

Prison inmate population

The Fundación Secretariado Gitano focuses on the Roma prison inmate population and their families through this Programme. While the profile of the Roma inmate population changes over time, some noteworthy characteristics remain stable such as serious social breakdown, low social and educational level and major difficulties finding work and fitting in to society. This situation is further exacerbated by drug abuse problems and the number of HIV positives. We therefore find a profile characterised by important social, educational, labour and family deficits as well as health problems.

While these characteristics define the profile of these programme users, we must not forget that each inmate has his/her own unique nature when diagnosing their needs many of which can be summarised in the following points:

- } Labour training and access to resources
- } Literacy and academic training
- } Motivation to partake in training
- } Social skills training
- } Health education
- } Social support, expectations upon leaving prison
- } Guidance, information and support in adapting to prison
- } Social support for families.

While this profile often coincides with that of the rest of the prison population, it is important to stress Roma cultural differences and the marginalization faced by this community vis-à-vis the rest of the society.

In the case of the Roma inmate community, it is important to focus intervention on making resources more readily available, motivation, accompaniment and anything else to get inmates involved in their own treatment process.

The FSG attention and advancement Programme for Roma minority members in penitentiary



MADRID V PENITENTIARY CENTRE

centres has been carried out at Madrid V (Soto del Real) since 1995 with financial support from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and with the collaboration of the penitentiary institution. The main objective is to promote the advancement of the Roma inmate population from a socio-educational and cultural perspective with a view to contributing to their reinsertion process. A series of actions are carried out to achieve the objectives of the programme which includes four areas of action:

- } Individual; programme users are catered to individually allowing for more personalised and in-depth intervention where this intervention is more oriented to education.
- } Group; involving a series of socio-educational workshops to support and reinforce the content dealt with individually with a special accent on socialisation. We also run flamenco workshops, a women's classroom, health, literacy, school support and we publish a magazine called *Nómadas*.
- } Family; this is closely linked to individual attention and is focused on lessening the impact that incarceration has on the family of the inmate, on supporting the advancement and development of the latter and his/her family as well as access to mainstream resources.

In 2009 the *Nómadas* magazine celebrated its 10th anniversary with issue number 40.

Coordination; technical coordination is important both on the inside and outside. This is done with treatment teams, social workers, educators, psychologists and staff teams and health-care workers of the penitentiary centre itself.

Outside of the prison environment we work with different institutions and organisations such as social services, drug centres, lawyers and with other professionals having to do with the treatment of prisoners including the Foundation's different programmes and resources, especially primary care and labour market and social integration.

We feel that a good intervention programme should be constantly assessed with a view to improvement. We would stress the positive value of these changes in terms of individualised intervention work and the emergence of new intervention strategies more focused on educationally-based treatment stressing change and improving attitude and mindset and social skills. The aim is to bring about change in inmates from the "inside out" providing them with tools which are useful in prison and in their future life outside. As for group work, a wider array of offerings was made in the area of sports.

In 2009 we individually monitored a total of 114 programme users and worked with 64 families. The following group workshops were given. Magazine workshop: 47 participants; Women's workshop: 40 participants; Flamenco: 61 participants; Men's health workshop: 35 participants; Women's health workshop: 14 participants; Literacy: 37 participants; Reception group: 122 inmates; Sports: 37 participants. The flamenco group also participated in different commemorative acts in the prison such as the

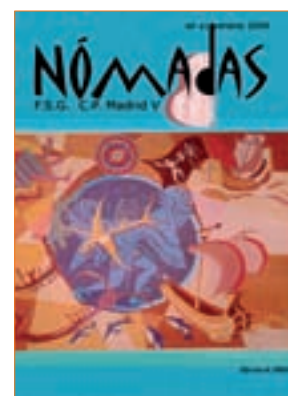
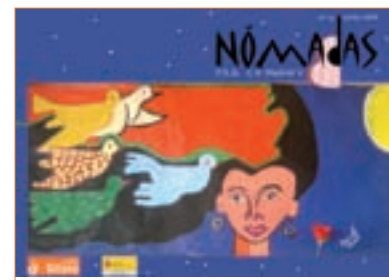
celebration of Our Lady of Mercy and the closing ceremony of the C.E.P.A. Yucatán academic year.

We would stress that in 2009 the *Nómadas* magazine celebrated its 10th anniversary with issue number 40. During this period of time improvements have been made both in terms of content and presentation, overcoming the technical difficulties involved in publishing a magazine in prison. The biggest strides have been made in group work: debates, communications, reflection and team work, assessments and in daily co-existence and the whole intercultural aspect of an activity so rich in cultural diversity.

These actions are carried out in the modules of the penitentiary centre while offices are made available to us for family work and coordination with other organisations at Madrid V. For our workshops we use the centre's socio-cultural spaces. Family visits are made and on some occasions to other penitentiary centres when inmates are moved from one centre to another.

According to the law, prison should serve to re-educate and re-insert inmates into society. If this is to be achieved, many invisible walls need to be torn down to then use teaching as a tool to build an area for education within a difficult environment due to its structure and specific characteristics.

Our role is to join forces in order to meet the objective of administering therapy with a view to reinserting those who have committed crimes and, specifically referring to the Roma population, we strive to raise awareness and create appropriate and tailored resources with a view to equipping inmates with the social and personal adjustment mechanisms which make their future reincorporation into society possible with sufficient guarantees that they will not become re-offenders and can successfully integrate into society.



THE MAGAZINE *NÓMADAS*