

Institutional activity

The Fundación Secretariado Gitano has always considered institutional activity as one of its fundamental work axes and has worked to foster its presence in the institutions establishing and improving relationships with the administrations, private entities, NGOs, the media, etc. and promoting networks and work platforms.



The good work done by our organisation was acknowledged this year with the Government awarding of **the Civilian Order of the Golden Cross for Social Solidarity** to the President of the FSG, Pedro Puente Fernández, “in recognition of his work at the helm of the Fundación Secretariado Gitano, platform from which he has encouraged the defence of the rights of this Community, its exercise of full citizenship and the fight on poverty and social exclusion”. This distinction was published in the Official State Gazette (Spanish acronym BOE) on 22 November and will be personally awarded by the Queen, Doña Sofía, at the beginning of 2007. Pedro Puente is a founding member and has been President since the time of the birth of the Secretariado Gitano during its period as an Association (1982-2001) and now as a Foundation. In 2002 he also received this important honour on behalf of the organisation Fundación Secretariado General Gitano “for its work in favour of the advancement and support of the Roma people”.

The FSG’s institutional presence is characterised by its **participation in the main institutional bodies and councils** related to its sphere of work thus giving it the opportunity to take part in the decisions affecting social issues having to do with the Roma community. The FSG is a member of the State Council of Social Action NGOs and of the Social Action NGO Platform. Strictly within the sphere of the Roma community, the Foundation is a member of the State Council of the Roma People and of the Advisory Commission to the Roma Development Plan. It also takes part in different Roma participatory bodies set up in some Autonomous Communities such as the Basque Country, Extremadura, Madrid and Catalonia.

In 2006, in an effort to promote the participation of the Roma community in public life and the institutions, the FSG implemented different actions targeting the **institutional recognition of the Roma community** and to that end organised an international seminar in the month of February to analyse international law in that regard, the recommendations of international organisations and the models adopted in other European countries with a view to making proposals to address issues affecting Spain. A book was subsequently published containing the material used at the seminar and conclusions.

The FSG's institutional activity is further strengthened through the **promotion of networking** both in Spain and throughout Europe in diverse spheres and with different types of entities. The FSG collaborates with Roma and non-Roma entities and with public and private institutions working basically in fields related to social exclusion, defence of Roma minority rights, the fight against discrimination, health, employment, etc.

Within the framework of activity undertaken jointly with other entities in 2006, we would stress the work done with the other operators of the European Social Fund's Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination, the result of which was a decalogue of proposals for the new 2007-2013 period of Structural Funds officially submitted to the Congress of Deputies in an act denominated "Debate on the state of non-discrimination".

In addition to networking initiatives most of which are promoted by the Foundation itself, **the FSG is a member of officially constituted platforms working intensely**, for example, in the European Anti Poverty Network – Spain (EAPN-Spain) as a member of the executive committee and also in the networks created



LEFT TO RIGHT: JOSÉ MANUEL FRESNO - DIRECTOR OF THE LUIS VIVES FOUNDATION, PEDRO PUENTE - PRESIDENT OF THE FSG, LUIS CRESPO - PRESIDENT OF THE ONCE FOUNDATION, JOSÉ LUÍS FERNÁNDEZ IGLESIAS – DEBATE MODERATOR AND TONI BRUEL - DIRECTOR OF THE RED CROSS; TAKING PART IN THE DEBATE ON NON-DISCRIMINATION.

at regional level. At international level, the FSG is a member of REIIES (European Network of Initiatives for Economic and Social Integration) and SASTIPEN (European Network targeting Health and the Roma Community).

Within the sphere of **institutional relations with the public administrations** at national level, the FSG continues to collaborate very closely with the different units of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, especially with the Administrative Unit of the European Social Fund (AUESF). In 2006 the Ministry of Health and the FSG renewed their Collaboration Agreement which implemented the Agreement signed in 2004 to foster policies designed to reduce health inequalities and promote the Roma population's access to health-care services on an equal footing with all other citizens. The agreement concluded with the Ministry of Education and Science a few years ago has likewise been renewed.

Furthermore, in the month of July the Ministry of Housing and the FSG signed a Collaboration Agreement setting up a framework of objectives and actions designed to forge ahead in gaining insight into the situation facing the Roma population having regard to housing and then to develop policy measures in accordance with that diagnosis.

The FSG's management of a part of the Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination allowed the Foundation some years ago to establish a number of agreements with local and regional administrations focusing



SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT WITH THE SOCIAL WORKS DIVISION OF CAJA DEL MEDITERRANEO

mainly on employment-related initiatives. These agreements have been renewed year after year and in most cases have spread to other fields of work such as education, health, etc.

We would also stress that in 2006 a concerted effort was made **to collaborate with private entities** on specific projects and initiatives. In addition to the collaborative efforts already established in previous years, we have added, inter alia, the Un Sol Mòn Foundation of Caixa Catalunya's social action programme, the Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo (CAM), the social action programme of Caja Madrid, the Housing Institute of Valencia and the ICO Foundation (Official Credit Institute).

Also, the dissemination of the awareness-raising campaign entitled "Get to know them before judging them" undertaken in two stages (2004-2005 and 2005-2006) gave us a unique opportunity to collaborate more closely with the media both at national and local level and thus conclude a framework of very diverse coordinated actions.

And finally, once again **the FSG has received a positive evaluation from the Lealtad Foundation** for the publication of its annual report reflecting aspects of quality and transparency in its work with social entities. In this connection, the FSG continues to work in collaboration with other entities forming part of the NGO Quality Network for the development of quality strategies, management tools and standards.



SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT WITH THE UN SOL MON FOUNDATION OF CAIXA CATALUNYA