



Cases of discrimination in other areas

- 1. January. Cordoba. Discrimination by other agents.** A Roma man married a non-Roma woman and, little by little, became estranged from his family and even lost contact with other members of the Roma community. However, his sisters regularly visited him despite the fact that his children never had any contact with their father's side of the family. The man suffered a heart attack and died and Roma family members showed up at the funeral to pay their final respects. When the daughter saw them come in she ran out crying and asked them to leave because her boyfriend was coming and didn't know that her father was Roma and that could endanger their relationship. The man's sister then said that she would take her brother to a place where no one was ashamed of his life or of his death. That was enough to convince the daughter to allow the Roma side of the family to attend the funeral services.
- 2. January. Vigo. Discrimination by other agents.** A man, age 40, illiterate and with no communication skills and no driving license was accused by a company (on three occasions) of being the driver of a very expensive automobile (owned by the company) which had been involved in several traffic violations in an attempt to get out of having to pay traffic fines. In its statement the company provided a copy of the man's identity card and identified him as the driver. They had a copy of his ID because they regularly paid him for his services as a scrap metal vendor. The company's people are perfectly aware of the man's social circumstances and that he is totally defenceless. The traffic police processed the violations without notifying the accused party accepting the company's claims, where an incorrect address was provided, as valid. According to the postal acknowledgement of receipt, the notifications had been delivered to a person of the same ethnic origin and the same name but with a different ID number. As a result, the process went forward without any submissions from the alleged offender. In the end, a fine was imposed and Inland Revenue seized the man's assets. That was when he became aware of what was happening because they managed to get his address right to seize his bank account. Inland Revenue then seized the man's minimum income subsidy despite knowing that such subsidy is not eligible for seizure. They did this so that the affected party would come forward to exercise his rights although this should have been done ex officio. The FSG's Vigo office helped the man go from office to office submitting the different appeals and even applied for a court-appointed attorney and access to free justice which was subsequently denied by the Regional Government of Galicia. A claim was also initiated against the company for what it had done. In the view of the FSG, this is a case of discrimination. From the very beginning, the company took advantage of the victim's circumstances to evade a fine and the Administration ignored the accused's special circumstances, his situation of inequality and total defencelessness in the case.
- 3. January. Malaga. Discrimination by other agents.** A Roma man with a physical disability who had been working for the ONCE organisation for many years was suffering from discriminatory treatment which included insults and threats for over 20 years from a few neighbours who, among other things, blocked the complainant from gaining access to the presidency of the homeowners association. The administrator of the building of flats, while well aware of the situation, did nothing to remedy it. This is a case of discrimination, or even harassment, in light of the intimidating and hostile environment revolving around the man's ethnic origin. This discrimination, while not related to access to housing, is perpetrated by other members of the homeowners association in the building where the victim lives.

- 4. January. Cordoba. Discrimination by other agents (banking institution).** A young man went to his bank to take care of some business. The next day two police officers showed up at his door telling him that the bank had accused him of stealing a stamp and that he had to come with them to make a statement. Shortly thereafter, the bank withdrew its complaint but, in the meantime, the young man had filed his own complaint for slander and libel because there was no evidence to back up the accusation and it was based solely on negative prejudices and stereotypes against the Roma community; prejudices and stereotypes may have been reinforced on the part of the neighbours who witnessed how the police went to the man's house and accused him of stealing.
- 5. February. Malaga. Discrimination at the hands of the police.** An intercultural mediator working for the FSG was walking around a poor neighbourhood of the town where he had lived for many years and where part of his family still lives today. All of a sudden, a police officer approached him and asked to see his ID card and upon seeing that the address on his card did not correspond to the neighbourhood he was walking through he asked him why he was there if he didn't live there. His exact words were "if you don't live here, then you shouldn't be here." Apparently, the right to free movement does not apply in certain neighbourhoods where there is a significant or majority Roma population.
- 6. March. Cordoba. Discrimination in health-care.** An elderly Roma woman went to her local health clinic with her appointment to see her family physician. She sat down in the waiting room and the physician came out of his office and said to her in a loud voice for everyone to hear: "*You come here with no appointment and get away with it! I'm sick and tired of Reyes, Flores and Heredias and all other gypsies on my patient list! I'm tired of it and can't stand it any more!*" *You don't have an appointment and just come to waste my time.*" The woman then informed the physician that her surname was not Heredia or Flores or Reyes, that she did indeed have an appointment, that her blood pressure was 16, that she had an arrhythmia but that not to worry because she wouldn't bother him any more. She then went to the administrative office on the second floor and requested that her family doctor be changed. An FSG mediator went to see the physician at his office the next day. Although he did apologise, the apology was not heard by the victim. This is a clear example of direct ethnic discrimination in accessing health care services. Once again, the individual behaviours of a few are the cause of negative prejudices and stereotypes which are applied to the entire Roma community.
- 7. March. Cordoba. Discrimination in health-care.** A young Roma woman went to the emergency paediatric wing of her local health centre. She explained the symptoms her young daughter was suffering and the response she received was that Roma people needed to clean their houses more thoroughly and that most illness affecting Roma children was the direct consequence of poor home hygiene. This is a clear example of discrimination in health-care because this woman was not treated at all like other patients and was chastised for a behaviour that the physician attributes to the entire Roma community without even studying the case before her.
- 8. April. Granada. Discrimination at the hands of the police.** This case is about an Eastern European Roma woman participating in the Acceder Programme. She has two children. The two children were playing in the neighbourhood with a toy pellet pistol that their mother had bought them at the local thrift shop. A police patrol car was driving by and saw the older of the two boys with the toy pistol (which looked like a real BB gun) except that it had the inscription "made in China" on the barrel. They told the boy to give it to them, which he did, and then, according to the mother and several neighbours, the police hit the boy, put him in the car and took him to the station. The mother informed the police that the child was a minor and showed them his documentation. At that point, one of the officers apologised but the mother told him that she was going to file charges because they hit her son for no reason. Later, in July, the mother received notification from the police that the child had been given a 150 euro fine. The FSG lodged an appeal against the fine claiming that the police action was disproportionate considering that the two children were only playing and no other children were involved. It should be noted that the number of police checks and their intensity is usually excessive, i.e. higher in neighbourhoods where most residents are Roma.



- 9. April. Slovakia. Police.** At a police station in Kosice in Eastern Slovakia, several police officers mistreated a group of Roma children who they accused of stealing a handbag. The officers forced the children to punch one another, take off their clothes and they even scared them with aggressive dogs. When they were found out, the officers were suspended from duty and action was initiated to expel them from the force.

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Eslovaquia suspende a nueve policías por abusos contra niños gitanos

Los agentes les desnudaron y les obligaban a pegarse e insultarse

EFE - Praga - 09/04/2009

Vota ★★★★★ 85 votos

Los abusos cometidos contra seis niños gitanos en una comisaría de Kosice, en el Este de Eslovaquia, ha causado el cese de nueve agentes de los servicios de seguridad del país centro europeo.



Eslovaquia
A FONDO
Capital: Bratislava.
Gobierno: República.
Población:
5,455,407 (est. 2008)

La noticia en otros webs

- webs en español
- en otros idiomas

En unas circunstancias aterradoras y bajo los ladridos de perros agresivos, un grupo de policías obligó el pasado 21 de marzo a varios niños gitanos a desnudarse y pegarse entre ellos, mientras los gendarmes filmaban la escena en sus teléfonos celulares y con cámaras de video.

Los agentes, mientras tanto, amenazan y gritan a los jóvenes, con expresiones como "panda de gitanos", y les obligan también a besarse. Algunos de los niños fueron incluso mordidos por los perros.

"He sido informado de que nueve policías han sido suspendidos de sus funciones, mientras que el proceso de expulsión de siete de ellos del cuerpo de Policía está en estudio debido a la infracción del juramento policial", ha informado este jueves en Bratislava el ministro de Interior, Robert Kalinak

El ministro ha precisado que varios oficiales perderán su puesto, y que "entre ellos figura el director de la unidad motorizada rápida y su mano derecha, el director del Departamento de Policía Local, y el director del Departamento de adiestramiento de perros".

El personal subalterno de aquellos departamentos fue testigo de esos malos tratos perpetrados por sus jefes en la comisaría de policía en el barrio de Lunix IX, donde viven en su mayoría gitanos. "Han dañado gravemente el buen nombre del cuerpo y han hecho algo que no tiene nada que ver con la ética policial y está en contradicción con el juramento que hicieron", constató el presidente del dirección policial, Jan Packa.

Obligados a pegarse por robar un bolso
VIDEO - AGENCIA ATLAS - 09-04-2009

Un vídeo de teléfono móvil donde la Policía aparentemente abusa de un grupo de niños ha llevado la controversia a Eslovaquia. En él se observa cómo los niños son obligados primero a pegarse entre ellos y después a desnudarse. Los chavales, de en torno a los 10 años, habían robado el bolso a una mujer antes de ser detenidos. El vídeo llegó a manos del periódico SME Daily, quien ha difundido la noticia. El ministro de Interior eslovaco, Robert Kalinak, ha ordenado procesar a los policías por abuso de autoridad.

Comentarios - 11

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11 **Silvano Torres** - 10-04-2009 - 06:16:08h

Los organismos que no se renuevan, mueren. Esto es un llamado a todas las Religiones, es tiempo de inclusión.

10 **Fawdawi** (<http://fawdawi.blogspot.com>) - 10-04-2009 - 05:19:59h

¿suspendidos? Es decir, después de un castigo ¿regresarán a su trabajo los enfermos estos? Esto que hacen las autoridades eslovacas lo defino con una sola palabra: ASCO.

9 **paris paris** - 09-04-2009 - 19:27:06h

si si

8 **Mocho** - 09-04-2009 - 19:21:36h

Pues yo soy profesor. ¿Por qué yo no cobro derechos de autor por mis maravillosas clases, que además mis alumnos aprovechan de por vida y les sirven en su vida particular y profesional hasta que se muera?. Esto me parece una tomadura de pelo. Que cobren el precio que corresponda y punto; pero que eso sea de por vida...Y además con canon digital, uses los elementos de almacenamiento de memoria para lo que los uses, aunque no esté relacionado con estos fines. El estado favorece a unos pocos de forma injustificada.

7 **Lea** - 09-04-2009 - 18:56:22h

Y la de cosas que jamas saldrán a la luz, vejaciones y malos tratos de fuerzas del orden de cualquier parte del mundo. Incluso a ninyos... A fuera con esta escoria de humanos que se creen con derecho a todo.

CASE 9

- 10. April. Madrid. Racist Acts / Housing.** A series of demonstrations and public protests were organised against the construction of a road connecting two neighbourhoods, Retiro and La Estrella. The argument was that crime would rise in one of the neighbourhoods if people from the other were provided with easy access. One of the neighbourhoods is characterised by high levels of social exclusion and, in speaking out against delinquency and drug addiction, racist comments are made against the Roma population which is blamed for being at the origin of these problems. The media published statements such as: *"The gypsies are always causing problems", "they're going to send all the gypsies to our neighbourhood."*
- 11. May. Castile-Leon. Discrimination by other agents.** A regional television programme interviewed the president of a charity organisation because the homeowner's association of the building where the organisation was setting up a food kitchen was radically opposed to its being located there. In arguing how wrong the neighbours were in their protests, the president made the following argument: There's nothing to be afraid of because the people who will be coming to the food kitchen are "people just like you and I. There won't be any gypsies or people armed with knives". The equal treatment area together with the local FSG office sent a letter to the discriminating party asking for a public retraction. The party in question contacted the FSG office in Castile-Leon to apologise for his unfortunate remarks and stressed that it was not his intention to discriminate against anyone. He even said that he was going to the media to make the retraction requested. However, the FSG office closely monitored the press and no public retraction was published meaning that we have just one more case of discrimination in the media, with wide-ranging public repercussions, which is "settled" with a private apology which does nothing to offset the damaging effects of the original publication.
- 12. June. Ireland. Racist Incidents.** Racist attacks were perpetrated against Roma in the south of Belfast (Northern Ireland) in June 2009. The victims had suffered verbal threats and three properties were attacked that same day. The city's mayor spoke out against the attacks and encouraged citizens to support the victims. The Northern Ireland government then paid for plane tickets for Roma who wanted to return to their country as a result of the attacks.
- 13. June. Murcia. Racist Incidents.** The FSG organised an end-of-school party at a youth centre located in an industrial park in a district of Murcia. On their way home from the celebration, a few of the young people did damage to two vehicles and harassed people in the vicinity. When the FSG learned of what had happened, three workers went to speak to those who had been affected. Together with a worker from the youth centre, they went to the garage where the incident had taken place to see if the boys had got into any mischief there. They were informed that no damage had been done because the boys were stopped from entering the garage. After the youth workers identified themselves, the garage workers made the following statement in reference to the children: *"That bus full of dogs should have had a dog trainer on it"*. One of them added that he lived in a neighbourhood where Roma also lived and that he felt like taking a shotgun and killing them all. These comments were made in an aggressive and arrogant manner to people who they knew were FSG workers but that apparently didn't phase them in the least.
- 14. June. Navarre. Police.** According to the report submitted to the Navarre Parliament in 2009 by the Navarre chapter of SOS Racismo, there was an increase in the number of discriminatory police practices based on ethnic origin. The report indicated that it is very common for aliens or Roma to be asked to identify themselves. There are a number of examples of abuse, intimidation and mistreatment found in cases of aggressions against the Roma community which in one instance led to the death of a woman.
- 15. June. Granada. Racist Expressions.** This person is from Casanueva (Granada) and the incident occurred in Tocón, the town where her son lives in the province of Granada. The son is married to a non-Roma woman and they have a baby. A friend of the daughter-in-law mentioned several times that the husband was not the father of the baby. The woman went with her sister to visit her son in Tocón. The woman, her son, her son's father-in-law, her daughter-in-law and her sister were in a bar having a drink when the friend drove by in her car. This friend started shouting at the couple,



insulted them and even acted as if she was going to punch them. The rest of the family members went outside to see what was going on and the father-in-law even had to grab the girl's arm to keep her from punching his daughter. When the sister asked the girl why she was doing this the latter responded "... I'm not afraid of you gypsies... you're bad people and you're all alike" and then she went off to the police claiming that she had been injured.

- 16. June. Granada. Racist Incidents.** Three Roma workers who are involved in the PAE (educational action project) fostering education in Granada's northern district, were at the primary school on the day final grades were being distributed. They stopped to talk to a child and her mother who they knew from the school but whom they do not work with because she is a year younger than the groups they teach. They began talking about the child's plans for the summer and one of the workers asked her if she was going to go to the local pool in the summer to which the child, in front of her mother, responded as if it were the most normal thing in the world: "*Not me. That place is full of gypsies*". The mother showed no reaction whatsoever. Maybe she was not aware that two of these FSG workers were Roma. This is an example of how prejudice arises out of ignorance and is passed from one person to the next generating situations of discrimination.
- 17. July. Granada. Discrimination by the Administration.** During an FSG reception interview of a new programme participant, the FSG worker asked the woman if she was receiving a minimum social salary to which the interviewee responded that she used to but not any more because she did not have a good relationship with her social worker who had to file the application form on her behalf. They continued talking and the woman told her that no application had been filed on behalf of her sister either because that required a home visit by the social worker who told her that she could not do that because she didn't feel secure in that neighbourhood. Most of the people living in the neighbourhood in question are Roma and, while not a shanty town, it is run down. However, the other social workers properly discharge their visitation duties. In short, two Roma families are unable to apply for social assistance because a civil servant refuses to do her job which she does do for the rest of the service users. This is due to the fear which is rooted in the negative prejudices and stereotypes she harbours.
- 18. July. Granada. Racist Incidents.** An FSG worker was waiting for the bus in the north of the city when a woman with a visible physical disability approached her and tried to make conversation by saying how fed up she was with her father. She talked about having to go to the doctor, that she didn't have money for the bus fare, that she had many problems, that her support payment didn't come through and then she said: "You can't trust the Gypsy women here, I know how they behave. They have bad manners, they don't know how to speak properly, they're bad people. I don't want to live here anymore." This is a clear example of how "accepted" and "normal" racism towards the Roma community is. It can come up that easily in any superficial conversation with a stranger.
- 19. July. Granada. Racist Expressions.** An FSG worker on her way to do her weekly monitoring of local training programmes overheard a conversation on the bus between two people she knew taking about the famous "crisis". Eventually the conversation went off on a tangent criticising Roma from Eastern Europe saying that they don't want to work and all they want are free handouts without having to do anything in return. This is the idea that the majority of local people have of Romanian Roma and is based on negative prejudices and stereotypes which, in nearly all cases, are applied to the entire community: they're thieves and they work as little as possible.
- 20. August. Granada. Discrimination at the hands of the police.** A young man of about 20 on a motorcycle with no documentation was stopped by the police while driving through town. When asked for the motorcycle's documentation the young man said that he didn't have it to which one of the police officers responded: "*all gypsies and Moroccans should be kicked out of Spain*". The other officer who was older told his colleague that he shouldn't make comments like that. As they were bringing the young man to the station, the younger officer saw that he was limping and started to hit him on his bad knee with his baton "to see if he was faking". The young man was very intimidated by this treatment and the comments made.

- 21. August. Hungary. Racist Incidents.** In a Hungarian village called Tatárszentgyörgy, a Roma man and his 5 year old son were victims of a premeditated murder. The perpetrators of the crime threw incendiary bombs at the family's home and shot the father and his son as they were trying to escape the flames. The assassins have rekindled the violence propagated by extreme right wing groups in Hungary: In November 2008, two brothers were assassinated in a very similar incident in the town of Nagysécs in the east of the country. The extreme right wing party called Jobbik and its paramilitary wing, the Hungarian Guard, dress in a uniform which is reminiscent of the fascist groups which supported the Nazis and employ the standard rhetoric of hatred against Roma and Jews. Tatárszentgyörgy was the site of a controversial parade by the Hungarian Guard where chants revolved around "cleaning up" public life of what they referred to as "gypsy crime". Shortly after this parade, a court disbanded the "Hungarian Guard Cultural Association" for instilling fear in the hearts of Roma people and other minorities and for attacking the dignity of Jews". A report by a Council of Europe committee criticised Hungary for the "rapid increase in racism in public discourse" and for the increasing dissemination of racist messages against Roma in the press.
- 22. September. Granada. Racist Incidents.** Two sisters, participants in FSG programmes went to a garage where they had an appointment to fix their car. They stood in a queue where other customers were waiting. One of the sisters approached the door of the office to take a look at a list of names of customers and the time of their appointment. A man waiting in the queue called to her in a loud voice telling her to go to the end of the queue. The girl explained that she just wanted to look at the list and that someone was saving her place in the queue but the man just repeated the same thing but this time was louder. One of the sisters told him that someone was holding their place in the queue so why what did it matter to him whether she waited in the queue or out of it. Then, out of the blue, the man said: "*look at how the gypsy clicks her heels*". The man's wife then added: "*And then you gypsies say that you suffer discrimination, you're all just so.....*". Then the man meeting with the customers came out of his office and called the two sisters because it was their turn. No one had to wait in the queue after all because everyone had a pre-assigned appointment. This is a clear example of the sort of discrimination suffered by members of the Roma community for the mere fact of their ethnic origin. The sisters were the only ones treated in this manner by the other customers who, blinded by their negative prejudices and stereotypes, simply assumed that the girls were trying to skip ahead in the queue. It is also a typical example how discrimination against the Roma community is "justified" and of how the behaviour of a single person justifies discrimination against an entire community.
- 23. October. Granada. Discrimination by the Administration.** A woman who was referred from the Municipal Training and Employment Institute (IMFE) approached the local FSG office seeking employment and training. The IMFE later called the FSG, on behalf of the social worker, to request a report on how this person was getting on in order to keep things "under control". According to this social worker, the woman made no effort to find work and did nothing to improve her situation. In fact, according to the IMFE worker, the social worker said, and we quote: "*The fact is that these people don't want to work. The only thing they want is to live off welfare*". The IMFE worker described the social worker as being prejudiced.
- 24. October. Malaga. Discrimination at the hands of the police.** A Roma man who works for the FSG was driving near a Roma neighbourhood when two police officers ordered him to stop his vehicle. They told him to get out of the vehicle and open the boot. The driver's companion asked the officers if they stopped him because he was Roma, has long hair and was driving a Mercedes close to Roma neighbourhood. The officer implicitly recognised the truth when he answered: "Well... you know how it is." After a few minutes the conversation became more friendly and, while the officer did not apologise, he did recognise that he had acted on his prejudices.
- 25. October. Malaga. Discrimination by other agents.** Since the local Workshop School was first set up there were frequent complaints, many unjustified, from the homeowners association of the building where the school was located concerning cleanliness, motorcycles driving where they were not supposed to, etc. It just so happens that the offices of the IMFE (Municipal Training and



Employment Institute) are located in the same building so there are many participants from both services coming and going every day. However, it would appear that only the participants in the FSG programme are responsible for these problems. Could this have something to do with the fact that the word "gypsy" is written on the window of the facilities used by the workshop school while IMFE office has not such inscription? The fact is that no one even bothered to check which programme the motorcycle riders or litterbugs were from.

- 26. October. Jaen. Racist Incidents.** A neighbour from the building where the local FSG has its headquarters came by to see us. He started to talk about the signs from our awareness-raising campaigns "Employment makes us equal" but then changed the subject and starting saying things like "all Roma are the same, they don't want to work, children go barefoot and live poorly because they choose to, they prefer to live on the dole rather than make an effort to study and find a job" etc. One of the FSG workers asked him how many Roma he knew personally because it was obvious that his opinions were based on what others say, things that he's heard more than on his own personal experience. This image he has corresponds to marginalised people, Roma and non-Roma, but he was applying it to the Roma community in general. The man just turned and walked away.
- 27. November. Jerez. Racist Incidents.** This case came to us through our press monitoring system. According to a local paper, a Flamenco group fell victim to vandalism in the form of graffiti, some of which was racist. The newspaper published a photograph of the façade with the words "Gypsies no" painted on it.
- 28. November. Granada. Racist Incidents.** A local woman and FSG worker received a phone call from a real estate agency because she had been looking into renting a flat. She told the agency that she was no longer interested because she had bought her own flat and the people at the agency started asking her questions about it. They asked her where her flat was located and when she told them they said that now they understood why she didn't like the flat that they had offered to her because it was located in the "gypsy part of the city".
- 29. November. Jerez. Racist Incidents.** A couple was having problems with a neighbour. On one occasion shoved the couple's youngest daughter and her boyfriend. Other neighbours who witnessed the incident reproached the aggression saying that he should feel ashamed for hitting a woman to which he responded: "*I'm going to shoot those gypsies. You can get out of jail but not out of the cemetery.*" The police brought him to the station to take his statement. The hearing is still pending. Moreover, this man has made a habit of going to the shop where the couple's oldest daughter works as a cashier and as he approaches the check-out counter he acts as if he's speaking on his cell phone and says things like "these stinking gypsies".
- 30. December. Huelva. Discrimination by other agents.** A woman was waiting for her daughter at the entrance to school at the end of the school day and called her by her full name (given and surname) to get her attention. Another mother who was waiting nearby heard her and said: "Yuck, Vargas! That's a Gypsy surname", to which the child responded, "that's because I'm Roma". Another mother then advised her: "well don't go around telling people because you don't look gypsy" to which the girl's mother replied that she had nothing to hide, that her father is Roma and her daughter is proud to be Roma. It is not something to conceal.