

Training in intercultural mediation

Ignorance of one's own world and that of others, especially in terms of ways of perceiving, understanding, feeling and acting, is a breeding ground for prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination and racism. This ignorance separates people, creates or maintains distance between them and hinders joint community building. It was within this context that the need for intercultural mediation arose.

There is a growing demand for mediators and trainers specialised in certain areas of social intervention (e.g. schools, family, access to employment, social-health services and social services in general). In this connection, priority has been placed on professional specialisation in order to be able to respond to increasingly specific requests.

With the foregoing in mind, the FSG's Area of Training has set the major objective of developing actions to enhance the capacity-building of mediators and trainers for social intervention with the Roma population.

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The following training actions serving a total of 179 participants were executed during 2008 by the Area of Training.

Training of mediation professionals

The purpose of these actions is to train mediators to prepare them to work professionally in the field of social and labour market integration and to boost neighbourhood services through intervention in fields such as education, health, employment, dispute mediation or community advancement, to name a few. These actions have led to the development of several courses. Three basic courses on *Mediator training in multi-cultural contexts* were given in Barcelona, Valencia and Puente de Retama (Ciudad Real). An advanced version of this same course was given in Valladolid. A course on *Mediation and family intervention through short-term family therapy* was also given in Vigo to provide an effective and positive response to the new challenges facing families.



“INTERCULTURAL MEDIATION COURSE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS: WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND FACULTY” - GRANADA



“MEDIATOR TRAINING COURSE IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT – LEVEL I” - PUENTE DE RETAMA (CIUDAD REAL)



“MEDIATOR TRAINING COURSE IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT – LEVEL II” - VALLADOLID

› Training the Trainer

These training initiatives focus on the training of individuals who, in turn, are responsible for the training of mediators working in the different areas of mediation with the Roma community. The course given in Seville entitled *Group mediation: the group as a vehicle for the construction of personal and social identity*, focused on the main topics of group intervention as a way to build community networks and also dealt with social intervention methodology in general. The course given in Granada entitled *Intercultural mediation in educational settings: working with families and faculty* was designed to provide intercultural mediation guidelines designed to overcome the inequalities suffered by groups that find themselves in disadvantaged educational and cultural situations.

› Dispute management training in multicultural contexts

The growing diversity of society adds to the number of disputes with a cultural component. The course entitled *Dispute settlement and management in multicultural contexts* which was developed in Zaragoza aims to train professionals in the design of mediation guidelines to overcome the inequalities suffered by groups in disadvantaged socio-labour situations. In addition to the aforementioned training acts, the dossier entitled “Challenges in multicultural contexts – intercultural skills and settlement of disputes” was distributed both in hard copy form and electronically. Among other things, this initiative makes material available through our Web page

to those interested in the topic of mediation. This documentation has become essential support material and a reference guide in the mediation courses given through this programme.

› Technical consultation measures regarding mediator training

The FSG has continued in its line of work providing technical consultation in training to public and private entities involved in the development of mediator training projects and/or socio-labour market integration actions with the Roma population which envisage, or could envisage, the mediator figure as part of the professional teams. This year technical consultation actions were carried out on the subject of mediation and mediator training as were dissemination actions through periodic FSG publications published on the Foundation’s web page. This has provided visibility to a number of successful innovative experiences concerning intervention with the Roma community in the areas of labour market integration and intercultural mediation, information regarding resources, conferences, seminars, etc. The resource centre has responded to many requests for information and resource material on mediation processes, mediator training, social insertion and the figure of the mediator.

We would stress that there are constant requests for technical assistance and consultation and call for help at the resource centre itself. The FSG has established coordination and partnerships in the field of mediation with many public and private institutions.