

# Youth



The FSG has taken careful note of the role played by Roma youth as agents for change in the living standard and advancement of the Roma people. In 2006 the Area of Youth continued to encourage Roma youth to increasingly take advantage of the different youth resources available in our country and to see to it that their rights and duties, just as any other group of young citizens in Spain or elsewhere in the European Union, are included in the design of youth policies.

In achieving this goal, we have received economic and institutional support from the Youth Institute through the signing of the VII Collaboration Agreement between that entity and ours; the Spanish Youth Council with which we signed the III Collaboration Agreement and where the FSG's Area of Youth coordinates the Roma Youth Working Group; and the European Union's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency supervised by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Union. There are also many administrations and institutions who help us to achieve these goals on the regional and local levels.

Also, through the *Chavós Nebó – Youth Today* Network fostering Information and Participation among young people, the Area has developed a wide-ranging programme of activities catering to those seeking an environment in which to participate, meet and share with other Roma youth. During the course of 2006, the following different lines of work were conducted:

» **Information and Participatory Youth Network *Chavós Nebó – Youth Today. An intercultural forum for young people.*** This Network was launched in the year 2000 and by 2006 had 17 teams (with the incorporation of Burgos and Leon) comprising the Youth Network for Information and Empowerment, all recognised by their respective Coordination Centres and local administrations and most of them form part of the regional and state-wide Youth Information Network. Moreover, these youth information and empowerment services are run by youth informers who are mostly young Roma.

The results of this programme show that it is increasingly taking root among Roma youth thanks to its offer of annual activities and the methodology adopted by these services which have the support of several different local, regional, national and European youth administrations.

Given the considerable increase in the number of empowerment teams forming the Youth Network *Chavós Nebó – Youth Today*, it became necessary to design a more structured training block in accordance with the FSG's yearly Strategic Plan. In this connection we would draw attention to the training provided in the development, management and evaluation of youth projects, drug-abuse prevention and education on HIV/AIDS with the Roma population (see Area of Health), the main training sessions offered in 2006.



I MEETING OF ROMA YOUTH, CASTILLA-LA MANCHA

› **Regional Roma Youth Meetings.** In 2006, within the framework of the VIII Collaboration Agreement between the FSG and the Youth Institute, regional meetings of Roma youth were organised as a forum for dialogue and exchange in each of the Spanish regions (Autonomous Communities). In Castile-La Mancha and Extremadura we managed to bring together approximately 100 young people who worked together on the current situation and looked into future perspectives as agents of change for the Roma people.

› **Collaboration with other youth organisations, technical assistance and awareness-raising.** In 2006, as part of the close collaboration between the FSG's Area of Youth and the Spanish Youth Council (Spanish acronym CJE), this principle platform for youth organisations in Spain identified the need to create a working group to make sure that Roma youth were able to participate in the CJE. This body was therefore created within

With the inclusion of Burgos and Leon in the Chavós Nebó – Youth Today youth information and participation network, there are now 17 information contact points.

the Specialised Equal Opportunities Commission under the Area of Diversity. Responsibility for the coordination of its activities was assigned to the FSG's Area of Youth with a view to encouraging the rest of the member entities to get involved in the defence of the rights and duties of Roma youth.

At regional level, the FSG's Area of Youth now participates in a greater number of Regional Youth Councils such as the Councils of the Autonomous Communities of Madrid, the Principality of Asturias, Extremadura and Castile-La Mancha.

Also, in the framework of collaboration with the Youth Institute and within the *Pilot Project for Citizenship Education targeting Roma youth* funded by the European Social Fund, the *Handbook for work and awareness-raising with Roma youth* was published for use as an awareness-raising tool to foster the elimination of stereotypes and prejudices levelled at the Roma community. This publication was compiled with graphic material designed for the FSG's awareness-raising campaign entitled "Get to know them before judging them".

› **European projection of the Area of Youth.** We should draw attention to the major achievement of the Area of Youth in 2006, i.e. the implementation of the transnational project entitled *Roma Youth—European Citizenship*, funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture, seeking to familiarise Roma youth with the concept of European citizenship. The project is under way with the collaboration of the following entities: *Romani Baht Foundation* (Bulgaria), *Open Society Foundation* (Slovak Republic), *Impreuna Agency for Community Development* (Romania) and *Athinganoi S. O.* (the Czech Republic), and has also received economic



YOUTH NETWORK MEETING, MERIDA

backing from the Spanish Youth Institute, the Youth Institute of the Principality of Asturias, the Youth Institute of the Region of Murcia, the Youth departments of the Town Halls of Avilés, Gijón and Oviedo, and technical support from the Youth Institute of Romania and the Directorate-General for Youth of the Castile-Leon Regional Government.

The project's main activities include educational courses on citizenship, the celebration of Europe Day, study visits to Brussels and Strasbourg, the design of a web page and discussion forum and the publication of a teaching handbook and sundry informative material.

For several years now the FSG has been a member of the Forum of European Roma Young People – FERYP, a platform of Roma youth organisations and individuals with no political affiliation and with headquarters in



YOUTH FROM CACERES TAKING PART IN FSG ACTIVITIES

Strasbourg whose aim is to promote fora for exchange and dialogue between Roma youth throughout the whole of Europe.

In 2006 the FSG participated in two events organised by the FERYP. The first was at the European Youth Centre in Budapest (Hungary) where work was undertaken on the importance of education and human rights as a vital tool in actions taken with the Roma youth population. The second was held at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg (France) where work focused on the wave of Romaphobia pervading Europe at the moment and where we presented the pillars of the work of our entity in the field of equal treatment and non-discrimination.