

Education



NATIONWIDE MEETING OF ROMA STUDENTS
(MADRID, MARCH 2009)

Everyone's right to an education is envisaged in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which speaks to the full development of one's personality and the deepening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It should also promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and ethnic and religious groups and promote the development of UN peacekeeping activities.

Education is also a right recognised in the Spanish Constitution which provides that basic education be both compulsory and free and the Organic Education Act (LOE) underscores the importance of the inclusive nature of education and equal treatment and non-discrimination under all circumstances.

The enrolment of Roma children in school in Spain has only been mandatory for just over 30 years now. Summing up, we could

say that this process has gone through three phases which sometimes overlap: exclusion, separate enrolment and unified enrolment under a majority group model¹.

Although an increasing number of minors are attending pre-school and attendance and academic performance in primary

school is clearly improving, we should not lose sight of the difficulties which still persist at these stages.

While Roma families are increasingly becoming involved in the education of their children, a long road ahead still remains.

The step from primary to secondary education, permanence in school and academic achievement in secondary school and the continuance of Roma students in post-compulsory studies are some of the challenges facing the educational community today. It must be remembered that 80% of the Roma students who enter their first year of compulsory secondary education drop out before completing their last year².

¹ Fernández-Enguita, M. (1999)

² *Incorporation and performance of Roma girls in compulsory secondary education*. Madrid: Women's Institute, CIDE, Fundación Secretariado Gitano, 2006. - 175 p. www.gitanos.org/educacion

According to the data published by the Sociological Research Centre (CIS)³, 76% of this Community has no more than a primary school education as compared to 36% of the overall Spanish population.

This has clear repercussions for the future professional career of young Roma men and women and is a barrier which must be overcome if we expect to ensure the true social inclusion and labour market integration of Spain's Roma population.

Within the framework of the aforementioned legislation, the Fundación Secretariado Gitano strives to guarantee the access and participation of Roma in education and, to that end, undertakes actions targeting the educational advancement of the Roma community in all levels of education and at all ages.

In 2009, the Fundación Secretariado Gitano implemented different socio-educational actions in collaboration with different administrations and organisations at local, provincial, regional and European level. Especially important were those focusing on the stages where the greatest difficulties have been detected, i.e. compulsory secondary education (ESO). In general terms, we can speak of:

- } Actions focused on promoting and facilitating the enrolment of Roma children in **pre-school** in light of the important role played by early school enrolment in the subsequent academic success of students and quality education.

³ "Analysis of the CIS survey as concerns the Roma population". Universidad Pública de Navarra/ALTER Research Group. Pamplona, 2008.



PROMOCIONA PROGRAMME POSTER

- } Actions designed to support educational mainstreaming of Roma students in **primary school** especially emphasising consistent attendance and the development of suitable teaching-learning processes while taking account of the intercultural educational framework, the involvement and support of families, monitoring and support of students' educational processes and educational compensation in situations presenting difficulties related with social disadvantage. Special attention has been given to attendance at primary school and accompaniment in gaining access to and persevering in compulsory secondary education.

“The step from primary to secondary education, permanence in school and academic achievement in secondary school and the continuance of Roma students in post-compulsory studies are some of the challenges facing the educational community today.

Within the framework of the 2007-2013 Multi-Regional Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination, mostly funded by the Ministry of Education, Social Policy and Sports, work on the Promociona Programme has begun⁴, focusing on students who are coming to the end of primary education and are about to embark upon compulsory secondary education.

The overarching objective of the Promociona Programme is to enhance academic achievement at this level of education and foster the participation of Roma students in post-compulsory education.

This programme targets students in mainstream educational processes and their families. Work is also done in close collaboration with schools and other agents involved.

**PROMOCIONA PROGRAMME
2009 DATA:**

Students	208
boys	44%
girls	56%
Families	179
Schools	86

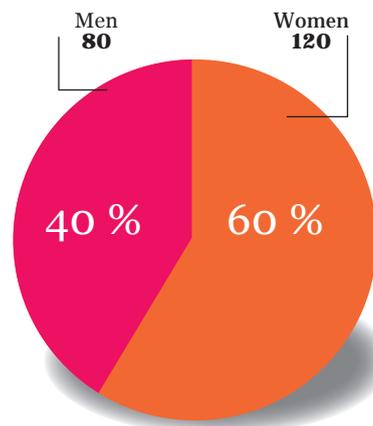
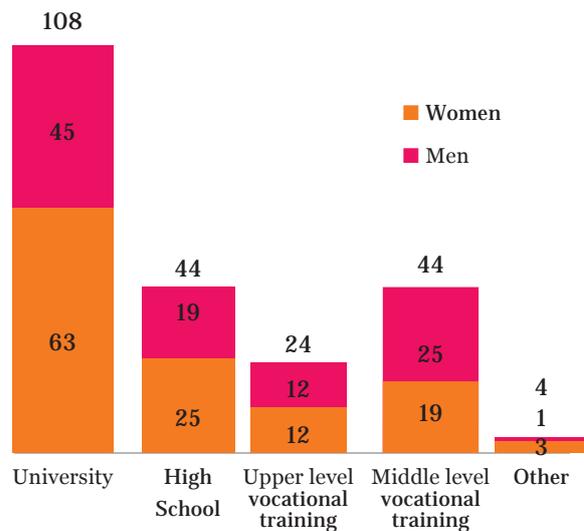
**STUDENT BODY: BREAKDOWN BY GENDER AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL.
2008/2009 ACADEMIC YEAR**

	Primary ed.	Secondary ed.
Male Students	22%	22%
Female Students	29%	27%

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS (2009)

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS: 238

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS: 224



4 http://www.gitanos.org/upload/32/21/Folleto_PROMOCIONA_FSG.pdf



THE PROMOCIONA CLASSROOM IN SALAMANCA

The involvement of Roma families in the education of their children is increasing but there is still a long way to go.

In 2009, pilot experiences were carried out in eight Autonomous Communities (14 centres): Andalusia, Asturias, Cantabria, Castile-Leon, Galicia, Madrid, Murcia and Navarre. Agreements were reached with 86 schools and a total of 208 students and 179 families were tutored.

} Access to and promotion of **post-compulsory studies** among the Roma community through the implementation of specific actions at national level subsidised by the Ministry of Education, Social Policy and Sports and funded through special income tax allocations. These actions consist mainly in the awarding of scholarships (a total of 224 students have received economic support), tutoring and the organisation of meetings with the participation of Roma students and their families along with professionals working in the educational and social fields.

In 2009 meetings of this sort were held in Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Castile-Leon, Galicia and a nationwide meeting of students. A total of 440 people took part in these meetings.

} Conduct basic diagnoses and ongoing monitoring of the scholastic situation of Roma students through **studies and research**.

} We continued in 2009 with work initiated in 2008 in collaboration with the Educational Research and Documentation Centre (CIDE) of the Ministry of Education, Social Policy and Sports and with the Women's Institute where a comparative study was made with those conducted previously by this Centre in 1994 and 2001 regarding the educational situation of the Roma community in primary education.

} This year the field work and analysis corresponding to a preliminary pilot study on the situation of Roma students in pre-school (age 3 to 6) was carried out in two Autonomous Communities: Madrid and Andalusia.

} Promote **basic training for Roma adults** through programmes targeting young people and adults who were early school leavers or who were never properly enrolled in school. The objective is to provide the means, using the FSG's own resources or in collaboration with other entities, for adults to acquire basic training for their personal development and to gain access to employment. This line of work includes literacy and basic training activities as well as preparation for academic diplomas or access to higher studies.

} Provide **training, support and technical advice to professionals** in the educational and socio-educational fields: In 2009, we responded to 189 requests to encourage **knowledge and advancement of Roma culture** in both formal and non-formal learning environments. The exhibit entitled “*Culturas para compartir, gitanos hoy*” (Sharing cultures, Roma today) is a resource used by schools and education professionals and comes with a teacher’s guide for classroom use. The exhibit has been visited by many people of all ages, especially school students.

In addition to the permanent exhibit located at the Adalí Calí centre in Vallecas (Madrid), we have two mobile exhibits which we have loaned out 20 times to schools, cultural centres, social services, NGOs and other FSG centres during 2009 with a total of approximately 2,500 visitors.

“The main objective of the Promociona Programme is to enhance academic performance at the end of primary school and in compulsory secondary education and to encourage Roma students to stay in school after the compulsory stage.”



FAMILY INTERVIEW



SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL FOLLOW-UP IN GRANADA