



# Presentation



The year 2007 was designated by the Parliament and Council of the European Union as the *European Year of Equal Opportunities for All* for the purpose of raising awareness as concerns non-discrimination and equal opportunity. This is an important challenge which must be addressed by each and every citizen requiring special attention to those groups or individuals still suffering some form of “citizenship deficit” which is frequently the case of minorities. This is especially true of the Roma minority given that despite important progress made over the last few decades, this is still the group facing the greatest social rejection in Spain according to the latest CIS (Sociological Research Centre) studies.

At the FSG we have continued to work to the best of our ability on three major aspects which we feel are crucial in diminishing these disadvantages: improve the living standard of the Roma community’s most disadvantaged members; promote recognition and support of culture; and encourage full citizenship. In this arduous and complex task we must acknowledge (and express our gratitude for) the consolidation of institutional support and recognition of the Roma community which we hope will continue to grow and intensify at European, national, regional and local level because all of these have special relevance to the lives of citizens.

In this new edition of the *FSG Annual Activities report* (published in Spanish and English and 13 specific editions, one for each Autonomous Community where we work) we continue to adhere to the principle of transparency which guides our action as we publish this report on the work undertaken in 2007. These 12 months have been especially significant for the Foundation in that they have borne witness to the two major phases of our most important intervention in terms of resources: the *Acceder* employment programme. It is our hope that during this new stage of the Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination 2008-2013 of the European Social Fund just recently getting under way we are able to continue to consolidate the excellent results achieved during the previous year and also to learn from our mistakes, implement improvements and move boldly ahead despite the threat

of recession on the horizon which always takes the greatest toll on the weakest.

Employment is the subject of the new social awareness-raising campaign which, with the slogan “Employment makes us equal”, we began to disseminate at the end of 2007 given its importance as a key aspect in the social inclusion of the most disadvantaged individuals and groups. The new public presentations and communication initiatives carried out within this framework will also serve as a platform to provide our co-funders who have supported us and the society at large (supporting us through their tax contributions) with the main results of the actions carried out within the framework of the Acceder Programme during the 2000-2006 period.

In line with the new stage we have embarked upon, in 2007 we also began to take the first steps in the development of a new *Institutional Strategic Plan* allowing us to strengthen the foundation of an organisation which has grown appreciably over a short period of time. Striving to take an integral approach to its actions, the FSG has been developing a wide array of activities ranging from education to health and including culture, communication, quality, housing and international actions, this latter aspect taking on particular importance over the next several years. For all of these reasons it is important to step back and take a close look at the activities carried out with a view to complete the mission defined by the organisation as effectively as possible.

In closing, I would like to express to the Board of Trustees, the FSG’s team of workers and to all of the organisations and individuals who have been supporting us, the honour and satisfaction I felt upon receiving for the second time, from the hands of Her Majesty Queen Sofia, the Civilian Order of the Golden Cross for Social Solidarity, an award which endorses the work that the *Secretariado Gitano* has been doing for decades.

***Pedro Puente Fernández / Chairman***

