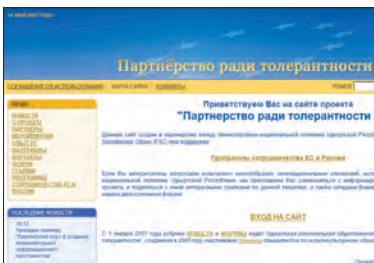


# International cooperation



WEBSITE OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME IN UDMURTIA (RUSSIA)

The enlarged Europe, with a Roma population (Roma, Traveller and Sinti) of between 10 and 12 million people according to recent estimates along with its cooperation mechanisms, provides a very advantageous environment for work on social inclusion and the fight against the discrimination of the continent's most important minority group. The fact is that working in different groups, fora and transnational networks facilitates exchange of the most successful methodologies, the joint development of tools and the identification of best practices in very diverse fields.

The FSG has been working in the European context for over 15 years and, since 1999, has been spreading its actions towards the Eastern European countries since this geographic area is where the greatest concentration of Roma population resides and where their social situation is most deteriorated. The currency and political relevance of minority protection at international level, together with the European enlargement process, has attracted quite a bit of attention over the last several years in light of the repercussions and impact it will have on Spain's Roma population.

2006 was a transition year for the European Union which was on the verge of incorporating two new members, and it was also the time for the evaluation of strategies, policies and funding instruments; the time to review achievements and failures and plan for the new 2007-2013 period.

In this context, throughout this year the FSG has moved forward on a number of international actions which can be divided into three basic areas of action:

“Working in different groups, fora and transnational networks facilitates exchange and the spread of the most successful methodologies.”

- › **Consulting and technical assistance** in the design and execution of measures and policies provided to the different levels of public administration (state, regional and local) and to Roma associations and social entities working with this population sector.
- › Specific **training** and improvement of the qualifications of the Roma themselves and of the field professionals working with them.
- › **Support and sponsorship of networks** for experience sharing with entities and institutions of other countries.

A number of different projects have been carried out in these work areas listed below and further developed throughout the rest of this Activity Report:

› The project entitled *Support for the Roma Council in the incorporation process of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a participant State in the “Decade of Roma Inclusion”*. This initiative, funded by the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI), is carried out in the Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and its main objective is to provide support to the Bosnian Roma Council in its development of National Plans for intervention in the areas of employment, housing and health for the Roma community to be presented at the “Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-2015)”

› In the area of education the Socrates-Grundtvig 2 project entitled: *A new approach to relations between students, teachers and parents (2005-2007)* is a project funded by the European Commission in which the FSG is a participating partner together with entities from Romania and Turkey.

› *Socrates-Grundtvig 2 Project: Skills for companies and job seekers (2005-2006)*. Within the scope of training and employment, this project fosters the organisation of exchanges and the production of tools in two areas: vocational counselling methodologies targeting job-seekers and interdependence with companies with a view to conducting an objective and practical assessment of the competences and skills required of potential workers. This is a European Commission-funded project with partners from Great Britain, France, Italy and Romania.



WORKING GROUP AT THE ROMA-EDEM INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR





› Within the framework of the fight against discrimination, the year-two activities of the *ROMA-EDEM* Project were implemented: *Promoting integration and equal treatment of Roma/Travellers in education and employment (2005-2007)*. This project is under the European Commission's anti-discrimination community action programme. This FSG-led project includes partners from Portugal, Northern Ireland, Romania, the Czech Republic and Hungary, the main objective of the initiative being that of bringing institutional practices into line with anti-discrimination legislation currently in force.

› At the beginning of 2006, the final activities of the project entitled *Partnership for ethnic tolerance* were implemented in the Republic of Udmurtia, one of the 89 regions of the Russian Federation. This project forms part of a framework programme of cooperation between the European Union and the Russian Federation. The project has been instrumental for the National Policy Ministry of Udmurtia in the development of new programmes and cooperation mechanisms with associations representing ethnic minorities. The project has developed the following subjects: tolerance at school, the conservation of minority languages, reception of new immigrant minorities and intercultural mediation.



› In the health field, the project *SASTIPEN: Reduction of health inequalities in the Roma community (2005-2007)*. This project is led by the FSG and has partners in Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Romania. The aim of this initiative is to reduce the inequalities suffered by Europe's Roma population in the area of health and it is funded by the European Commission and makes use of the collaboration platform: *Sastipen European Network*.

› The project *Roma Youth – European Citizenship (2006-2008)* is an FSG-coordinated initiative with partners from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Romania. Project activities focus on the training and capacity-building of Roma youth in the make-up and operation of the European institutions and their values and identity. This is a European Commission-funded project.

ITALIAN PARTNERS' VISIT TO OUR HEADQUARTERS  
AS PART OF THE GRUNDTVIG PROJECT

We would also highlight other actions undertaken through the area of International Cooperation:

» With the aim of fostering debate and dialogue regarding the institutional recognition of Roma in our country, **the International Seminar entitled *Institutional Recognition of the Roma community in Spain*** was conducted during the first quarter of the year in Madrid within the framework of the project bearing the same name and funded through the Human Rights Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. This meeting provided a unique opportunity to gain insight into the structure of the international rights of minorities, the models adopted in other countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Sweden) and the different recognition formulas which could be applied in the Spanish political-administrative context. There were over 60 participants at the seminar including representatives from the different Spanish administrations, political parties, Roma associations, representatives from another 5 European Union Member States, international organisations working with Roma and several different universities. The conclusions reached at the seminar can be found in a report also published in 2006.

» In 2006, the FSG participated in different seminars and working groups organised to plan actions targeting the Roma population in the programming of the new period of **Structural Funds 2007-2013**. Countries such as Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria invited the FSG to present the model developed in Spain through the *Acceder* Programme.



SEMINAR ON STRUCTURAL FUNDS AND ROMA COMMUNITY HELD IN PRAGUE