience.

The four mentors were selected so that they have served at least one of the mentees involved in the interviews as well. The scope of the qualitative data was to substantiate the quantitative data and provide more insightful information on how mentees and mentors evaluate the progress of the young persons through the programme.

Representation

The analysis and discussion sections are based mainly on the progress data provided by the 23-person sample who responded at all three time points: before the mentoring relationship began (pre), at its conclusion (end), and three months after the intervention ended (post). The respondents were not randomly chosen. The responses depended on the availability and willingness of the beneficiaries to respond at each timepoint. To evaluate the representativeness of this sample population to the whole population of 108, the analysis team ran a representativeness evaluation. This evaluation looked at both demographic information and whether the initial Psychosocial self-assessments showed similarities. The aim was to establish whether this sample population could be considered representative.

Demographic representativeness		
Characteristic	**Whole population (n=108)**	**Full triad completers (n=23)**
% Female	63.9%	60.9%
% Male	36.1%	39.1%
Age at Pre-survey, mean (years)	25.07	25.26
University degree or higher, %	71.3%	65.2%
Unemployed at Pre-survey, %	52.8%	47.8%

N	108	23

Table 6: Demographic representativeness

This section checks whether the 23 respondents who completed the full Pre → End → Post 3-month triad differ systematically from the whole 108-respondent Pre population, across the 10 composite scales. For each scale, the whole-population Pre average and the matched-23 Pre average are ranked against each other to detect the difference in self-evaluation.

Category	Pre Avg. (n=108)	Matched-23 Pre Avg.	Δ (23 – 108)
GSE-SE (Self-Efficacy)	7.75	7.89	+0.14
GSE-RE (Resilience)	6.92	7.20	+0.27
Proactive Coping	7.37	7.82	+0.44
Social Responsibility	8.55	8.81	+0.26
Social Trust	6.75	7.04	+0.29
Prosocial Actions	8.36	8.46	+0.09
Creativity & Problem-Solving	7.43	7.62	+0.20
Risk-Taking	7.51	7.61	+0.10
EQoL (Wellbeing)	6.95	7.43	+0.47
SIQoL (Social Inclusion)	6.84	7.07	+0.22

Table 7: Psychosocial scales responses representativeness

On average, the 23 respondents who completed all three surveys scored very close to the full 108-person population across the ten measured areas, with differences ranging from as small as 0.09 points to at most 0.47 points on a 1-to-10 scale, small enough that the two groups can be considered similar overall. The closest match was on Prosocial Actions, where the average difference was just 0.09 points, while Self-Efficacy, Risk-Taking, and Creativity & Problem-Solving all showed differences under 0.3 points as well. The two areas with the largest differences were Wellbeing, where the 23 respondents' average was 0.47 points higher than the 108 population's, and Proactive Coping, where their average was 0.44 points higher, both still modest gaps on a 10-point scale, but large enough to note that the 23 respondents started out somewhat more hopeful and proactive than the wider group before the programme began. The demographic and Psychosocial evidence suggests the 23 respondents are a reasonably representative slice of the 108-person population, though not a perfect one, and their results should be read as broadly indicative of trends rather than as a precise stand-in for the whole group.

In the qualitative analysis the interview participants were not selected at random. Instead, selection was purposive, based on participants' level of experience within the mentoring programme. The explicit aim was to capture a diversity of experience, rather than to achieve a statistically representative cross-section of the population. While this approach is well suited to generating rich, varied qualitative insights, it means that the

interview sample cannot be assumed to be representative of the broader participant population. Therefore, findings from the qualitative strand should not be generalised numerically or treated as proportionally reflective of the whole cohort.

3.4 Ethics and Gatekeeper

Data anonymisation. All data provided by respondents, including survey responses and interview transcripts, was anonymised prior to analysis. Any identifying information was either removed or replaced with non-identifying reference codes. This means that individual respondents cannot be identified from the data used in this report. This protects participant confidentiality and ensures that the findings are reported at an aggregate or thematic level, rather than in a way that could be traced back to any one individual.

Informed consent and disclosure of AI use. The interviewees were informed in advance about the scope and purpose of the interviews, including how their responses would be used for this impact assessment. They were also informed that artificial intelligence tools would be used in the analysis process to translate, organise or code the qualitative material, for example. This level of transparency ensured that participants gave informed consent to being interviewed and to the specific methods that would be used to process the information they provided.

3.5 Considerations

Qualitative interview translation. The interviews that formed the basis of the qualitative findings were conducted in Spanish and were then translated into English, using AI tools, for analysis and reporting purposes. While efforts were made to preserve intent and nuance, translation carries an inherent risk of semantic drift - idiomatic expressions, emotional register and culturally specific meanings can be diluted or altered in the process. Therefore, some of the subtlety in participants' discussions may not be fully captured in the English-language analysis, and this should be borne in mind when interpreting direct quotes or thematic interpretations drawn from the interviews.

Statistical power of the quantitative tests. The quantitative analysis draws on a relatively small population (n = 108, with matched subgroups of n = 35 and n = 23). As noted throughout this report, the applied significance tests (independent-samples t-tests, Wilcoxon signed-rank test) are consequently limited in their statistical power. With sample sizes of this size, these tests are reasonably well suited to detecting large effects, but considerably less so to reliably detecting small effects a real but modest difference between groups may fail to reach conventional significance.

Ceiling effect: One consideration that should be taken into account when reading the Pre→End and End→Post results in this Impact Assessment is the ceiling effect. Beneficiaries entered the programme already reporting high scores on the 1–10 self-assessment Likert scales, leaving comparatively little numerical room for a detectable increase.

The starting point was already high. Across the 108 Pre respondents, the average score across the ten composite scales was 7.44 out of 10 — already comfortably above the scale's midpoint. At the individual scale

level, several constructs started even closer to the ceiling: Social Responsibility began at 8.55, and Prosocial Actions at 8.36. Even the lowest-starting scale, Social Trust, began at 6.75, still above the scale midpoint. With most respondents already clustered near the top of a bounded 1–10 range, there is mathematically limited headroom for a further increase to register, regardless of whether the programme had a genuine effect.

Why this matters for interpretation. A flat or non-significant Pre→End/Post result in this dataset should not be read as "the programme had no effect." Three explanations are plausible and cannot be fully disentangled with this design:

- **Ceiling effect** - respondents started too high on the scale for a true improvement to be numerically visible.
- **Genuine stability** - the programme reinforced/maintained already-strong self-perceptions rather than raising them further, which is itself a meaningful (if less visually dramatic) outcome.
- **Limited statistical power** - the small matched samples (n=35 Pre→End, n=23 full triad) reduce the ability to detect a real but modest effect, as already flagged in the Analysis_Overview power table.

4. Results

This chapter presents the findings of the assessment across its two evidentiary strands. The findings are reported here, with their interpretation reserved for the discussion that follows. The chapter is organised into three parts. The first part sets out the quantitative analysis, covering descriptive employment and income data, intention to return to education and the ten Psychosocial composite scales. The latter are reported both as an overview and on a scale-by-scale basis. The second part presents the qualitative analysis and provides the full coding structure for the mentee and mentor interviews, along with a note on the analysts' position and the status of the themes as a credible interpretation of a small dataset. The third part draws the qualitative material into a narrative account of the findings organised by the themes that emerged from the mentee and mentor interviews, respectively.

Two features of the data are worth bearing in mind from the outset, since they influence how the strands relate to one another. The descriptive employment and income figures provide the most tangible evidence of change in this assessment by tracking movement from programme entry to the three-month post-intervention mark. The Psychosocial scales, by contrast, show little statistically significant change over the same period. This divergence is not resolved in this chapter, which aims to accurately report each strand, but the qualitative findings are most valuable here, as they help to explain a pattern of change that the standardised scales do not capture. The two respondent groups used throughout the report — the matched n=23 cohort who completed all three timepoints, and the wider n=35 group who provided pre- and end-data — recur across the quantitative tables and should be read consistently.

4.1 Quantitative analysis

Employment and income data are analysed descriptively (counts and percentages) by timepoint, for the same two respondent groups used throughout this report. They provide the most tangible, concrete evidence of programme impact in this assessment, as change can be seen from the moment entered in the programme to the end of intervention, and the change remains until the 3-months post intervention mark.

Employment status

Table 8 shows the employment status at the three data collection timepoints (pre, end and post) for the population of n=23 who completed all data collection sets.

The employment across all contract types increased by 26.2% from the start to the end of the support period, and this gain remained stable three months after the intervention concluded. Specifically, the proportion of beneficiaries in employment increased from 47.8% at the outset to 74% by the end of the intervention,

remaining at this level three months later. This indicates that the employment gains achieved through the programme were sustained rather than temporary.

Status **N=23**	Pre	Pre %	End	End %	Δ N (End vs Pre)	Δ pp (End vs Pre)	Post (3m)	Post (3m) %	Δ (Post (3m) vs End)	Δ (Post (3m) vs End)%	Δ (Post (3m) vs Pre	Δ (Post (3m) vs Pre %
Employed	11	47.8%	17	74%	+8	+26.2 %	17	74%	0	0.0%	+6	+26.2 %
Informal work	0	0%	1	4.3%	+1	4.3%	1	4.3%	0	0%	+1	4.3%
In education or training	0	0%	1	4.3%	+1	4.3%	1	4.3%	0	0%	+1	4.3%
Unemployed	12	52.2%	4	17.4%	-8	-34.8%	4	17.4%	0	0.0%	-8	-34.8%
Total	**23**	**100.0%**	**23**	**100.0 %**			**23**	**100.0 %**				

Table 8: Full Pre → End → Post triad (n=23)

Permanent contracts saw the largest increase of all the employment categories, rising by 30.4 percentage points from the Pre to the End timepoints. They continued to grow throughout the follow-up period, increasing by a further 8.7 percentage points from the End to the 3-month Post timepoint. The next largest gains were shared by seasonal contracts, internship/training contracts and informal work, each of which increased by 4.3 percentage points from Pre to End. However, seasonal work did not maintain this increase, declining by 8.7 percentage points between End and the three-month follow-up. Three months after the intervention, 52.2% of respondents were on permanent contracts, 17.4% on temporary contracts, and 4.3% each on seasonal contracts, training/internship contracts, and informal work.

Category	Pre N=23	Pre: %	End: N=23	End: %	Δ End-Pre	Post (3m): N=23	Post (3m): %	Δ Post-Pre
Unemployed	12	52.2%	4	17.4%	-34.8%	4	17.4%	-34.8%
Informal work (without contract)	0	0.0%	1	4.3%	4.3%	1	4.3%	4.3%
In education or training	0	0.0%	1	4.3%	4.3%	1	4.3%	4.3%
Temporary contract	4	17.4%	4	17.4%	0.0%	4	17.4%	0.0%
Seasonal contract	2	8.7%	3	13.0%	4.3%	1	4.3%	-4.3%
Self-employed	2	8.7%	0	0.0%	-8.7%	0	0.0%	-8.7%
Permanent contract	3	13.0%	10	43.5%	30.4%	12	52.2%	39.1%
Total N	**23**	100%	**23**	100%		**23**	100%	

Table 9: Full Pre→End→Post triad (n=23)

Unemployment in the matched group fell by 34.8%, from 52.2% to 17.4%. Among the 35 sample group respondents who provided data at both time points, the drop in unemployment was even higher, falling from 60% to 20%. There was also a significant increase in permanent contracts, rising from 13% to 52.2% for the n=23 population and from 14% to 46% for the n=35 population, indicating a shift towards long-term employment. The project beneficiaries achieved an employment rate of 82.6% at the end of the intervention, and this percentage remained the same at the three-month follow-up.

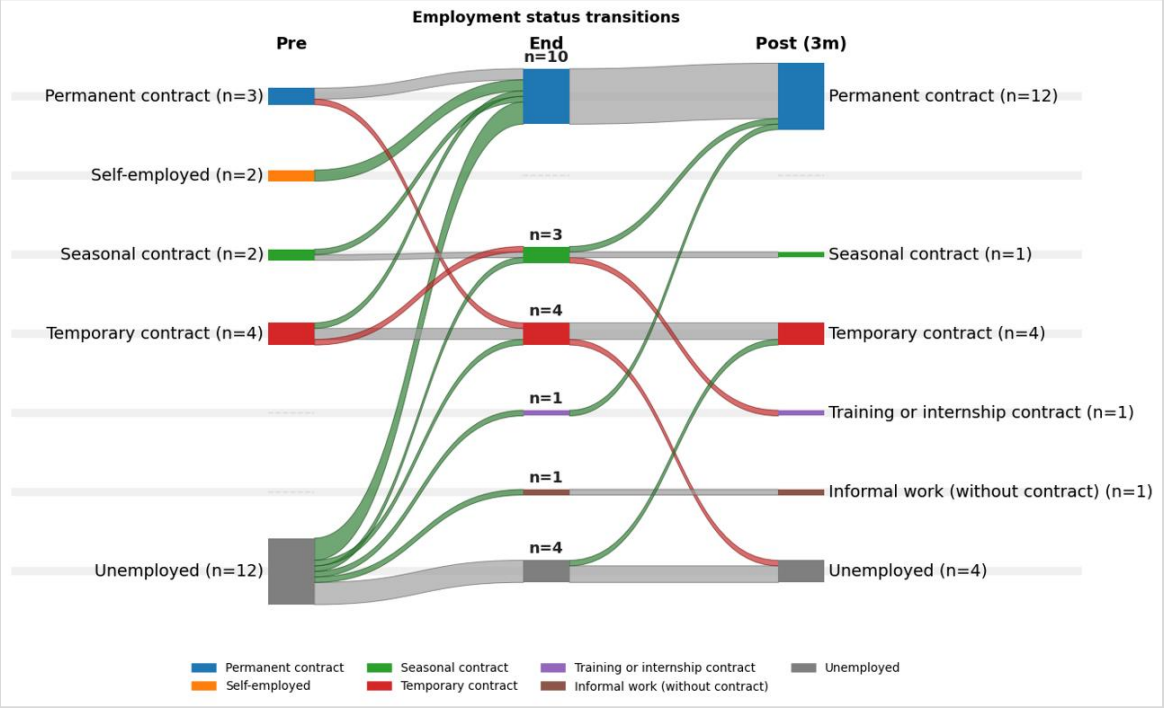


Figure 7: Employment status transitions, n=23 (Pre → End → Post)

Figure 7 illustrates the change in employment status over the three data collection periods. While the data indicates a shift towards permanent employment, it also suggests that young people who are initially unemployed may find it difficult to re-enter the labour market. When they do so, they tend to move into less sustainable forms of employment. Furthermore, when young people re-engage with the labour market, they

often find it difficult to sustain their employment, particularly in seasonal or temporary roles, which can lead to a cycle of temporary work and unemployment.

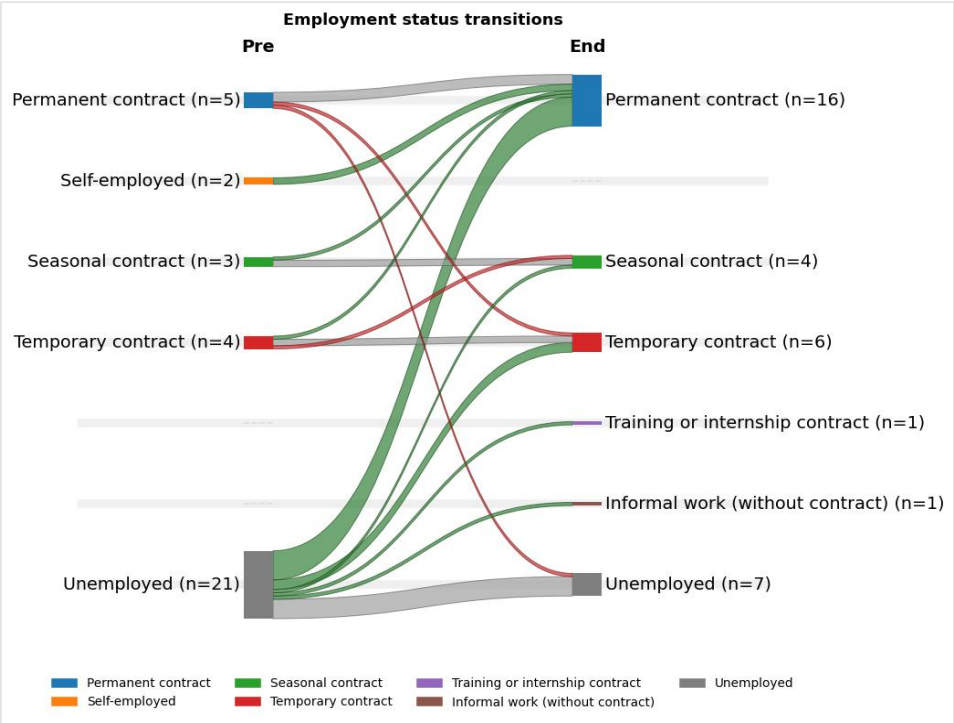


Figure 8: Employment status transitions, n=35 (Pre → End)

Figure 8 shows that, during project implementation, young people tend to seek permanent contracts. However, for the unemployed, the transition involves less sustainable forms of employment, such as temporary or seasonal work, or informal work.

Group	N=11	% of N=11	N=17	% of N=17	N=17	% of N=17
Working < 30 hours/week	7	63.6%	7	41.2%	5	29.4%
Working ≥ 30 hours/week	4	36.4%	10	58.8%	12	70.6%
Total	**11**	**100.0%**	**17**	**100.0%**	**17**	**100.0%**

Table 12: Distribution of persons in employment by the 30 hours/week threshold

Table 12 shows that at the beginning of the intervention, the distribution of persons working less than 30 hours per week in formal employment indicates that almost two thirds of respondents met the underemployment criteria of working fewer than 30 hours per week. However, by the end of the intervention period, this figure had fallen to 41.2%, and to 29.4% three months afterwards.

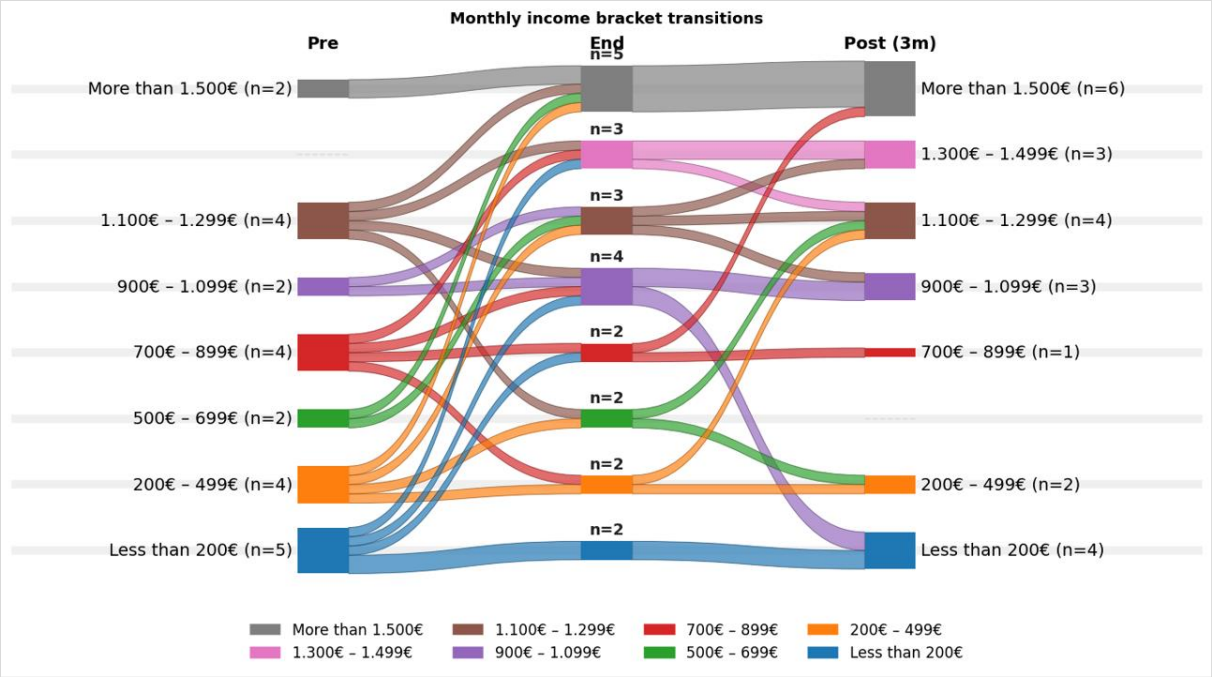
Monthly income

Monthly income is a further category in which change can be observed across the three timepoints: entry into the programme, the end of mentoring support, and three months after the intervention ended.

Category	Pre: N	Pre: %	End: N	End: %	Post: N	Post: %
Less than 200€	5	22%	2	9%	4	17%
200€ – 499€	4	17%	2	9%	2	9%
500€ – 699€	2	9%	2	9%	0	0%
700€ – 899€	4	17%	2	9%	1	4%
900€ – 1.099€	2	9%	4	17%	3	13%
1.100€ – 1.299€	4	17%	3	13%	4	17%
1.300€ – 1.499€	0	0%	3	13%	3	13%
More than 1.500€	2	9%	5	22%	6	26%

Table 10: Full Pre→End→Post triad (n=23)

Figure 9 shows that the distribution of incomes shifted towards the higher brackets over the same period. The proportion of respondents earning less than €200 per month decreased from 29% to 14% (n = 35), while the proportion earning more than €1.500 per month increased from 6% to 17%. Across all three time points, the more-than-€1.500 bracket increased from 9% in the pre-period to 26% in the post-period. However, this



growth was neither linear nor steadily progressive towards higher income brackets, as respondents could also slip back into lower income brackets, both during the implementation of support and after the end of it.

Figure 9: Monthly income transitions, n=23 (Pre → End → Post)

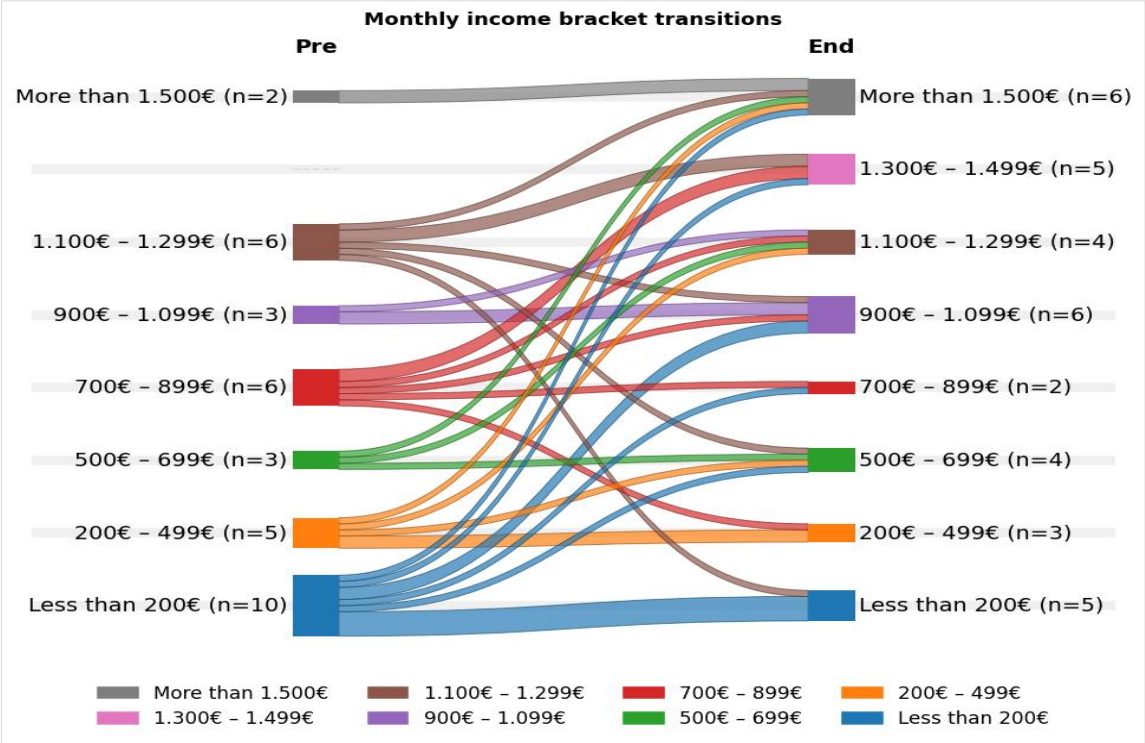


Figure 10: Monthly income transitions, n=35 (Pre → End)

Figure 10 shows that there is high mobility between income brackets, indicating the efforts young people make to access higher income brackets. However, this evolution is not guaranteed or one-directional. These transitions may be fragile, moving both upwards and downwards.

Income Category	Pre (n)	Pre (%)	End (n)	End (%)	Post (n)	Post (%)
Below minimum wage (< €1,180/month)	8	72.7%	4	36.4%	4	36.4%
Minimum wage (bracket containing €1,180/month)	1	9.1%	2	18.2%	1	9.1%
Above minimum wage (> €1,180/month)	2	18.2%	5	45.5%	6	54.5%
Total	**11**	**100.0%**	**11**	**100.0%**	**11**	**100.0%**

Table 13: Persons below the minimum wage

Among the 11 persons in formal employment (table 13), responding to all the three timepoints, 72.7% earned less than minimum wage, meeting one of the criteria for underemployment. The 8 persons in a situation of underemployment at the beginning of the intervention was reduced by 36.4%, from 72,7% down to 36,4%.

Average income increase (band-midpoint estimate, live formula)		
Comparison	Average increase (€)	N (respondents with income data at both timepoints)
Pre → End (matched Pre & End, n≤35)	291.4	35
Pre → Post 3m (full Pre/End/Post triad, n≤23)	313.1	23

Table 11: Average income increase

As presented in table 10, on average the tendency is to increase income, as it rose by €291 between the start of support and the end of the intervention, and this upward trend continued, reaching an average gain of €313 at the three-month post-intervention mark. Although the direction of travel is clearly positive, the pace of change indicates that most respondents remain below meaningful low-income thresholds, and that employment gains have not yet translated into financial security.

Intention to go back to school

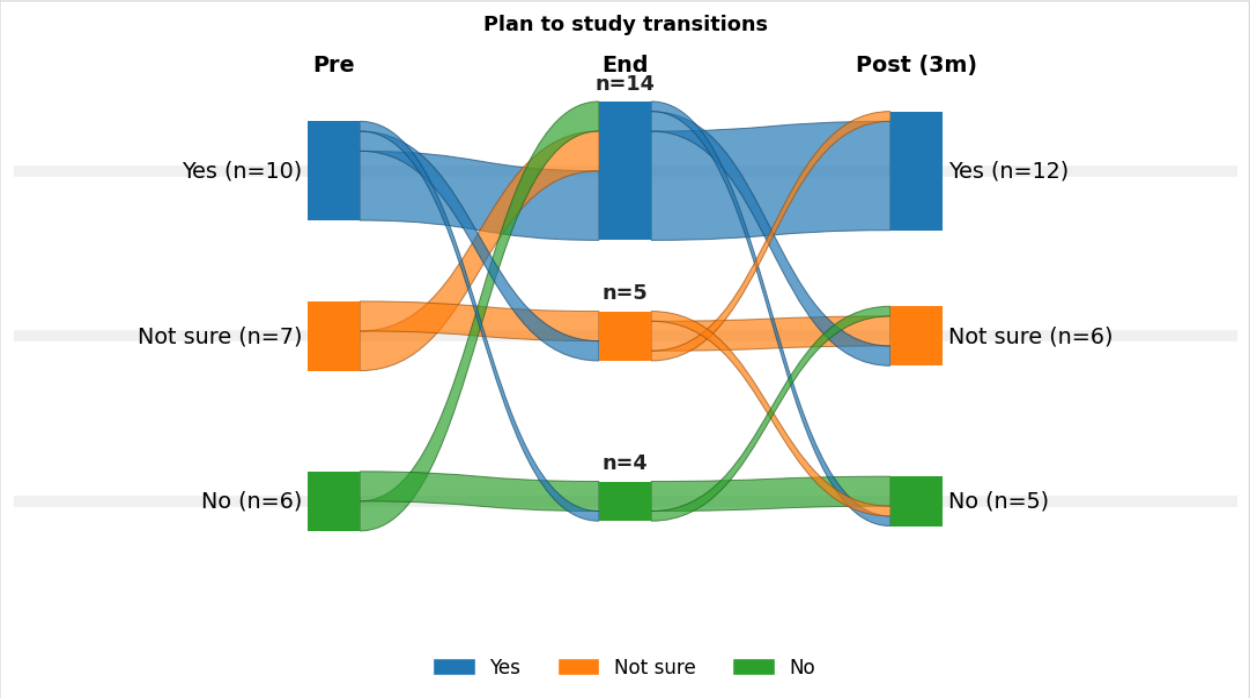


Figure 11: Intention to return to school or education, n=23 (Pre → End → Post)

Among the 23 respondents who completed the full Pre/End/Post journey, intention to return to education shifted positively over the course of the programme, though the gain wasn't fully sustained.

At Pre, only 10 of the 23 (43.5%) said they planned to return to education, while 7 (30.4%) were unsure and 6 (26.1%) said no. By End, those saying "Yes" rose to 14 (60.9%), with the "Not sure" group shrinking to 5 (21.7%)

and "No" falling to 4 (17.4%), suggesting the programme helped move a meaningful share of undecided or reluctant participants toward a clearer intention to study.

By the 3-month Post follow-up, this had eased back slightly to 12 saying "Yes" (52.2%), 6 "Not sure" (26.1%), and 5 "No" (21.7%). Overall, the net movement from Pre to Post is still positive, 2 more respondents committed to returning to education than at the start, but roughly a third of the End-point gain had faded by the 3-month mark, indicating the shift in educational intent, while real, may need continued reinforcement to hold.

Psychosocial composite scales data analysis

These tables combine the Pre/End/Post means and mean change (Δ) for every scale with both significance tests side by side, for each of the three comparisons.

Table 12 presents the 10 composite scales, comparing scores collected at two timepoints (pre and post) for the same group of participants (n = 23). For each scale, the table reports the mean and standard deviation at pre and at post, the difference between the two means (Δ), the p-value from a paired t-test, the p-value from a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and whether the two tests agree on their conclusion.

#	Scale	Pre M (SD)	Post M (SD)	Δ	t-test p	Wilcoxon p	Agreement
1	GSE-SE (Self-Efficacy)	7.89 (0.93)	7.70 (1.28)	−0.20	0.421	0.563	Agree - ns
2	GSE-RE (Resilience)	7.20 (1.06)	7.13 (1.47)	−0.07	0.835	0.931	Agree - ns
3	Proactive Coping	7.82 (1.00)	7.63 (1.34)	−0.19	0.403	0.385	Agree - ns
4	Social Responsibility [1]	8.81 (0.96)	8.59 (1.00)	−0.22	0.307	0.541	Agree - ns
5	Social Trust [1]	7.04 (1.63)	7.33 (1.62)	+0.28	0.450	0.731	Agree - ns
6	Prosocial Actions	8.46 (0.99)	8.33 (1.41)	−0.13	0.516	0.629	Agree - ns
7	Creativity & Problem-Solving [1]	7.62 (1.13)	7.58 (1.23)	−0.04	0.845	0.405	Agree - ns
8	Risk-Taking	7.61 (1.27)	7.54 (1.45)	−0.07	0.817	0.782	Agree - ns
9	EQoL (Wellbeing)	7.43 (1.43)	7.19 (1.97)	−0.23	0.582	0.704	Agree - ns
10	SIQoL (Social Inclusion)	7.07 (1.67)	7.57 (1.93)	+0.50	0.252	0.304	Agree - ns

Table 12: Pre → Post (n=23)

Table 13 presents the 10 composite scales, comparing scores collected at two timepoints (pre and end) for the same group of participants (n = 23). For each scale, the table reports the mean and standard deviation at pre and at post, the difference between the two means (Δ), the p-value from a paired t-test, the p-value from a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and whether the two tests agree on their conclusion.

#	Scale	Pre Mean	End Mean	Δ	t-test p	Wilcoxon p	Agreement
1	GSE-SE (Self-Efficacy) [1]	8.04 (0.93)	8.16 (1.52)	+0.11	0.519	0.286	Agree - ns
2	GSE-RE (Resilience) [1]	7.14 (1.26)	7.39 (1.47)	+0.26	0.253	0.095	Agree - ns
3	Proactive Coping	7.74 (1.12)	7.73 (1.42)	−0.01	0.973	0.797	Agree - ns
4	Social Responsibility [1]	8.80 (0.91)	8.56 (1.10)	−0.24	0.169	0.283	Agree - ns
5	Social Trust [1]	6.97 (1.79)	7.09 (1.83)	+0.11	0.730	0.669	Agree - ns
6	Prosocial Actions	8.40 (1.08)	8.44 (1.15)	+0.04	0.761	0.955	Agree - ns
7	Creativity & Problem-Solving	7.67 (1.16)	7.76 (1.21)	+0.10	0.575	0.465	Agree - ns
8	Risk-Taking	7.78 (1.34)	7.81 (1.52)	+0.03	0.884	0.723	Agree - ns
9	EQoL (Wellbeing) [1]	7.31 (1.45)	7.62 (1.79)	+0.30	0.258	0.100	Agree - ns
10	SIQoL (Social Inclusion)	6.93 (1.73)	7.14 (1.79)	+0.21	0.505	0.728	Agree - ns

Table 13: Pre → End (n=35)

Table 14 presents the 10 composite scales, comparing scores collected at two timepoints (end and post) for the same group of participants (n = 23). For each scale, the table reports the mean and standard deviation at pre and at post, the difference between the two means (Δ), the p-value from a paired t-test, the p-value from a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and whether the two tests agree on their conclusion.

#	Scale	End Mean	Post Mean	Δ	t-test p	Wilcoxon p	Agreement
1	GSE-SE (Self-Efficacy) [1]	7.96 (1.71)	7.70 (1.28)	−0.26	0.406	0.429	Agree - ns
2	GSE-RE (Resilience)	7.17 (1.54)	7.13 (1.47)	−0.04	0.841	0.968	Agree - ns
3	Proactive Coping	7.72 (1.40)	7.63 (1.34)	−0.10	0.552	0.489	Agree - ns
4	Social Responsibility	8.57 (1.08)	8.59 (1.00)	+0.03	0.876	0.831	Agree - ns
5	Social Trust [1]	7.28 (1.62)	7.33 (1.62)	+0.04	0.862	0.430	Agree - ns
6	Prosocial Actions	8.35 (1.19)	8.33 (1.41)	−0.02	0.871	0.903	Agree - ns
7	Creativity & Problem-Solving [1]	7.65 (1.19)	7.58 (1.23)	−0.07	0.771	0.753	Agree - ns
8	Risk-Taking	7.45 (1.49)	7.54 (1.45)	+0.09	0.755	0.737	Agree - ns
9	EQoL (Wellbeing) [1]	7.64 (2.05)	7.19 (1.97)	−0.45	0.294	0.115	Agree - ns
10	SIQoL (Social Inclusion) [1]	7.30 (1.52)	7.57 (1.93)	+0.26	0.202	0.088	Agree - ns

Table 14: End → Post (n=23)

Figure 12 offers the visual representation of the 10 composite scales evolution throughout the three data collection time points, indicating little visible evolution in the self-evaluation ranking.

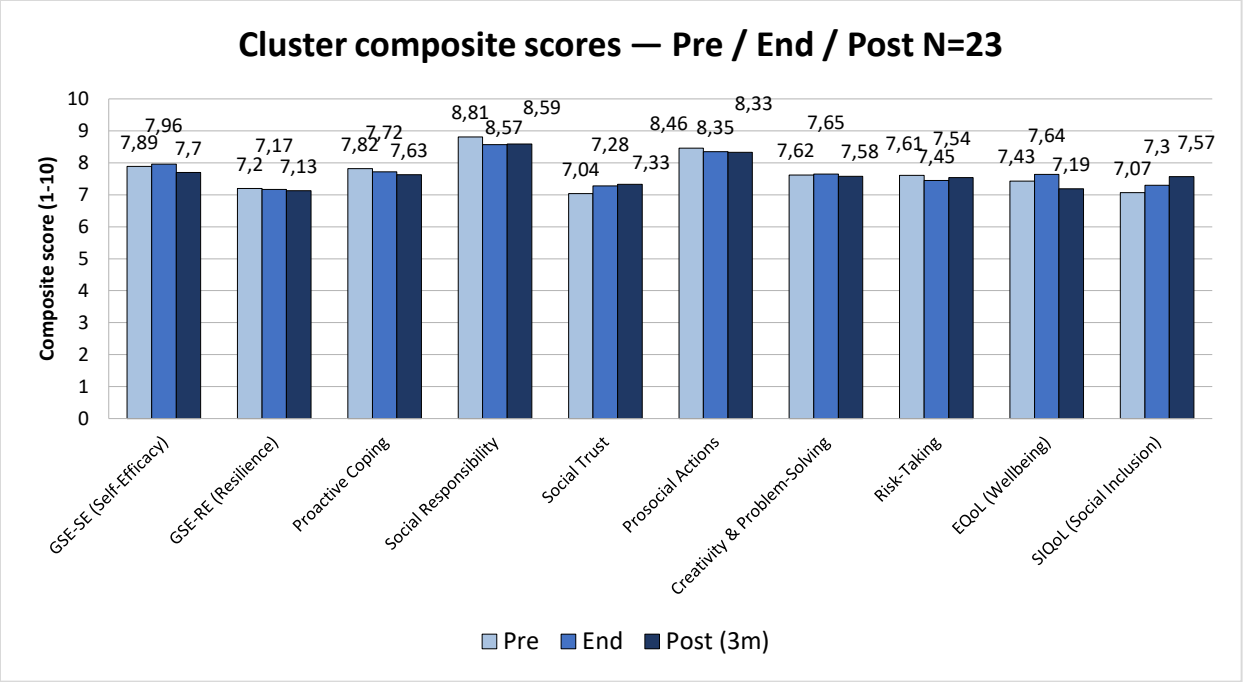


Figure 12: Category composite scores, n=23 (Pre → End → Post)

Figure 13 shows a similar evolution from pre to end, indicating that even for a higher population, the trends remain similar.

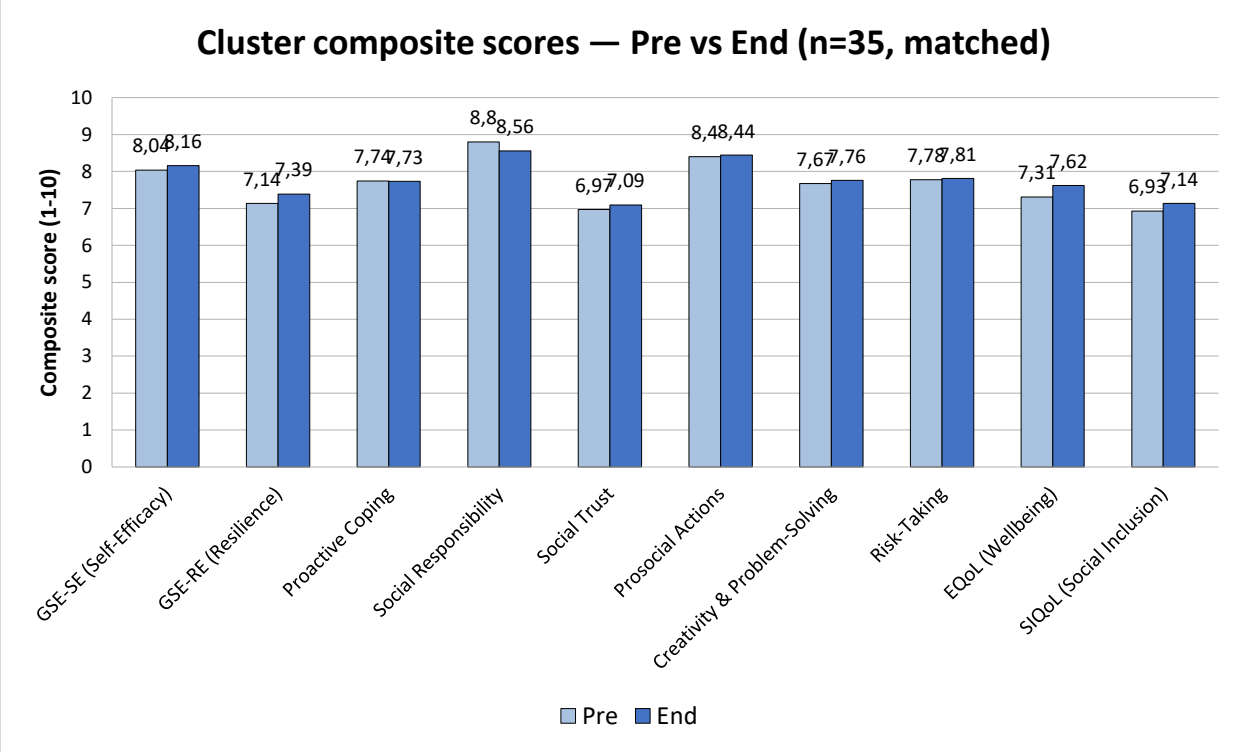


Figure 13: Category composite scores, n=35 (Pre → End)

Scale by scale analysis

Each of the 10 composite scales is presented below with a header band giving pre/end/post means and the t-test/Wilcoxon p-values at each comparison, followed by a narrative that interprets both tests together.

GSE-SE (Self-Efficacy) *Pre 8.04 (0.93) → End 8.16 (1.52) → Post 7.70 (1.28)*	Pre→End: t p=0.519, W p=0.286 End→Post: t p=0.406, W p=0.429 Pre→Post: t p=0.421, W p=0.563

General Self-Efficacy captures respondents' confidence in solving problems, persisting toward goals and handling unforeseen situations through their own effort. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 8.04 to 8.16 (Δ +0.11); t-test p = 0.519, Wilcoxon p = 0.286 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 7.96 → 7.70 (Δ −0.26); t p = 0.406, Wilcoxon p = 0.429. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 7.89 → 7.70 (Δ −0.20); t p = 0.421, Wilcoxon p = 0.563.

All three comparisons agree fully between the t-test and Wilcoxon test, and all land on "non-significant." The scale rises slightly Pre→End (+0.11) but gives that back and more by Post (−0.26 End→Post, netting −0.20 Pre→Post). Self-efficacy is considered to be the outcomes of mentoring (see Theory of Change of the mentoring programme under investigation). Therefore one interpretation of the absence of a sustained positive signal here, unlike SIQoL, suggests this construct may be genuinely stable across the programme window for this cohort, or that three months is long enough for an initial gain to fade without reinforcement.

GSE-RE (Resilience) *Pre 7.14 (1.26) → End 7.39 (1.47) → Post 7.13 (1.47)*	Pre→End: t p=0.253, W p=0.095 End→Post: t p=0.841, W p=0.968 Pre→Post: t p=0.835, W p=0.931

Resilience captures adaptability to change and persistence in pursuing goals despite setbacks. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 7.14 to 7.39 (Δ +0.26); t-test p = 0.253, Wilcoxon p = 0.095 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 7.17 → 7.13 (Δ −0.04); t p = 0.841, Wilcoxon p = 0.968. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 7.20 → 7.13 (Δ −0.07); t p = 0.835, Wilcoxon p = 0.931.

Resilience shows the second-smallest p-value in the entire assessment at Pre→End (Wilcoxon p = .095, alongside a t-test p = .253), on a positive movement of +0.26, the largest Pre→End gain among the first four scales. That gain does not carry forward, however: End→Post is essentially flat (−0.04) and the net Pre→Post change is a small −0.07. Both tests agree at every stage that the change is not statistically significant.

Proactive Coping *Pre 7.74 (1.12) → End 7.73 (1.42) → Post 7.63 (1.34)*	Pre→End: t p=0.973, W p=0.797 End→Post: t p=0.552, W p=0.489 Pre→Post: t p=0.403, W p=0.385

Proactive Coping captures anticipatory, initiative-taking responses to challenges, identifying what is needed to succeed and taking the first step before a problem escalates. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 7.74 to 7.73 (Δ −0.01); t-test p = 0.973, Wilcoxon p = 0.797 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 7.72 → 7.63 (Δ −0.10); t p = 0.552, Wilcoxon p = 0.489. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 7.82 → 7.63 (Δ −0.19); t p = 0.403, Wilcoxon p = 0.385.

Proactive Coping drifts gently downward across all three comparisons (−0.01 Pre→End, −0.10 End→Post, −0.19 cumulative Pre→Post), though neither test approaches significance at any stage (all p > .38). Combined with a high baseline mean (7.74–7.82/10), this is consistent with a stable, trait-like disposition that a short mentoring programme would not be expected to shift substantially in either direction.

Social Responsibility *Pre 8.80 (0.91) → End 8.56 (1.10) → Post 8.59 (1.00)*	Pre→End: t p=0.169, W p=0.283 End→Post: t p=0.876, W p=0.831 Pre→Post: t p=0.307, W p=0.541

Social Responsibility captures a sense of obligation to follow through on commitments and to contribute one's fair share within a group. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 8.80 to 8.56 (Δ −0.24); t-test p = 0.169, Wilcoxon p = 0.283 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 8.57 → 8.59 (Δ +0.03); t p = 0.876, Wilcoxon p = 0.831. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 8.81 → 8.59 (Δ −0.22); t p = 0.307, Wilcoxon p = 0.541.

Social Responsibility declines in two of the three comparisons (Δ = −0.24 Pre→End, +0.03 End→Post, −0.22 Pre→Post) from the highest baseline of any scale (8.80–8.81/10). Both tests agree it is not statistically significant at any stage, though the Pre→End t-test p (.169) is among the smaller values in the assessment. The most plausible reading is a ceiling effect: respondents who started near the top of the scale had limited room to score higher, and a small amount of regression toward the mean is the most likely explanation for the pattern.

Social Trust	Pre→End: t p=0.730, W p=0.669

Pre 6.97 (1.79) → End 7.09 (1.83) → Post 7.33 (1.62)	End→Post: t p=0.862, W p=0.430 Pre→Post: t p=0.450, W p=0.731

Social Trust captures the belief that other persons are generally willing to help, and that support can be found when needed. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 6.97 to 7.09 (Δ +0.11); t-test p = 0.730, Wilcoxon p = 0.669 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 7.28 → 7.33 (Δ +0.04); t p = 0.862, Wilcoxon p = 0.430. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 7.04 → 7.33 (Δ +0.28); t p = 0.450, Wilcoxon p = 0.731.

Social Trust is the most consistently positive of the stable-baseline scales: it rises at every single stage (+0.11 Pre→End, +0.04 End→Post, netting +0.28 Pre→Post, the third-largest Pre→Post gain in the assessment). Neither test reaches significance at any comparison, but the direction is uniform and never reverses, distinguishing it from EQoL and GSE-SE.

Prosocial Actions *Pre 8.40 (1.08) → End 8.44 (1.15) → Post 8.33 (1.41)*	Pre→End: t p=0.761, W p=0.955 End→Post: t p=0.871, W p=0.903 Pre→Post: t p=0.516, W p=0.629

Prosocial Actions captures active, other-directed behaviour: volunteering, sharing knowledge and opportunities, and helping others in difficulty. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 8.40 to 8.44 (Δ +0.04); t-test p = 0.761, Wilcoxon p = 0.955 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 8.35 → 8.33 (Δ −0.02); t p = 0.871, Wilcoxon p = 0.903. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 8.46 → 8.33 (Δ −0.13); t p = 0.516, Wilcoxon p = 0.629.

Prosocial Actions shows almost no net movement Pre→End (+0.04) followed by a small cumulative decline through Post (−0.02 End→Post, −0.13 net Pre→Post). With a high baseline (8.35–8.46/10) and no comparison approaching significance, this is best interpreted as a stable, already-strong entry characteristic of this cohort rather than a programme-responsive outcome.

Creativity & Problem-Solving *Pre 7.67 (1.16) → End 7.76 (1.21) → Post 7.58 (1.23)*	Pre→End: t p=0.575, W p=0.465 End→Post: t p=0.771, W p=0.753 Pre→Post: t p=0.845, W p=0.405

Creativity & Problem-Solving captures self-confidence in generating novel solutions and enjoying the process of tackling a challenge. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 7.67 to 7.76 (Δ +0.10); t-test p = 0.575, Wilcoxon p =

0.465 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 7.65 → 7.58 (Δ −0.07); t p = 0.771, Wilcoxon p = 0.753. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 7.62 → 7.58 (Δ −0.04); t p = 0.845, Wilcoxon p = 0.405.

Creativity & Problem-Solving moves in a small positive direction Pre→End (+0.10) before drifting back down through Post (−0.07 End→Post, −0.04 net Pre→Post). Both tests agree on non-significance throughout, and the small magnitude of movement in either direction (all Δ ≤ 0.10) suggests a largely stable construct over this period.

Risk-Taking *Pre 7.78 (1.34) → End 7.81 (1.52) → Post 7.54 (1.45)*	Pre→End: t p=0.884, W p=0.723 End→Post: t p=0.755, W p=0.737 Pre→Post: t p=0.817, W p=0.782

Risk-Taking captures a self-reported propensity to seize opportunities and take on uncertainty, a comparatively stable dispositional trait. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 7.78 to 7.81 (Δ +0.03); t-test p = 0.884, Wilcoxon p = 0.723 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 7.45 → 7.54 (Δ +0.09); t p = 0.755, Wilcoxon p = 0.737. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 7.61 → 7.54 (Δ −0.07); t p = 0.817, Wilcoxon p = 0.782.

Risk-Taking shows the smallest movement of any scale in this assessment (Δ between −0.07 and +0.09 across all three comparisons), consistent with its status as a comparatively stable dispositional trait that would not be expected to shift substantially over a short mentoring programme. Both tests agree on non-significance at every stage.

EQoL (Wellbeing) *Pre 7.31 (1.45) → End 7.62 (1.79) → Post 7.19 (1.97)*	Pre→End: t p=0.258, W p=0.100 End→Post: t p=0.294, W p=0.115 Pre→Post: t p=0.582, W p=0.704

EQoL (Emotional Quality of Life) captures happiness with life overall, satisfaction with one's current path, and optimism about the future. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 7.31 to 7.62 (Δ +0.30); t-test p = 0.258, Wilcoxon p = 0.100 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 7.64 → 7.19 (Δ −0.45); t p = 0.294, Wilcoxon p = 0.115. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 7.43 → 7.19 (Δ −0.23); t p = 0.582, Wilcoxon p = 0.704.

EQoL shows the most volatile pattern of any scale in this assessment: a Pre→End gain of +0.30 is followed by the single largest decline anywhere in the results tables (−0.45 End→Post), netting an overall Pre→Post decline of −0.23, the only scale, alongside Social Responsibility, to end below its Pre baseline. The Wilcoxon p-values

are among the smallest observed at both Pre→End (.100) and End→Post (.115), reflecting that this movement, while not significant, is more consistent across respondents than the near-zero-p-value scales. This "rise then fall" pattern may reflect a genuine post-programme adjustment period, with an initial boost around programme completion that is not sustained three months later, though the sample size cannot confirm this interpretation.

SIQoL (Social Inclusion) *Pre 6.93 (1.73) → End 7.14 (1.79) → Post 7.57 (1.93)*	Pre→End: t p=0.505, W p=0.728 End→Post: t p=0.202, W p=0.088 Pre→Post: t p=0.252, W p=0.304

SIQoL (Social Inclusion Quality of Life) captures the sense of being valued by close others and expecting positive change in the near future. Pre→End (n=35): mean moved from 6.93 to 7.14 (Δ +0.21); t-test p = 0.505, Wilcoxon p = 0.728 (agree: both non-significant). End→Post (n=23): 7.30 → 7.57 (Δ +0.26); t p = 0.202, Wilcoxon p = 0.088. Across the full Pre→Post window (n=23): 7.07 → 7.57 (Δ +0.50); t p = 0.252, Wilcoxon p = 0.304.

SIQoL stands apart from every other scale in this assessment: it is the only construct whose mean rises at every single comparison (Pre→End +0.21, End→Post +0.26, cumulative Pre→Post +0.50 - the largest Pre→Post gain of any scale in the entire assessment). The End→Post Wilcoxon p-value (.089) is the single smallest p-value anywhere in this report, closely followed by GSE-RE's Pre→End Wilcoxon p (.095). Both tests agree that none of these results is statistically significant, but the combination of a positive, growing trend that never reverses and the smallest p-values observed makes SIQoL the single strongest candidate for a genuine, sustained programme effect in this assessment - and the construct most theoretically coherent with the concrete employment and income gains documented in Section 4.

4.2 Qualitative data analysis

The tables below give the full coding structure for the mentee and mentor interviews separately, listing every individual code (not just counts) under its theme and sub-theme, incorporating the additions from Section 2.1: mentee data yields 4 themes, 11 sub-themes and 73 codes; the mentor sample yields 3 themes, 12 code families (functioning as sub-themes, since the mentor map has no separate sub-theme layer) and 21 codes.

Mentee theme map

Theme	Sub-theme	Code
T1 - A partner through the journey	T1a Because they've been there too	3b.1 Mentor's lived experience as the credible core
		3b.2 Shared experience builds connection and normalises struggle
		3b.3 Relevant experience valued over exact-field match
		3d.1 Tailored, sector-specific support vs generic services
	T1b Safe enough to bring the whole self	3a.1 Comfortable, trusting rapport
		3a.2 Trust built over time
		3a.3 Safe space for personal disclosure and support
		3a.4 Working through friction strengthened the bond
		3c.1 High availability and responsiveness
		3c.2 Generous opening of networks / lasting contact
		3c.3 Genuine, non-hierarchical, guiding stance

Theme	Sub-theme	Code
	T1c When the match doesn't quite fit	3d.2 Personalisation depends on adviser fit and own effort
		7d.1 Mentor's path not fully transferable
		7d.2 Generational / field-change gap
	T1d Meeting mentees at the start of the journey (provisional)	3e.1 Support experienced as meeting the mentee at an early, unresolved point
		1a.2 At a career-transition threshold (cross-ref.)
T2 - Working on the self, not the CV	T2a Being argued out of undervaluing myself	1c.1 Low self-esteem / damaged confidence carried in
		1c.3 Needing time for emotional recovery first
		5a.1 Growth in confidence and self-worth
		5a.2 Mentor challenging self-undervaluation
	T2b Acting on one's own behalf	2c.2 Motivated by needing to learn how to 'get in'
		4a.1 Producing work/profile to employer standards
		4a.2 Portfolio, CV and interview readiness
		4a.3 Self-presentation and storytelling
		4a.4 Pricing / quoting transparency as a job-search-craft skill
		4b.1 Networks as the route to work
		4b.2 LinkedIn / direct outreach as a learned skill
		4c.1 Gaining direction and a future plan
		4c.2 Weighing freelance / self-employment

Theme	Sub-theme	Code
		5a.3 Sense of agency / 'luck is made'
		5c.3 Renewed optimism / ambition
	T2c Learning to reframe	1a.3 Feeling lost / unable to break into qualified work
		1c.2 Anxiety and grief around the transition
		5b.1 Calmer, more resilient response to setbacks
		5b.2 Cognitive reframing / positivity
		5b.3 Managing anxiety and the urge to control
		5b.4 From self-criticism to managed negativity
		5c.1 From lost to oriented
		5c.2 More realistic expectations and self-appraisal
T3 - Effort meeting a ceiling	T3a Walls that don't move	1b.1 No contacts or guidance into the field
		1b.2 Outsider to the field or the city
		6b.1 Migration-related barriers
		6b.2 Experience paradox and competition
		6b.3 Educational / network disadvantage
		6b.4 Barriers are structural, not individual
		6c.1 Missing credential / qualification
		6c.2 Skill / profile mismatch
	T3b Forward, but not secure	6a.1 Secured employment (contract/role)
		6a.2 Job obtained through networks/contacts
		6a.3 Internships and stepping stones

Theme	Sub-theme	Code
		6a.4 Expanded options / having choices
		6d.1 Job misaligned / under-using qualifications
		6d.2 Financial instability or no improvement
		6d.3 Contract precarity / insecurity
		6d.4 Housing unaffordable; relocation risk
NT4 - Owning the change without over-claiming it	T4a It reinforced what was already there	2b.1 Combining multiple support services
		2b.2 Self-directed help-seeking incl. therapy
		5d.1 Reinforced rather than created change
	T4b It wasn't only the mentoring, and it wasn't everything	2c.1 Calibrated / modest expectations
		5d.2 Limited or no perceived change
		5d.3 No spillover to personal relationships
		5d.4 Change attributable to combined supports
NT5 The quality of the mentoring relationship	T5a when matching and structure work	7a.1 Effective mentor matching
	T5b Naming the gaps	7a.2 Coordinator support, structure, follow-up and flexibility
		7b.1 Wanted more structure/guidance in sessions
	T5c Valued, but not visible enough	7b.2 Wanted more concrete tools and informed matching
		7b.3 Preference for in-person over online sessions
		7c.1 Valued free resource and willing advocacy
		7c.2 Under-publicised / poor visibility
		7c.3 Should reach more persons

Table 14: Mentee theme map

Mentor theme map

Table 15: Mentor theme map

Theme	Sub-theme	Code
MNT1 - Confidence is the lever: what he believes mentoring changes	M2a Experience compensating for inexperience	M2a.1 Mentoring = experience compensating for inexperience
	M2b Personalised, one-to-one, example-driven practice	M2b.1 Pragmatic, example-driven coaching
		M2b.2 Prefers personalised one-to-one over generic group
	M3a Confidence and 'not being alone' as the core gift	M3a.1 Confidence / not deciding alone as the core gift
		M3a.2 Self-belief as a hiring prerequisite (hirer's view)
	M3b Gauging progress, engagement and variation	M3b.1 Reads progress through mentee initiative
		M3b.2 Adapts to varied mentee profiles
MNT2 - Holding frustration against a ceiling he can't lift	M4a Holding frustration and emotional weight	M4a.1 Holding mentees' frustration is the hardest part
		M4a.2 Doubting he could help a difficult case
	M4b Authority, tasks and mentee fit	M4b.1 Authority tension and uncompleted tasks
		M4b.2 Some mentees want solutions, not stories
	M4c Drawing boundaries on the personal	M4c.1 Sets boundaries on personal/family matters
		M4c.2 Mentor's own emotional over-attachment and need for personal distance

	M5a Structural barriers he observes	M5a.1 Structural labour-market barriers (AI, rigid hiring)
		M5a.2 Racial discrimination named as a structural barrier
	M5c Adequacy of support for mentors	M5c.1 Finds coordinator contact sufficient support
		M5c.2 Calls for the emotional weight of mentoring to be made organisationally visible
MNT3 - Giving back what he was given: mentoring as reciprocity and identity work	M1a Professional background and credibility	M1a.1 Career pivot into a credible position
	M1b Reciprocity: being mentored, giving back, staying on	M1b.1 Mentors to give back / reciprocity
		M1b.2 Continues because it was felt to help
	M5b Personal and professional growth from mentoring	M5b.1 Personal/professional growth: guiding style and new perspective

The themes are the analysts' reading of the material, shaped by the analysts' position and the study's impact-assessment purpose. Naming positionality explicitly is a requirement of RTA, not incidental: because coding here is semantic-level and single-coder, the analytic choices about what counts as 'the same' pattern across eleven different life stories are the main source of the report's validity claims, and should be legible to anyone using this report for programme decisions.

In practice, this means the mentee themes should be treated as one credible, well-evidenced reading of a rich but small dataset, useful for generating hypotheses and informing programme design, rather than as a validated measurement instrument. The qualitative material also complements the quantitative datasets collected from Autoocupació's beneficiaries. Because the respondents who provided data across all three stages of the programme — at the start of the mentoring, at the end of the mentoring relationship, and three months after its close — showed little measurable change on the Psychosocial scales, the qualitative findings play a particularly important role in enriching and interpreting the information gathered through the questionnaires.

4.3 Findings

The main narrative themes and subthemes emerging during the mentee interviews are:

Mentees

Theme 1: “A partner through the journey"

Participants experience not generic expertise delivered top-down but a credible, relatable person, someone whose own path mirrors theirs, and with whom it feels safe to be vulnerable. The relationship itself, not its technical content, is the active ingredient. Across the interviews, three aspects of how mentees perceived the mentor's role stood out.

Because they've been there too. The mentor's own lived experience is what makes them credible in the mentee's eyes. Shared experience builds connection and normalises struggle, so difficulties feel less isolating. What mentees value is relevant experience rather than an exact match of profession or field.

Safe enough to bring the whole self. Mentees describe a comfortable, trusting rapport that is built gradually over time. The relationship becomes a safe space for personal disclosure and support, helped by the mentor's high availability and responsiveness. Mentors open their networks generously, and the contact often lasts beyond the programme. Throughout, the mentor's stance is genuine, non-hierarchical and guiding rather than directive.

When the match doesn't quite fit. How personalised the support feels depends both on the fit with the mentor and on the mentee's own effort. A mentor's path is not always fully transferable to the mentee's circumstances, and a gap in generation or a change of field can limit how relevant that experience is.

Theme 2 : "Working on the self, not the CV"

The change that participants experience is in how they see and value themselves. They are encouraged to overcome self-undervaluation, develop a sense of agency, take control of their own destiny, and learn to reframe difficulty. Practical job-search craft matters mainly as a vehicle for this inner shift rather than as the point. Two aspects of the mentor's role stood out for mentees.

Being argued out of undervaluing myself. Many mentees arrive carrying low self-esteem and damaged confidence, and some need time for emotional recovery before anything else can move. Over the course of the mentoring they describe real growth in confidence and self-worth, helped by a mentor who actively challenges their tendency to undervalue themselves.

Learning to reframe. Mentees often begin feeling lost and unable to break into qualified work, with genuine anxiety and grief around the transition. Through the relationship they develop a calmer, more resilient response to setbacks, learning to reframe difficulty and hold on to a more positive outlook. They become

better at managing anxiety and the urge to control what they cannot, moving from harsh self-criticism to a more managed negativity. The overall shift is from feeling lost to feeling oriented, with more realistic expectations and a fairer appraisal of themselves.

Theme 3: Effort meeting a ceiling

Participants' growing agency and confidence repeatedly come up against structural barriers that the programme cannot overcome, such as migration and recognition regimes, the experience paradox, precarity and housing. Gains and hard limits therefore must be discussed together. As one participant puts it, structural problems are not individual problems. This plays out in two ways for mentees.

Walls that don't move. Many mentees have no contacts or guidance into their target field and remain outsiders to the sector or the city. Some face migration-related barriers, and most run into the experience paradox needing experience to get the work that would give them experience in a competitive market. Educational and network disadvantage compounds this, as do missing credentials or qualifications and mismatches between their skills or profile and what employers are looking for. The common thread is that these barriers are structural, not individual.

Forward, but not secure. Some mentees do move forward: securing employment, often through networks and contacts, or taking up internships and other stepping stones. But the progress is frequently insecure. Jobs can be misaligned with or under-use their qualifications, incomes may not improve or may stay unstable, contracts are often precarious, and unaffordable housing brings the added risk of having to relocate.

The main narrative themes and subthemes emerging during the mentor interviews are:

Mentors

Theme (MNT1) Giving back what he was given

Mentors frame the work through reciprocity - having been mentored themselves, they now give back - and the role reshapes their own identity, moving them from a commanding to a guiding stance. Three strands run through this.

Professional background and credibility. A career pivot into a credible professional position gives them the standing they draw on as mentors.

Reciprocity: being mentored, giving back, staying on. Having been mentored themselves, they take on the role to give back. They stay with it because they feel it genuinely helps.

Personal and professional growth from mentoring. The role becomes a source of their own growth, developing a more guiding style and a new perspective.

Theme (MNT2) Confidence is the lever

Mentors locate the core of the work in building confidence and self-belief, which, as people who also hire, they see as a prerequisite for being employed, delivered through a personalised, example-led relationship, with progress read from the mentee's own initiative. Four strands sit within this.

Experience compensating for inexperience. They see mentoring as a way for their own experience to compensate for the mentee's inexperience.

Personalised, one-to-one, example-driven practice. Their coaching is pragmatic and taught through concrete examples rather than theory. They prefer a personalised one-to-one relationship over generic group provision.

Confidence and "not being alone" as the core gift. They see the central gift as confidence and the sense of not having to decide alone. Drawing on their own experience of hiring, they treat self-belief as a prerequisite for getting hired.

Gauging progress, engagement and variation. They read progress mainly through the mentee's own initiative, and they adapt their approach to very different mentee profiles.

Theme (MNT3) Holding frustration

The hardest part is bearing the mentee's frustration, rooted in personal and structural conditions, e.g. housing, AI displacing entry-level roles, rigid hiring, that mentors cannot change. They manage this by setting boundaries, and find the existing coordinator support sufficient. Five strands run through this.

Holding frustration and emotional weight. Holding the mentee's frustration is the hardest part of the role. At times they doubt whether they could really help a particularly difficult case.

Authority, tasks and mentee fit. They feel a tension around authority when agreed tasks go uncompleted. Some mentees want concrete solutions rather than experience shared as stories.

Drawing boundaries on the personal. They set boundaries around personal and family matters, keeping the relationship focused.

Structural barriers he observes. They point to structural labour-market barriers beyond anyone's control, including AI displacing entry-level roles and rigid hiring practices.

Adequacy of support for mentors. They find contact with the coordinator to be sufficient support for the role.

5. Discussion

This chapter interprets the above findings, moving from individual results towards an integrated reading of what the assessment appears to show, and identifying the limits of this interpretation. This process involves four steps. First, it considers the mixed-methods design itself, examining how the quantitative and qualitative strands relate to one another. In particular, it considers how the apparent stability of the Psychosocial scales should be understood alongside the more pronounced movement visible in the qualitative accounts and descriptive economic data. The second step presents a thematic synthesis of the interview material. Drawing on reflexive thematic analysis, it traces how the intervention seems to have operated in practice. This ranges from the relational dynamics at the heart of the mentoring dyad to the structural frictions that individual mentoring cannot readily resolve. The third step interprets the combined evidence in light of the Ready4Work Spain Theory of Change, identifying areas where the programme logic appears to be effective and where it is challenged by the conditions of the Spanish labour market. The fourth step draws out the policy and practice implications, situating the findings in relation to the European Pillar of Social Rights and setting out the operational enhancements that the assessment appears to suggest. Throughout, the discussion is framed as an interpretation of the evidence available rather than as settled conclusions. It also considers the measurement and durability questions that affect several of the headline results.

5.1 Mixed-Methods Synthesis and Triangulation

A mixed-methods design was chosen for this impact assessment to capture both measurable population-level shifts and the nuanced mechanisms explaining how and why change occurred. The qualitative evidence relies on in-depth interviews conducted after the intervention with 7 mentees and 4 mentors. These interviews investigated what changed for mentees, what specific intervention components worked, and if or how participants' career intentions and self-perceptions evolved.

The quantitative evaluation adapted validated Psychosocial scales to assess longitudinal shifts in General Self-Efficacy (GSE), Resilience (CD-RISC), Proactive Coping (PCI), and Social Problem-Solving (SPSI-R). However, across all composite scales, inferential statistical testing (paired t-tests and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests) revealed no statistically significant changes across the pre, end, and post-intervention timepoints (all $p > .05$). Psychosocial indicators such as General Self-Efficacy remained essentially flat (pre: 8.04, end: 8.1should we say n to baseline (pre: 7.31, end: 7.62, post: 7.19).

This apparent statistical stability stands in striking contrast to both the qualitative accounts and the descriptive economic data. While standardized Psychosocial instruments did not capture statistically significant shifts, qualitative narratives revealed profound internal transformations, and descriptive analyses confirmed substantial, tangible improvements in employment status and income trajectories. This divergence highlights a

known methodological reality: standardized Psychosocial scales with high baseline scores often suffer from ceiling effects and may lack the sensitivity to detect domain-specific, contextualized shifts in self-worth and navigational capacity within relatively small cohorts (n=23 to n=35). The qualitative data and descriptive statistics therefore provide the necessary explanatory depth to understand how change was achieved.

It might seem reasonable to discount the Psychosocial findings on the grounds of the small sample size. Small samples are indeed less reliable in statistical terms, and quantitative analysis derives much of its validity and generalisability from applying statistical procedures diligently and in a mathematically correct form (Creswell and Poth, 2025; Garvey and Stokes, 2022). Yet, even where validated scales are applied correctly, they neither generate insight into nor explain why change occurred in a given context. This limitation is not unique to the present impact assessment. An impact assessment conducted in the same geographies, with the same demographics, the same validated scales, and a sample size of n>1.600 arrived at similar results (Olowode et al., 2024; 2022; Parola et al., 2021). Resnjanskij et al. (2021) could not find statistical relevant change using validated scales for a German mentoring programme directed at vulnerable youth.

5.2 Thematic Synthesis

The reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke) structured the interview data across four comparative axes, contrasting mentee and mentor perspectives to map how the intervention operated in practice.

The Relationship as the Active Engine

Across both cohorts, participants confirmed that the primary driver of progress was relational rather than purely instructional (comparing Mentee Theme NT1 and Mentor Theme MNT1). Mentees did not experience the programme as a top-down transfer of technical skills; rather, they derived value from a credible, peer-adjacent relationship grounded in shared lived experience (NT1a).

> *"He had also made that same change. He came from another sector and ended up... being what he is now... we connected much more than maybe with someone who had always worked in the same field."*[Participant R013]

Mentors mirrored this perspective, framing their participation around reciprocity (MNT1). Having navigated similar career transitions or barriers, they acted to give back the support they had once received (M1b.1). Adopting a non-hierarchical, guiding stance (3c.3) fostered psychological safety, enabling mentees to bring their whole self into sessions and openly address self-doubt and emotional exhaustion (NT1b, 3a.3). In turn, mentors experienced meaningful professional growth through refining their mentoring and guiding capabilities (M5b.1).

The Locus of Transformation

Both cohorts located the critical intervention impact within the mentee's self-perception, positioning practical job-search tools (CV tailoring, LinkedIn outreach, portfolio design) primarily as scaffolding for cognitive reframing (comparing Mentee Theme NT2 and Mentor Theme MNT2). Mentees described being actively argued out of undervaluing themselves (NT2a):

> *"There's a huge boost to my self-esteem... I'm starting to get my head straight again and to reconfigure my self-perception... just because one person didn't think I was a good fit for their project, it doesn't mean I'm not cut out for the job."*[Participant R031]

From the mentor's perspective as hiring professionals, self-worth and a coherent personal narrative were non-negotiable prerequisites for hiring (M3a.2, M2a.1). Restoring confidence translated directly into enacted agency, moving mentees from job-search paralysis to calculated, proactive outreach (NT2b, NT2c).

The Encounter with Structural Ceilings

Despite significant personal and professional empowerment, the data reveal hard boundaries where individual coaching collides with systemic realities (comparing Mentee Theme NT3 and Mentor Theme MNT3). Mentees encountered pervasive structural barriers, including bureaucratic immigration hurdles, unrecognized international credentials, and Barcelona's housing crisis (NT3a, NT3b):

> *"Seeing how your origin means... structural or bureaucratic racism issues around the profile that's applying for that position... this migratory status... generated a lot of insecurity... throughout several sessions with the mentor, we'd always talk about all these structural issues that go beyond us as individuals."*[Participant R023]

For mentors, bearing this frustration constituted the most emotionally demanding aspect of their role (M4a.1). Mentors recognized macroeconomic obstacles, rigid hiring protocols, and entry-level market contraction (M5a.1), which necessitated setting clear role boundaries around non-employment crises (M4c.1).

Modest Attribution and Ecosystem Scaffolding

Mentees demonstrated careful, reflexive ownership of their outcomes, framing mentoring not as a standalone miracle but as a catalyst that reinforced existing capabilities (NT4a). Participants embedded their progress within a wider web of support, combining mentoring with psychological therapy and municipal employment services such as Barcelona Activa (NT4b). High-quality outcomes depended directly on deliberate programme architecture, including precise matching and flexible coordinator check-ins (NT5a, NT5c).

Labour Market Realities

The available economic data provide evidence of significant and tangible progress in the realm of labour market integration. Most notably, the proportion of participants employed under a permanent contract appears to have increased by 39.2 percentage points, from 13.0% pre-programme to 52.2% at the three-month post-intervention mark for the n=23 matched cohort; the broader n=35 sample shows a parallel movement, from 14.0% to 46.0%. Concurrently, the unemployment rate among beneficiaries declined by 34.8 percentage points within the matched group (from 52.2% to 17.4%) and by 40.0 points in the broader sample (from 60.0% to 20.0%). For a significant proportion of the participants, this indicates a substantial transition towards formal, long-term employment. When considered as a whole, the pattern appears to align with the interpretation that mentoring functions as an accelerator within this context. The results observed at the six-month point, which marks the conclusion of the intervention, are already indicative of potential benefits. These results suggest that the programme may be able to compress a movement towards stable employment, which would typically require a significantly longer duration, into a relatively brief period.

The Volatility of Temporary and Seasonal Contracts: The central analytical question, however, is not so much whether the cohort advanced, as the data support, but rather whether that advance can yet be interpreted as stability, or whether it still leaves parts of the cohort in a precarious position. In relation to this particular question, the available data appear to delineate an internal boundary. Greater stability appears to be evident among those who have secured permanent contracts and those who have ascended to the higher income tiers. Conversely, evidence suggests that precarity is a persistent issue for two distinct groups: those with an income below the €900 to €1.100 bracket and those engaged in temporary or seasonal contracts as opposed to permanent positions. These do not appear to be marginal exceptions. Instead, these figures appear to reflect the segments of the cohort for whom entry into employment has not yet resulted in secure income or secure working conditions.

The interpretation of the contractual dimension is complicated by the timing of data collection. The economic data were collected primarily in June and July, months that traditionally exhibit higher employment levels compared to, for instance, December or January, particularly in sectors that utilise seasonal and temporary labour. A beneficiary recorded as employed on a temporary or seasonal contract in mid-summer may therefore have been captured at a comparatively favourable point in the annual cycle, and a single snapshot cannot establish how that same situation would hold through the low season. This does not detract from the importance of employment, but it does underscore the fact that, for temporary and seasonal workers in particular, the durability of the outcome remains an open question. As status is measured at a single point in time, a beneficiary surveyed during an active work spell is recorded as employed, irrespective of how stable that spell later proves to be. This has the potential to lead the data to overstate security for precisely the group whose position appears least settled.

Despite the overall shift towards employment, some of the respondents who were unemployed when they started the programme remained so throughout the six-month support period and for a further three months. This suggests that re-engaging with the labour market takes some in this group longer than the current support period allows for. Barriers such as skills gaps, low confidence, and lengthy job-search timelines may take more than six months to overcome. Thus, although we can expect progress during programme implementation, these barriers take longer to overcome than the project duration. This indicates a potential need to extend the mentoring support period for these participants to ensure that those who require additional time to re-engage are not left without support when beginning to make progress.

Income Thresholds: The Invisible Income Ceiling. The income data appear to delineate a similar divide in financial terms. The average monthly earnings of the participants increased by €291 at the point of programme completion, reaching €313 at the three-month follow-up. Concurrently, the proportion of respondents earning less than €200 fell from 29% to 14%, while those earning over €1.500 grew from 9% to 26%. A substantial proportion of this progress appears to be attributable to beneficiaries transitioning from the lowest tiers. However, a more persistent barrier is evident within the €900 to €1.100 bracket. Participants who have successfully cleared this barrier have demonstrated a tendency to remain stable or advance, while those who have not yet achieved this appear to encounter significant challenges in progressing towards living-wage levels. In this lower band, earnings are concentrated at the level of minimum wage and part-time employment ceilings. This may result in beneficiaries being vulnerable to cost-of-living shocks and housing precarity, despite being in employment. For this demographic, formal integration does not yet appear to have translated into economic security.

When considered as a whole, the findings tentatively support a two-part reading. In this particular context, mentoring appears to function as an effective accelerator, since the results after six months indicate rapid and substantial movement into employment and, for the majority of participants, into more protected contractual forms. However, the cohort does not appear to have moved uniformly across the threshold from precarity to stability. It is imperative to recognise that beneficiaries from lower income brackets, in addition to those lacking permanent contracts, may necessitate supplementary, targeted assistance. The objective is to ensure that their early gains are transformed into stable income and sustainable working conditions, thus avoiding the erosion of these gains during the subsequent seasonal downturn. In consideration of the extant evidence, the primary question that emerges from this analysis pertains to the maintenance of the programme's early impact for these groups. The resolution of this question would be facilitated by the collection of additional follow-up data.

5.3 Theory of Change Validation

Evaluating the combined quantitative, descriptive and qualitative findings against the Ready4Work Theory of Change helps to identify the apparent alignment of the programme logic and the constraints imposed on it by

systemic realities. Interpreting the results in this manner is valuable because it differentiates the components of the causal chain that the intervention can reasonably be expected to influence from those that lie largely outside its reach. Furthermore, this approach highlights the point at which the linear logic of the model begins to conflict with the conditions of the Spanish labour market.

Validating the Core Model: The present study aims to validate the core model by examining short-term outcomes in skills, employability, and social capital. The Theory of Change hypothesises that personalised volunteer mentoring programmes can enhance job-readiness, refine soft skills, and broaden professional social networks. The findings of the qualitative nature appear to provide robust validation for this pathway. It is evident that mentors have effectively guided mentees through concrete, practical tasks, including CV restructuring, interview simulation, and strategic LinkedIn networking. These mechanisms align with the model's anticipated outcomes. Moreover, the intervention appears to have exerted its effect at a level that extends beyond the mere transfer of technical skills. Indeed, a substantial proportion of its impact seems to have emanated from the restoration of participants' sense of self-efficacy and agency. The accounts indicate a transition from a state of self-doubt to a proactive approach in exploring career opportunities. This component of the short-term pathway is arguably the least explicitly addressed aspect within the model, yet it is the aspect that the data suggest has the greatest significance. The available evidence suggests that the initial links in the causal chain, extending from mentoring to enhanced employability, appear to be adequately substantiated.

Long-Term Employment Realisation: The realisation of long-term employment is predicated on the principles of sustainable employment and the promotion of social cohesion. The intervention logic further assumes that enhanced employability translates, in turn, into sustainable economic integration and social inclusion. The descriptive data are broadly consistent with this logic, most visibly in the 39 percentage point rise in permanent contracts and the substantial reductions in unemployment discussed above. The Psychosocial evidence provides a further, and in some respects more compelling, layer of support. The Social Inclusion Quality of Life (SIQoL) scale was the only index to demonstrate a continuous and uninterrupted positive trend across all measurement points, with an increase of +0.50 from pre-programme to follow-up. The fact that this is the one scale that does not appear to plateau or regress may offer the clearest signal that the intervention's effects extended beyond employment status into relational support and social integration, which is the harder and slower of the two long-term outcomes the model specifies. However, it is important to note that the strength of this link should be interpreted in the context of the durability concerns previously highlighted. This is because the permanent contract and income gains that underpin the "sustainable employment" component of the pathway are still contingent on the seasonal and measurement limitations previously mentioned.

Systemic Limitations to the Logic Model: The logic model is subject to systemic limitations in the form of structural boundary constraints. The point at which the linear Theory of Change appears to break down is the transition from labour market entry to socio-economic security. The model operates under the implicit assumption that individual mentoring, by improving employability, will more or less automatically deliver living-wage security. The findings indicate that this assumption is constrained by the structural characteristics of the Spanish labour market, which are beyond the scope of individual-level interventions. The qualitative accounts, when considered in conjunction with the observed barrier at the €900 to €1.100 income band, suggest that employment gains often remain precarious once individuals are situated against the backdrop of high living costs, restrictive migration policies, and prevailing temporary hiring practices. The most tenable interpretation of the available evidence is that mentoring has the capacity to equip individuals with the necessary skills to navigate the labour market more effectively. However, it cannot alone rectify the inherent imbalances in that market. This phenomenon does not signify a failure of the programme logic, but rather, it can be considered an instance of a boundary condition on the programme. The causal chain appears to be valid up to the point of labour market entry. However, it is at the subsequent step, where individual capability meets structural constraint, that additional and more systemic support appears to be required if the model's final outcome is to be reliably reached.

5.4 Policy and Practice Implications

The findings provide compelling evidence that volunteer mentoring can function as an effective and high-value methodology for adult learning, active labour market integration, and social inclusion. Across the cohort, the intervention appears to have resulted in a significant proportion of participants securing employment, and for many, in securing more protected contractual forms, and it seems to have achieved this within a relatively short period of time. On this basis, a compelling argument can be made for the formal recognition of mentoring as a direct and valuable contribution to the European Pillar of Social Rights, particularly with regard to Principle 1 (Education, training and life-long learning) and Principle 4 (Active support to employment). The correlation to Principle 1 is evident in the manner in which mentoring appears to enhance participants' capabilities, confidence, and orientation towards ongoing learning, as opposed to delivering a solitary placement in isolation. The correlation between this phenomenon and Principle 4 is evident in the observed transition from unemployment to formal employment contracts, which is consistent with the individualised, active support outlined in Principle 4. It is submitted that the recognition of mentoring in these terms would facilitate the positioning of it not as an auxiliary activity, but rather as a mechanism that speaks directly to two of the Pillar's core commitments. In order to sustain and extend this impact, and to address the structural limitations identified in this assessment, future iterations of the programme might consider implementing three operational enhancements.

The provision of extended pathways is predicated on the provision of differentiated support for vulnerable tracks. The extant evidence suggests that a standardised six-month intervention is well suited to job-ready participants who are able to move directly into permanent contracts, for whom the current model appears to work efficiently. However, the same duration and structure may be deemed inadequate for beneficiaries whose situation remains precarious at the conclusion of the intervention, particularly those engaged in temporary in seasonal employment or still unemployed and those with earnings below the €900 to €1.100 range. For these groups, a diversified approach with extended and more flexible support tracks could assist in preventing re-entry or remaining into unemployment and promoting progression towards higher and more stable earnings. Such tracks might involve a tapered continuation of mentoring beyond the six-month point, closer follow-up across the seasonal cycle rather than at a single favourable moment, and a more explicit focus on wage progression and contract consolidation. The hypothesis that tailoring the intensity and length of support to the beneficiary's starting position, rather than applying a uniform model across a heterogeneous cohort, will improve the durability of outcomes for precisely those participants whose gains currently look most fragile, is one that merits further investigation.

Multi-agency integration: delivery within an ecosystem. The findings also indicate that mentoring is unlikely to be most effective when it operates in isolation, since several of the barriers that keep beneficiaries in a precarious position fall outside the scope of what a single mentoring relationship can reasonably address. The deepening of institutional partnerships is therefore of significance. The establishment of closer ties with municipal employment agencies, such as Barcelona Activa, has the potential to facilitate the integration of mentoring with formal labour market services and vacancies. Specialised legal and migration services could address status-related obstacles that hinder access to stable employment. Furthermore, access to mental health and wellbeing resources could provide support to participants for whom non-employment barriers are a significant factor. The integration of mentoring within a coordinated ecosystem, accompanied by explicit referral pathways between partners, appears to be a more efficacious approach in addressing the comprehensive range of barriers encountered by beneficiaries when compared with the implementation of a standalone programme. In such a model, the mentor's role becomes partly one of navigation, helping participants to reach the appropriate service at the optimum time, rather than being expected to meet every need directly.

The provision of ongoing support for mentors encompasses a range of elements, including supervision, peer learning, and structured reflection. The evidence suggests a third enhancement directed not at the beneficiaries but at the mentors themselves. The analysis of the qualitative data suggests that the difficulties encountered by the dyads were relational and procedural in nature, rather than being a matter of mentor commitment or goodwill. The establishment of ground rules at the outset, and the negotiation of the evolution of the mentor's role across the life-cycle of the relationship, appear to be recurrent sources of friction. These are areas where mentors would plausibly benefit from more structured guidance. It is recommended that

subsequent iterations consider incorporating ongoing support for mentors, as opposed to focusing preparation exclusively on the recruitment and training stage. The utilisation of supervision, collaborative learning methodologies, and the utilisation of shared case studies could provide mentors with a structured forum for the reflection on their practice, the comparison of approaches, and the resolution of situations that are difficult to anticipate in advance.

It is submitted that the issue of frustration in mentees is a topic that merits treatment as a more advanced subject within the scope of such formats. Frustration on the part of the mentee, whether stemming from a stalled job search or mismatched expectations regarding the outcomes of mentoring, imposes particular demands on the mentor. Available data suggest that mentors may not always feel equipped to respond to such frustration. The establishment of a forum in which experienced and newer mentors can discuss these episodes may assist in the development of responses that neither dismiss the frustration nor allow it to undermine the relationship.

A parallel case can be made for the improved preparation of the mentees. Research suggests that beneficiaries who entered the process with a clearer understanding of what mentoring involves tended to engage with it more productively (Garvey and Stoke, 2022). It is evident that mentees are likely to accrue greater benefits when they possess the capacity to establish the agenda for their sessions, articulate their own needs, and engage in negotiations with their mentors regarding these needs, as opposed to passively awaiting direction from their mentors. This suggests a role for light-touch orientation on the mentee side as well, aimed at demystifying the process before it begins. More broadly, a shared understanding of the different roles and dimensions that a mentoring relationship can take on, held by both mentor and mentee, seems likely to benefit both parties, since much of the observed friction appears to arise where the two hold divergent and unspoken assumptions about the purpose of the relationship.

Mentor Support Architecture: Supervision and Burnout Prevention for Mentors: Given the emotional strain of holding mentee frustration in the face of structural barriers, programmes must provide ongoing coordinator check-ins, peer debriefing circles, and training on setting clear coaching boundaries.

Dimension	Mentee Finding	Mentor Finding	Programme / Policy Implication
Relational Model	Thrives on lived experience, non-hierarchical safety, and accessibility.	Thrives on reciprocity; shifts mentors from managerial to guiding postures.	Prioritize lived and parallel experience in matching over purely technical seniority.
Mechanisms of Change	Internal self-worth restored; practical tools serve as scaffolding for agency.	Confidence viewed as a non-negotiable hiring prerequisite.	Frame job-search tooling (CVs, LinkedIn) as instruments of narrative empowerment.
Structural Limits	Employment gains tempered by housing costs, visa hurdles, and precarity.	Emotional strain from holding frustration against immovable market barriers.	Provide mentor supervision and debriefing; avoid over-promising individual solutions to structural traps.
Ecosystem Integration	Mentoring acts as an amplifier alongside mental health and civic services.	Relies on coordinator check-ins to anchor boundaries.	Embed the programme explicitly within existing municipal and psycho-social networks.

6. Conclusions

This chapter brings together the quantitative, descriptive and qualitative elements of the assessment to form a set of overarching conclusions. These are then considered in light of both the programme's own logic and the broader evidence base on mentoring. It is organised into three parts. The first part considers the programme's effects on employment, income, and inclusion in the labour market and social integration, and where these effects seem to meet structural limits. The second part turns to the success factors that the data and literature suggest underlie the programme's success, focusing particularly on the quality of the mentoring relationship, the preparation of mentors and mentees, and the importance of time. The third part reflects on the impact assessment itself, setting out a number of methodological and ethical considerations bearing on how this evaluation was conducted and how future iterations might be approached. Taken together, these conclusions are intended less as a final verdict than as a considered interpretation of the current evidence, along with an indication of where further data and reflection would provide a clearer picture.

6.1 Labour market and social integration

The changes in income show a positive trend. However, it seems that there is an invisible barrier at the €900–€1.099 income bracket that is difficult to break through. Those who earn above this level tend to remain there. Conversely, those earning less seem to struggle to reach higher income levels. Another relevant factor is that, although income has increased, it remains close to the minimum income threshold in most cases. This prevents beneficiaries from improving their living situation.

The data suggests that temporary and seasonal employment is a volatile and unstable form of employment that distorts the view of the real issue by suggesting that a certain percentage of the population is employed if surveyed at the right time. However, it seems more likely that short-term engagement with the labour market occurs alongside income levels below the €900–€1.099 threshold. Focusing on unemployment status alone would miss a significant percentage of the youth population and fail to address the problem.

The data indicates that mentoring is an effective method of learning and development in this context. Mentoring should therefore be recognised as making a valuable contribution to the European Pillar of Social Rights, specifically with regard to lifelong learning and access to the labour market. The findings also suggest that longer-term support may be required for those on low incomes, as well as for those working under temporary or seasonal contracts.

6.2 Success factors

The data suggests that it is not possible to foster social integration through labour market integration which is consistent with research (Garvey, 2011; Colley, 2003). While labour market integration remains a main motivation to invest in mentoring programmes, the real value seems to be working on the self in space that allows for the learner to set the agenda. This, as the qualitative data suggests, can lead to a strengthened sense of confidence, agency and maintain hope. In the helping professions, the quality of the relationship, the trust and rapport in the dyads, has been identified as a key success factor (de Haan and Gannon, 2017; de Haan, 2008). The presence of hope as well as making use of external resources is credited to be the most successful factor compared to a control group (de Haan, 2008). This impact assessment suggests that mentoring, compared with other support interventions such as training or coaching, is particularly effective at encouraging beneficiaries to draw on external resources, and that this in turn leads to positive outcomes.

Garvey and Stokes (2022) argue that mentees as well as mentees make the most out of the relationship when they are familiar with the mentoring process. This includes familiarity with mentoring processes and techniques as well as being able to navigate power dynamics. In this context, this should be interpreted as the need to provide induction programmes for mentors and mentees so that the dyads are able to make the most out of the relationship. The feedback from mentors and mentees suggests that some critically important basics such as ground rules are not implemented consequently throughout the life-cycle of the mentoring relationship. This should be supported more by the mentoring coordinators of the programme. Additionally, such topics can be addressed in advanced mentor learning and supervision formats.

Another critical important success factor is time. The data suggests that barriers and ceilings exist and it takes more than six months to overcome them. The programme should consider an extension of the intervention in case mentor and mentee see value in it. Mentors are considered an external resource and the quality of the relationship underlines that learning is a social activity. Taking time for each other, trusting the process appears to generate very positive results. As Section 6.4 shows, extending a mentoring relationship costs considerably less than its first six months, at about €27 a month.

6.3 Impact assessment

Ethics: The mentoring programme under investigation is informed by an ethics or duty of care (Held, 2006). This position acknowledges the fundamental human need for support from others, which is a necessity that individuals experience at various stages of their lives. This fundamental principle constitutes the philosophical basis that underpins the mentoring process and its underlying techniques. It acknowledges the autonomy of the learner and the moral obligation to provide support to others in need. Autoocupació took the deliberate decision to onboard over 108 young persons and provide mentoring services to them, rather than limiting the number of beneficiaries to 90 as outlined in the proposal. This figure signifies a participation rate that is

approximately 20% higher than the committed target as of the end of June 2026. It is reasonable to predict an increase in the number of young people joining the programme. Although ethics are not a conventional metric with which to evaluate the impact of a programme, it would be negligent not to explicitly emphasise the value of a lived ethical position that aligns with the vision and mission statement of Autoocupació!

A contrasting approach was adopted by Resnjanskij et al. (2021). In order to facilitate the impact assessment, the programme imposed a limit on the number of beneficiaries, with additional applicants being utilised to establish a control group. The randomised selection process was regarded as the most ethical and "fair" (ebd. p. 39) process (without mentioning the underlying ethical position). The objective appears to be the establishment of a randomised control trial with a view to enhancing the validity of the study. The validity of the impact assessments appears to be given a higher priority than the lives of young persons who were actively excluded from the mentoring programme. While such a design may potentially contribute to academic value, it is positioned at odds with the ethical principles that underpin Autoocupació's mentoring programme. Parola et al. (2022) describe a situation in which the researcher intended to set up a control group, but respected the ethical concerns of an involved practitioner and chose an alternative research methodology for the respective impact assessment. Given the proven value of alternative research methods, such as qualitative approaches, in enhancing the validity of impact assessments without compromising the inclusion of young persons in support initiatives, there is a compelling rationale for their integration.

Qualitative research typically concludes when additional interviews do not reveal new insights. This effect is referred to as saturation (Saunders et al., 2018). To improve the validity and generalisability of this impact assessment it is recommended to continue interviewing mentees and mentees until saturation effects are visible. The design of this impact assessment can be used by programme managers.

Use of large language models (LLMs): LLMs can support programme managers to continue impact assessments. Based on the results of this assessment, it is recommended to continue collecting quantitative data related to age, gender, employment status, income brackets, housing situations, intentions to go back to school at the beginning, the end and post intervention. Additionally, the interview guide can be used to collect additional qualitative data. For the analysis most LLMs offer a cost-effective option to analyse data. However, LLMs are currently not able to conduct qualitative and quantitative data analysis in a consistently high quality, but they can reduce costs for impact assessments significantly. For the interpretation and discussion of the data, it is recommended to involve different persons inside and outside the organisation.

Validated scales in impact assessments: The assessment of validated Psychosocial scales did not yield statistically significant changes across the evaluation period. However, this absence of statistical variance does not indicate a lack of programme efficacy. On the contrary, descriptive labour market indicators and in-depth qualitative accounts provide robust evidence of meaningful personal and professional transformation. For the remainder of

this impact assessment, it is therefore recommended to de-emphasize generic psycho-social metrics in favour of concrete employment outcomes and qualitative mechanisms.

Several methodological and contextual factors explain the high baseline scores observed on these scales. First, participants exhibited adaptive resilience: rather than operating in a state of persistent despair, mentees have adjusted to their circumstances while sustaining realistic ambitions to advance. Second, the ordinal 1-to-10 response scales cannot be assumed to represent equidistant psychological intervals. Moving from an 8 to a 9 often reflects a substantially higher subjective threshold than moving from a 6 to a 7. Regarding quality of life, ongoing structural constraints (such as shared flats or continued reliance on family housing) mean that only major, life-altering breakthroughs would register as an incremental gain on top of already high baseline ratings.

6.4 Cost structure

The cost analysis draws on a process cost calculation. It estimates the full cost per participant of a six-month support cycle for three formats commonly used to support young people in their transition to work: the Ready4Work volunteer mentoring programme, individual coaching delivered by paid staff, and group training. For each format, the calculation breaks down the support into the activities needed to deliver it and costs each activity on the basis of the number of cycles and the staff time per cycle. Where an activity is delivered to a group or produces a single output for the whole cohort, such as a training workshop or a report, its cost is divided by the number of participants who share it. An overhead rate, which includes office or room rent, is added to the staff costs. The time contributed by the volunteer mentors is not costed.

Activities in mentoring. The mentoring cycle comprises ten cost items, which follow the steps of the Ready4Work Mentoring Guide:

- Outreach: contact with referral partners such as job centres and youth organisations and the first contact with the young person (one cycle of 90 minutes per participant).
- Onboarding: the selection interview and the profile of each mentee (one cycle of 90 minutes).
- Training: the induction on what mentoring is and is not, the process models and the ground rules, delivered in six sessions of 150 minutes to groups of twelve participants.
- Matching: the search for a suitable mentor, the kick-off meeting with the coordinator and the signed mentoring agreement (one cycle of 180 minutes).
- Monitoring: a monthly check-in by the coordinator with each relationship over the six months (six cycles of 30 minutes).
- Data collection impact assessment: the questionnaires at Pre, End and Post (three cycles of 45 minutes).
- Impact report: the analysis and drafting of the impact report, about 320 hours of work spread across 100 participants.

- **Evaluation data collection:** the feedback forms completed by mentor and mentee (two cycles of 45 minutes).
- **Evaluation report:** the drafting of the evaluation report, about 30 hours of work spread across 100 participants.
- **Overhead:** indirect costs, including office rent, at 20% of the staff costs.

The mentoring sessions themselves are delivered by volunteers and therefore do not appear as a staff cost. The paid staff time is concentrated on the coordinator's role around the relationship.

Activities in coaching. Coaching shares outreach (90 minutes) and a combined onboarding and matching step (90 minutes) with mentoring, but the support itself is delivered by paid staff: on average twelve coaching sessions per participant, each costed at 90 minutes including preparation. Monitoring consists of three short check-ins of 22.5 minutes, because the coach is already in regular contact with the participant. Data collection, evaluation and the two reports follow the same steps, and have the same cost, as in mentoring; overhead is also charged at 20%.

Activities in training. Training also starts with outreach and onboarding (90 minutes each). The course comprises 30 hours of group training, for example ten days of three hours, delivered to twelve participants. Monitoring is limited to a single contact of 45 minutes. The evaluation feedback takes longer than in the individual formats (two cycles of 90 minutes), while the evaluation and impact reports are shared across 108 participants. Overhead is charged at 35%, the higher rate reflecting the rent of training rooms.

Cost blocks. Overhead is calculated on the staff costs of all activities, at 20% for mentoring and coaching and 35% for training. Table 16 and Figure 14 summarise the resulting cost per participant, grouping the activities into three blocks: programme implementation (outreach, onboarding, training or coaching, matching and monitoring, together with the overhead for all activities), evaluation (evaluation data collection and report) and impact assessment (data collection and impact report). Evaluation and impact assessment are therefore shown as direct staff costs. Table 16 gives two totals: the cost of implementation with an impact assessment, and the cost of implementation with an evaluation only, since the depth of assessment is a choice that each programme makes according to its purpose and resources. The impact assessment costs three times as much per participant as an evaluation (€147 against €49), so it would be sensible to streamline the process or focus on a simpler evaluation method where a full impact assessment is not required.

Impact assessment at programme scale. At programme level, an impact assessment for about 150 mentees in Spain costs about €6,500 if carried out internally and about €12,500 if commissioned externally, which corresponds to €43 and €83 per mentee. Autoocupació currently funds the impact assessment from its own resources.

Cost per participant, six-month cycle (€)			
Cost block	**Mentoring**	**Coaching**	**Training**
Programme implementation (incl. overhead)	371	756	347
Evaluation	49	49	89
Impact assessment	147	147	121
Total with Impact Assessment	**518**	**903**	**467**
Total with Evaluation	**420**	**805**	**435**

Table 16: Cost per participant of a six-month support cycle by format; Autoocupació process cost calculation, Spain. Overhead on all activities is included in programme implementation; totals are calculated before rounding. Volunteer mentors' time not costed.

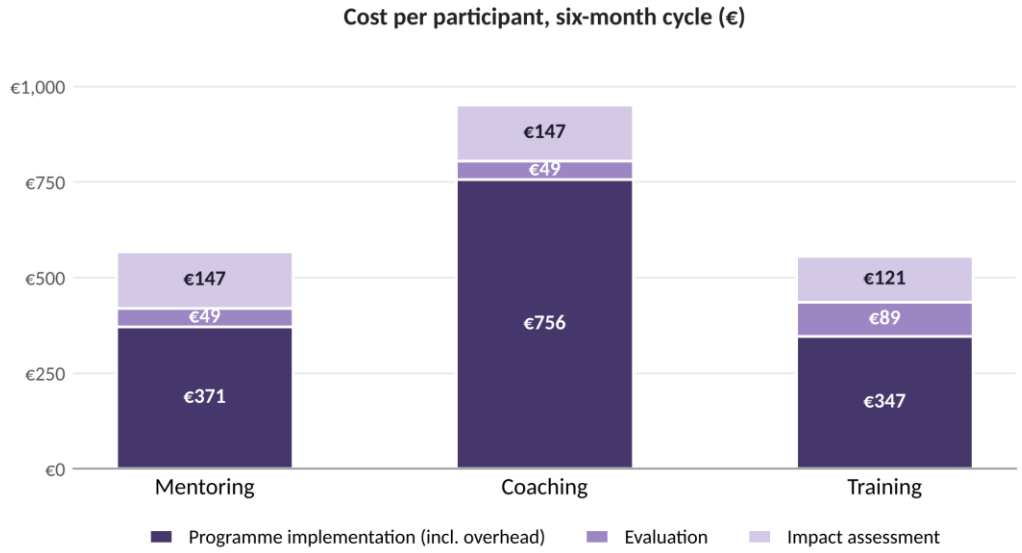


Figure 14: Cost per participant of a six-month support cycle by format and cost block (€); Autoocupació process cost calculation, Spain.

The rest of this section focuses on the cost of implementing the programme and of extending it, leaving evaluation and impact assessment aside. For a six-month cycle, implementation costs €371 per participant for mentoring, against €756 for coaching and €347 for training, so coaching costs about twice as much as mentoring to implement. Mentoring is cheaper because the core of the intervention, the relationship, is provided by volunteers, while paid staff time is concentrated on outreach, onboarding, training, matching and monitoring. Training is somewhat cheaper to implement because delivery is shared across a group, but it offers no individual relationship and only one monitoring contact, while the qualitative findings of this assessment identify the relationship as the active ingredient of change.

Extending support beyond six months. The largest difference between the formats appears when support needs to be provided for longer than six months. In mentoring, most of the staff time is spent at the start of the cycle: outreach, onboarding, training and matching are one-off activities. Once a relationship is established, extending it by six months requires only about two hours of management time to extend the mentoring agreements with mentor and mentee, plus monthly monitoring of 30 minutes for the further six months. Including overhead, this comes to about €162 per participant, or €27 a month, less than half of the monthly implementation cost of the first cycle (€62). In coaching, the cost is driven by the number of sessions delivered by paid staff, so it grows almost in proportion to the duration: six further months with twelve more sessions and monitoring add about €620, or €103 a month, not far below the €126 a month of the first cycle. A six-month coaching extension therefore costs considerably more than implementing a complete six-month mentoring cycle (€620 against €371). Training programmes typically run for three to six months and are not extended beyond that; a further course would be a new intervention rather than continued support. Table 17 shows the cumulative implementation cost.

Cumulative implementation cost per participant (€, including overhead)				
Format	**Implementation, 6 months**	**Extension, 6 more months**	**Implementation, 12 months**	**Per extra month**
Mentoring	371	162	533	27
Coaching	756	620	1,376	103
Training	347	not offered	n/a	n/a

Table 17: Implementation cost of extending support from six to twelve months by format; Autoocupació process cost calculation, Spain. Mentoring extension: two hours of management to extend the agreements plus six monthly monitoring contacts of 30 minutes. Coaching extension: twelve further sessions plus monitoring. Training programmes typically run for three to six months and are not extended.

Over twelve months, implementing mentoring costs €533 per participant against €1,376 for coaching. Coaching is about twice as expensive as mentoring to implement over six months and 2.6 times as expensive over twelve, and the gap keeps widening the longer support continues. Training does not offer this option, since training programmes typically end after three to six months. This matters because the results of this assessment point to a need for longer support for part of the cohort. Participants below the invisible ceiling of €900–€1,099 and those in temporary or seasonal work struggled to progress within six months, and Section 6.2 identifies time as a critical success factor. Mentoring is the format in which such differentiated, longer support can be offered at the lowest additional cost. As an illustration, extending the mentoring relationship by six months for one in three of the 108 participants would add about €5,800 to the programme budget.

Limitations and additional considerations. The cost figures in this section should be read as a cost comparison rather than a cost-effectiveness analysis in the strict sense. The costs of coaching and training are modelled on the same process logic, but this assessment did not measure their outcomes, so no cost per outcome can be

compared across formats. The calculation also excludes the time that volunteer mentors contribute; valued at market rates, this time would add considerably to the economic cost of mentoring, although not to the cost borne by the provider. Finally, the monitoring time assumes that coordinators have sufficient capacity. The Mentoring Guide sets this at 50 to 75 active relationships per coordinator, and under-resourcing the role would lower the cost of the programme at the expense of its quality.

The process costs are calculated for a programme size of 100 mentees who are supported by 60 to 75 mentors. It is recommended to have identified and qualified more mentors to make sure the mentees can work with a mentor that fits their needs and is able to form a good working alliance.

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Annex 1 – Updated data by October 2026

Impact assessment data collected until 30.10.2026

Total number of respondents at PRE: 117

Total number of respondents at END: 40

Total number of respondents at POST: 31

Employment status

Category	Pre (n=31)	% Pre	End (n=31)	% End	Δ	Post (3m) (n=31)	% Post	Δ
Employed	11	35%	23	74%	39%	23	74%	39%
Self employed	2	6%	0	0%	-6%	0	0%	-6%
Informal work	0	0%	1	3%	3%	1	3%	3%
In education or training	1	3%	1	3%	0%	1	3%	0%
Unemployed	17	55%	6	19%	-36%	6	19%	-36%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%

Table 11: Full Pre → End → Post triad (n=31)

Type of employment

Category	Pre (n=31)	% Pre	End (n=31)	% End	Δ End - Pre	Post (3m) (n=31)	% Post	Δ Post - Pre
Permanent contract	4	13%	15	48%	35%	16	52%	39%
Self-employed	2	6%	0	0%	-6%	0	0%	-6%
Seasonal contract	3	10%	4	13%	3%	2	6%	-3%
Temporary contract	4	13%	4	13%	0%	5	16%	3%
Informal work / family business	0	0%	1	3%	3%	1	3%	3%
In education or training	0	0%	1	3%	3%	1	3%	3%
Unemployed	18	58%	6	19%	-39%	6	19%	-39%

Table 12: Full Pre→End→Post triad (n=31)

Employment status transition

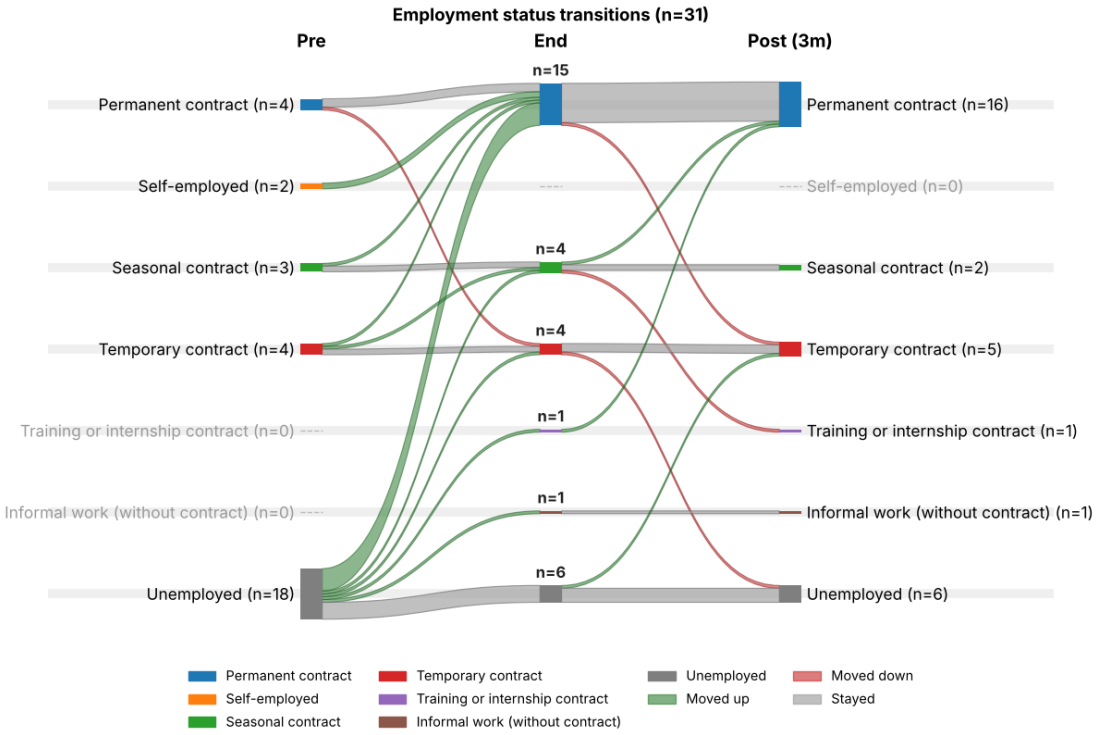


Figure 6: Employment status transitions, n=31 (Pre → End → Post)

Distribution of persons in employment at the three timepoints in relation to the 30 working hours threshold

Group	N=13	% of N=13	N=25	% of N=25	N=25	% of N=25
Working < 30 hours/week	9	69.2.1%	9	36%	8	32%
Working ≥ 30 hours/week	4	30.8%	16	64%	17	68%
Not reported					1	%
Total	**13**	**100.0%**	**25**	**100.0%**	**25**	**100%**

Table 13: Distribution of persons in employment by the 30 hours/week threshold

Evolution of monthly income

Category	Pre (n=31)	%	End (n=31)	%	Post (3m) (n=31)	%
Less than 200€	9	29%	4	13%	5	16%
200€ – 499€	5	16%	3	10%	3	10%
500€ – 699€	3	10%	3	10%	1	3%

700€ – 899€	5	16%	2	6%	1	3%
900€ – 1.099€	3	10%	6	19%	5	16%
1.100€ – 1.299€	4	13%	4	13%	4	13%
1.300€ – 1.499€	0	0%	3	10%	5	16%
More than 1.500€	2	6%	6	19%	7	23%
Not stated	9	29%	4	13%	5	16%
Total	**31**		**31**		**31**	

Table 14: Full Pre→End→Post triad (n=31)

Income bracket transition

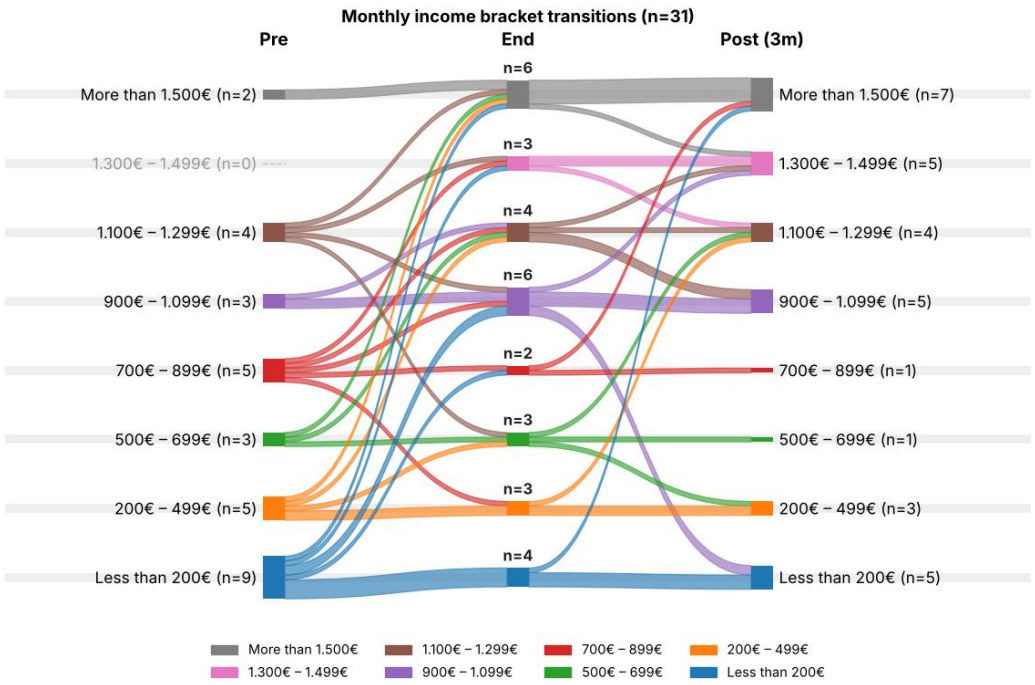


Figure 8: Monthly income transitions, n=31 (Pre → End → Post)

Distribution of persons in employment at three timepoints in relation to the minimum wage threshold

Income Category	Pre (n=31)	Pre (%)	End (n=31)	End (%)	Post (n=31)	Post (%)
Below minimum wage (< €1,180/month)	25	80.6%	18	58.1%	15	548.8%
Above minimum wage (> €1,180/month)	6	19.4%	13	41.9%	16	51.6%
Total	**31**	**100.0%**	**31**	**100.0%**	**31**	**100.0%**

Table 15: Persons below the minimum wage

The shift in average income from PRE to END and PRE to Post timepoints

Average income increase (band-midpoint estimate, live formula)		
Comparison	Average increase (€)	N (respondents with income data at both timepoints)
Pre → End (matched Pre & End,	303	40
Pre → Post 3m (full Pre/End/Post triad	371	31

Table 16: Average income increase

Intention to go back to school

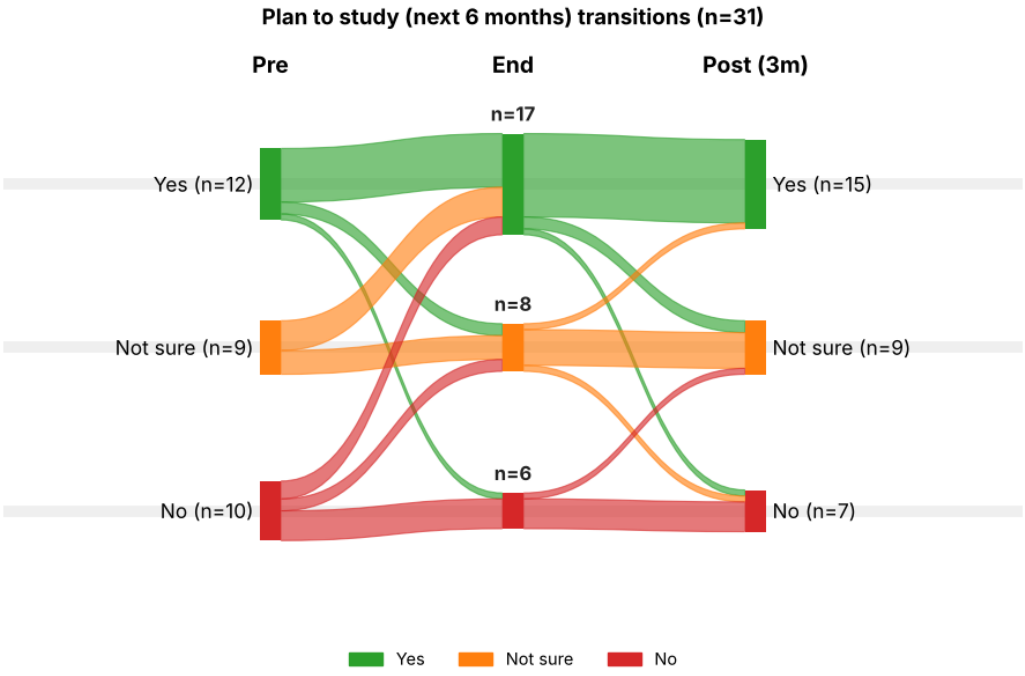


Figure 10: Intention to return to school or education, n=32 (Pre → End → Post)

Prosocial scales

#	Scale	Pre Mean	End Mean	Δ	t-test p	Wilcoxon p	Agreement
1	GSE-SE (Self-Efficacy)	8.00 (1.06)	8.25 (1.54)	+0.25	0.1446	0.0570	Agree: NS
2	GSE-RE (Resilience)	7.09 (1.25)	7.48 (1.47)	+0.39	0.0639	0.0194	Disagree
3	Proactive Coping	7.78 (1.18)	7.81 (1.45)	+0.03	0.8241	0.5899	Agree: NS

#	Scale	Pre Mean	End Mean	Δ	t-test p	Wilcoxon p	Agreement
4	Social Responsibility	8.80 (0.95)	8.62 (1.13)	−0.18	0.2662	0.4094	Agree: NS
5	Social Trust	6.83 (1.79)	7.16 (1.80)	+0.34	0.2826	0.2253	Agree: NS
6	Prosocial Actions	8.40 (1.18)	8.47 (1.22)	+0.07	0.6014	0.8676	Agree: NS
7	Creativity & Problem-Solving	7.67 (1.19)	7.78 (1.31)	+0.12	0.4423	0.3128	Agree: NS
8	Risk-Taking	7.78 (1.42)	7.81 (1.59)	+0.03	0.8542	0.6124	Agree: NS
9	EQoL (Wellbeing)	7.10 (1.49)	7.72 (1.74)	+0.62	0.0287	0.0123	Agree: sig
10	SIQoL (Social Inclusion)	6.89 (1.77)	7.31 (1.81)	+0.42	0.1738	0.3022	Agree: NS

Table 18: Pre → End (n=40)

#	Scale	Pre M (SD)	Post M (SD)	Δ	t-test p	Wilcoxon p	Agreement
1	GSE-SE (Self-Efficacy)	7.98 (0.92)	7.77 (1.13)	−0.21	0.2842	0.3654	Agree: NS
2	GSE-RE (Resilience)	7.02 (1.15)	7.07 (1.35)	+0.06	0.8225	0.5452	Agree: NS
3	Proactive Coping	7.66 (1.09)	7.65 (1.33)	−0.02	0.9162	0.9482	Agree: NS
4	Social Responsibility	8.74 (0.94)	8.63 (0.90)	−0.11	0.5204	0.9086	Agree: NS
5	Social Trust	6.85 (1.71)	7.19 (1.70)	+0.34	0.3264	0.3469	Agree: NS
6	Prosocial Actions	8.34 (1.02)	8.32 (1.25)	−0.02	0.8992	1.0000	Agree: NS
7	Creativity & Problem-Solving	7.63 (1.13)	7.54 (1.12)	−0.10	0.6377	0.5076	Agree: NS
8	Risk-Taking	7.76 (1.21)	7.62 (1.42)	−0.14	0.5644	0.5533	Agree: NS
9	EQoL (Wellbeing)	7.34 (1.34)	7.13 (2.06)	−0.21	0.5650	0.7785	Agree: NS
10	SIQoL (Social Inclusion)	6.81 (1.74)	7.26 (2.10)	+0.45	0.2306	0.2698	Agree: NS

Table 19: End → Post (n=31)

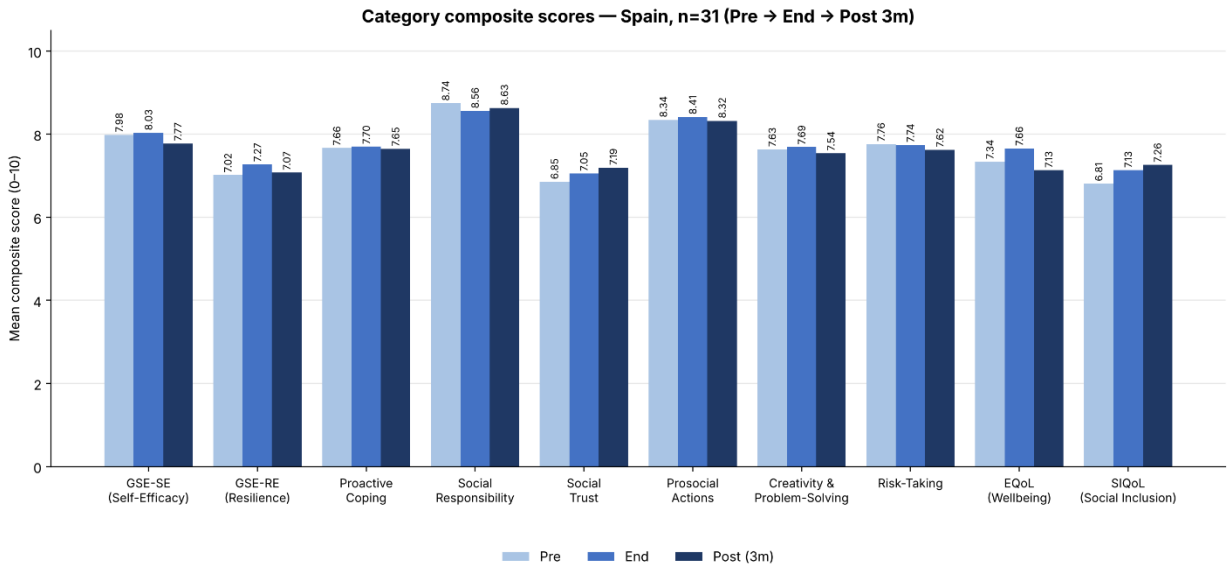


Figure 11: Category composite scores, n=31 (Pre → End → Post)

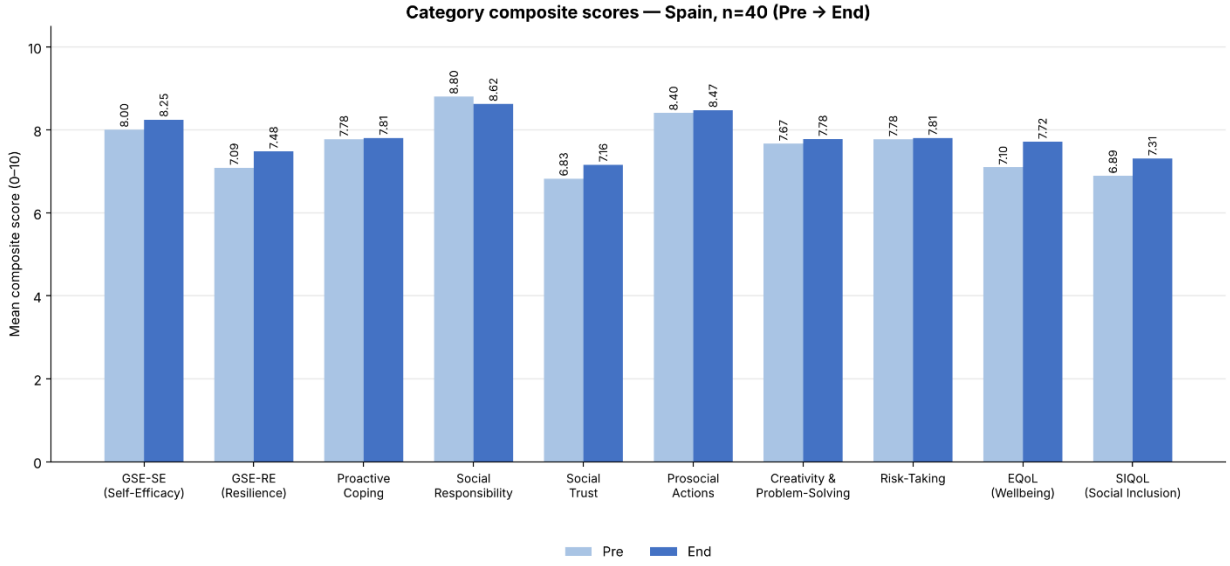


Figure 12: Category composite scores, n=40 (Pre → End)

Annex 2 – Impact assessment questionnaire

Ready4Work – Questionnaire of impact pre/end/post

Please enter your participant number: _____

Your date of birth: _____

Your gender: _____

Your postal code:_____

For the phrases below, please chose a number that best describes your reality:	**Not at all**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**Absolutely**
It is easy for me to stick to my goals.										
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.										
I always try to find a way to work around obstacles										
I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.										
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.										
When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.										
I am able to adapt when changes occur.										
Despite numerous setbacks, I usually succeed in getting what I want.										
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.										
After reaching a goal, I try to look for another more challenging one.										
When I experience a problem, I take the initiative in solving it.										
I try to pinpoint what I need to succeed.										
I feel comfortable to ask for help when needed.										
When I need support, I know where to address and get it.										
When someone provides me with support, I know how to best incorporate it										
I am always ready to take responsibilities.										
It is the duty of each person to do their task the very best way they can.										
I feel bad when I have failed to finish a task that I promised I would do.										
Most people are willing to help someone in need.										

When I am in need, I believe I can find people who will help me.										
Helping my friends/colleagues in their tasks gives me fulfilment.										
I frequently volunteer to help those who are in need.										
I offer my knowledge and abilities to others.										
I easily share with friends any good opportunity that comes to me.										
I am able of finding new ways to help other people cope with a difficult situation.										
I am confident of teaching/showing someone how to do something.										
I am able of working through my personal problems in a healthy way.										
I am able of choosing the best solution to a problem.										
I like challenges and beating the odds.										
I am a believer of taking chances.										
My friends would say that I'm a risk taker.										

For the phrases below, please chose a number that best describes your reality:	**Not at all**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**Absolutely**
I feel happy with my life these days.										
I feel happy with my current career path (training/education/present job/business).										
I am optimistic about my future.										
My close ones are proud of me.										
In the next six months I expect positive changes in my life.										

What is your current job status?

- No job / unemployed
- Informal work / no contract
- Internship contract
- Apprenticeship contract
- Seasonal/permanent-discontinuous contract
- Temporary contract
- Permanent contract

- Self-employed
- Other (please specify): _____

In total, how many hours do you work per week, on average? _____

What is your average monthly income in total? (Include salary, social benefits, unemployment benefits, informal jobs, family support, etc.) _____

What is your main source of income?

- Formal employment (with contract)
- Informal work (without contract)
- Social assistance (unemployment benefits, guaranteed income, etc.)
- Family or partner financial support
- Other (please specify): _____

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- No formal education
- Completed primary education
- Lower secondary education
- Basic vocational training
- Upper secondary education
- Intermediate vocational training
- Advanced vocational training
- Incomplete university studies
- Non-recognized studies from abroad
- University degree (Bachelor's, equivalent or higher)
- Other (please specify): _____

Are you currently studying?

- Yes
- No

Are you planning to be in studies within the next six months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

What is your current housing situation?

- I live with my family
- I share a flat with non-family members
- I live alone in a rented flat
- I live alone in an owned property

- I live with my partner in a rented flat
- I live with my partner in an owned property
- I rent a room
- I live in a temporary shelter or social service housing
- I live in an occupied (squatted) dwelling
- I am homeless
- Other (please specify): _____

Do you have people who depend on you financially or for caregiving? (more than one possible)?

- Children under 18
- Elderly or dependent family members
- I send money to support family abroad
- I provide financial support to family in Spain
- I have no dependents

Thank you for your participation!!