



Promociona

To the academic success
of the Roma community

Educational support and
guidance programme
for Roma youth
and their families

MULTI-REGIONAL OPERATIONAL
PROGRAMME FIGHT AGAINST
DISCRIMINATION 2007-2013

ACTIONS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION



Introduction

The Fundación Secretariado Gitano

We are a non-profit social organisation which provides services to the Roma community in all of Spain and also carries out actions in other European countries. Our activity dates back to the 1960s and we officially became a Foundation in 2001. We are currently established in 14 Autonomous Communities of Spain, and our teams, distributed among 76 work centres, are carrying out actions in 111 towns and cities.

Our mission

The **mission** of the FSG is the holistic advancement of the Roma community based on respect for its cultural identity.

The purpose of this mission is to support the access of Roma persons to rights, services and social resources on an equal footing with all other citizens. To this end, we carry out actions that contribute to improving the living standards of the Roma people, promoting equal treatment and preventing all forms of discrimination.

The values underpinning the FSG's actions and characterising all of the people comprising it are human dignity, justice, solidarity and interculturalism.

The Fundación Secretariado Gitano aspires to contribute to the construction of a cohesive and intercultural society where people freely and fully exercise their citizenship.

The Roma community and education

The distance between the educational situation of the Roma population (adult and school-age) and the rest of the population is truly alarming and is a factor contributing to widening inequalities and to the social exclusion gap affecting a large proportion of this community. The transition to compulsory secondary



education remains an insurmountable barrier. There are few boys and even fewer girls who even embark upon secondary education and 80% of those who do fail to complete their studies. The high rate of early school-leavers during the compulsory education period is one of the most important challenges facing the educational system, Roma families and the society at large and is standing in the way of a true social inclusion of the Roma minority.

According to the 2008 *Survey of the Roma population*, an analysis conducted by Spain's Sociological Research Centre, 24% of this community have reached post-primary school education (in other words, 76% have only primary school studies) compared with 64% of the overall Spanish population. This inequality in the area of education has a negative influence on their labour market integration and therefore on the development of a life project on an equal footing with the rest of the citizenry.

The Fundación Secretariado Gitano and Education

Since its creation, one of the Foundation's priorities has been the educational advancement of the Roma community. It should not be forgotten that this process got under way only 25 years ago and important progress has been made. Nevertheless, to this day we continue to find major voids which pose serious challenges. The 1980s witnessed the implementation of the so-called *bridge schools* which constituted the first enrolment plan targeting the Roma population.



Over the last several years, our organisation has continued to make strides in this area through enrolment support programmes, keeping students in post-compulsory studies through the awarding of scholarships and tutoring, by conducting surveys and research, training, general and technical advisory support for professionals in the field of education and social education and by implementing actions aimed at involving Roma families in the education of their children.

Hence, in the area of education, the Fundación Secretariado Gitano has been working to foster the educational advancement of the Roma community at all levels and ages, with a special emphasis on those stages that are proving to be the most difficult, in particular Secondary Education. This is among the priorities that the Fundación Secretariado Gitano envisages in its 2007-2013 Strategic Plan.

The Programme

Earning **basic compulsory academic degrees** can have a positive effect when embarking upon a suitable personal development and labour market integration pathway for Roma and would also facilitate their social inclusion on an equal footing with all other citizens. Training is a basic pillar for personal development and labour market integration: the higher and more specialised the qualification, the wider is the array of possibilities and the greater the likelihood of **success**.

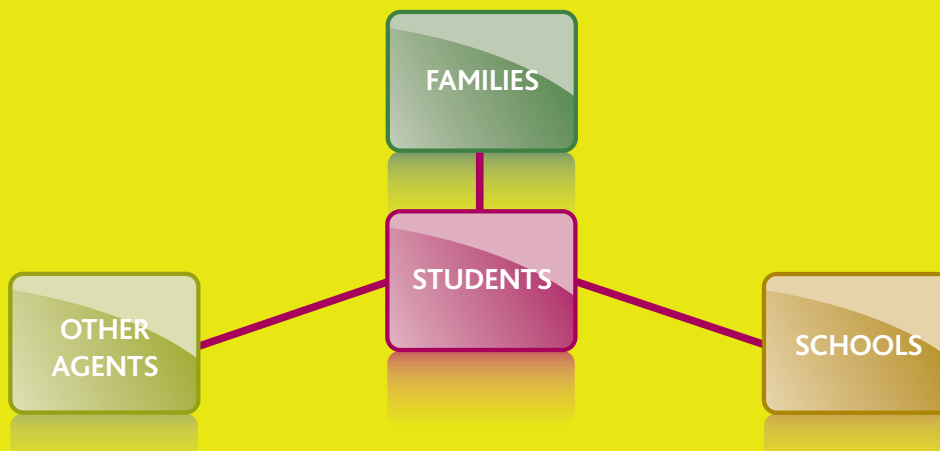
There is no doubt that this line of educational initiatives for young Roma has constructive effects on individuals, but the positive results for the advancement of the Roma community as a whole are likewise notable. The future of groups depends on the performance of their members; in the Roma community there is a lack of positive role models both in terms of middle and higher levels of training and skilled employment. This is why this objective is a priority if we are to maximise the likelihood of success in the social integration of Roma.

During the 2000-2006 period, the FSG managed actions targeting the Roma population through a Multi-Regional Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination financed by the European Social Fund (Acceder Programme). This programme is focused on providing access to employment through the training of the Roma population in Spain. Today, within the framework of the new 2007-2013 period, a new Operational Programme is being implemented which continues to focus on labour market integration but which also includes a new line of action in the field of education.

The aim of this new line of action is not only to encourage Roma students to complete their compulsory studies but to go on to higher levels of education. This requires a reduction in early school leaving, a problem affecting a significant proportion of Roma students.

To this end the Promociona Programme, supported to a large extent by the European Social Fund and the Spanish Ministry of Health and Social Policy through the allocation of income tax funds, targets the different players taking part in the educational process of young people: the **students themselves, their families, schools and other social and educational professionals**.

Promociona Programme



Objectives

Overall objective

The Promociona Programme seeks to promote the educational mainstreaming¹ of Roma students with a view to achieving higher academic standards at the end of primary education and throughout the compulsory secondary level of education and to promote continued middle and/or higher studies and vocational training.

Specific objectives

- To facilitate the **transition** between Primary and Compulsory Secondary Education, **permanence** in the educational system and **advancement** on to higher studies.
- To generate and enhance the conditions needed to achieve **academic success within the Roma community** and, in general, of the entire educational community through work with the different stakeholders: students, families, schools and other social agents.

¹ Mainstreaming: In educational processes, this means the right of all children to gain access on an equal footing to public education so that the latter may furnish the instruments needed for full development in those aspects which are going to facilitate their academic and social inclusion and their subsequent incorporation into society as active members.

Beneficiaries

The main actions of the Promociona Programme target **Roma students and their families in the final stages of primary education** (years 5 and 6) and in **compulsory secondary schooling** (years 7 to 10) in the areas of action. **Collaboration with schools** and joint work with **teachers** constitute another of the essential pillars of the implementation of actions.

These actions are specifically aimed at **children who are in a standard school environment** but who have been identified as requiring accompaniment to increase their likelihood of obtaining their compulsory education degree and to pursue post-compulsory studies.

Requirements for the implementation of the Promociona Programme

- Students should be in the last two years of primary education or in compulsory secondary education.
 - Students must regularly attend class, i.e. at least 80% of the classes during the past quarter.
 - There must be an agreement between the student's family and those responsible for the programme.
 - The school where the student is enrolled must commit to participate in the actions carried out through the Promociona Programme, i.e. prior consensus.
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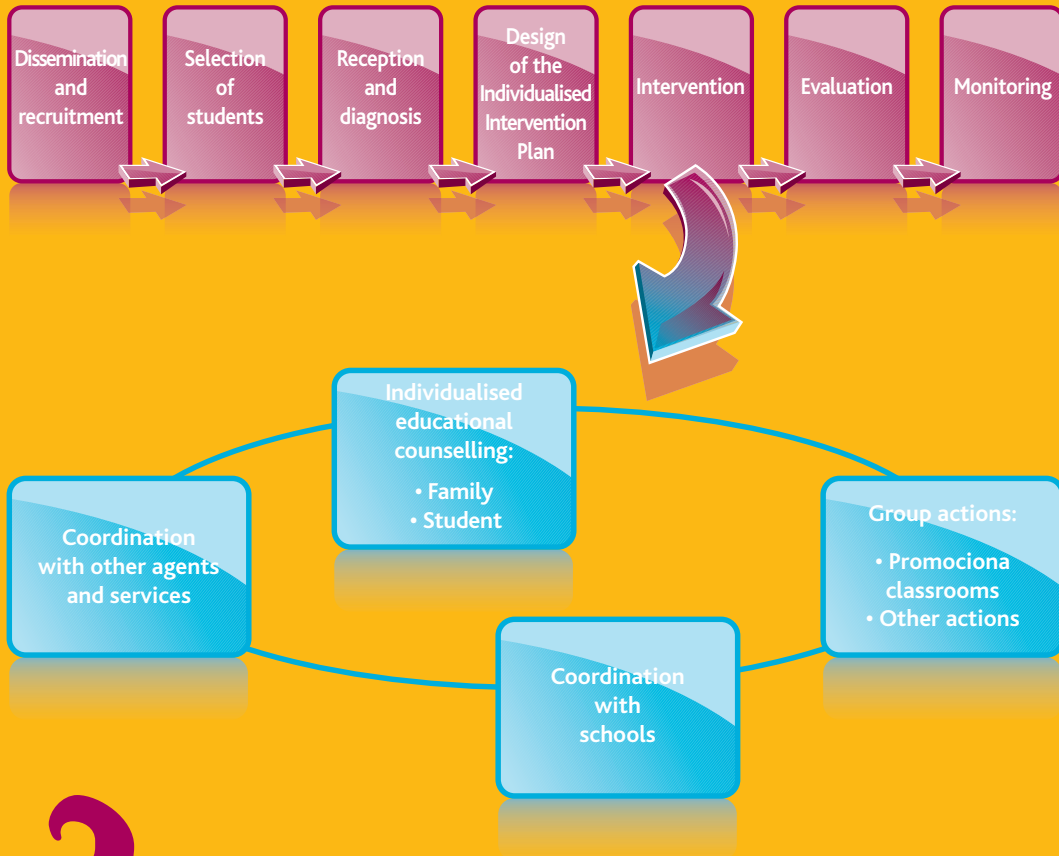
Priority actions

Three levels of intervention have been defined for the actions, although the Promociona Programme stresses **individualised work with students and their families (Individualised Intervention Plan)**. Collaboration with schools is also a key factor in the development of the programme, as is collaboration with other resources and services involved in the education of the student.

- **Individual level:** work with the student and his/her family should be personalised and priority should be placed on the proper sequencing of actions. This translates into the design of an **individualised Intervention Plan** and individualised tutoring and counselling sessions with the student and his/her family.
- **Group level:** priority is placed on group formation to reinforce academic support and to put into practice the behaviours promoted, thereby contributing to the learning and reinforcement of values and attitudes. The **Promociona Classrooms** are one of the actions playing a relevant role at this level. In terms of **academic support and reinforcement**, we work on the acquisition of skills focusing on learning habits, rhythms and rules conducive to the formal educational inclusion of young people and their continuation and permanence in the education system.
- **Social-community level:** focus is placed on the **environment** and on **social agents** close to students and schools as elements which have an informal influence on their educational process and on the achievement of the Promociona Programme's objectives.

| AGENTS/LEVELS | INDIVIDUAL | GROUP | SOCIAL-COMMUNITY |
|---------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| STUDENTS | Initial diagnosis Design of the Individualised Intervention Plan Tutoring Educational counselling Monitoring Assessment | Promociona Classrooms - School support - Educational counselling sessions | Participation in fora and other areas |
| FAMILIES | Design of the Individualised Intervention Plan Educational counselling Tutoring and family education Monitoring Assessment | Family educational counselling sessions | Participation in fora and other areas |
| SCHOOLS | Coordination with tutors Participation in the Individualised Intervention Plan Monitoring of students and families | Training Consulting | Participation in fora and other areas |
| OTHER AGENTS | Coordination with professionals | Networking | Participation in fora and other areas |

Intervention stages



Human resources

The professionals carrying out Promociona actions are **Educational Counsellors**. Their work focuses mostly on individualised monitoring and tutoring of both students and their families and close collaboration with schools and other agents involved in the educational process of the young people.

Specialised staff are also on hand to carry out small group **school support sessions** (Promociona Classrooms) along with those responsible for these and other actions, which the Fundación Secretariado Gitano carries out in the different Autonomous Communities, together with a programme coordinator at the national level.



Promociona

...Continue and win



PROMOCIONA PROGRAMME

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