

**“FEMINISTS ROMA WOMEN WORKING FOR DIVERSITY ASSOCIATION”.**

***2014 HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING. OSCE.ODHIR.  
(Working Session 9).***

The Roma Feminist Association for Diversity ( AGFD) arises as a response to the explicit and implicit needs detected throughout the professional exercise of the members of the Association, about the establishment and visibility of the legitimate rights of the Roma women, both within the community and outside of it, as well as the diversity of the reality of our culture.

Analyzing the discourse of some Roma women's associations,AGFD has concluded that despite the progress achieved since the establishment of the democracy in Spain and the Constitution of 1978, still today there are needs that are not covered. This degree of urgency, makes it necessary to direct our work in this direction and is a fundamental basis for the purposes set out in the statutes of the Association.

The lines of work could be summarized broadly around three areas of action:

1. Inside of our community, to educate men and women of the legitimacy of the Roma needs to empower all those who wish to participate in the change from the inside then. To do this we will use different strategies to formalize a current thought, feminist, but adapted to our needs, while respecting our cultural values and to avoid the assimilation into the majority culture.
2. An essential fact to legitimize this current thought is to include the Roma Women within the feminist movement in general, and thus reflected, that we are an integral part of mainstream society and that our voice has much to contribute,naturally from a plane of equality in terms of the weight of contributions.
3. The Roma Women must be reflected in the political sphere in terms of actual participation, influence legislative decisions that directly affect our community and the design of policies aimed at the implementation of the goals contained in the statutes, since as Spanish citizens, as well as Gypsies, and although it seems a no-brainer what reality shows every day that the collective unconscious differs in its opinion. We have the same duties and rights that other citizens, so it should and have the right to participate in the construction of a more inclusive society.

Consistent with all of the above mentioned points, the Roma Feminist Association for Diversity (AGFD) based on an internal structure that seeks the real participation of the people who make it, erecting its scope throughout the Spanish territory. Currently with headquarters in Madrid and two delegations, one in Lugo and the other in Murcia, and expected the opening of new offices in different strategic points of the Spanish geography in order to collect the greatest possible diversity for the establishment of the aims of the Association.

My name is PatriciaCaro , I´m from Spain and I´m cofunder and co-chair of the first Feminist Rroma Women Association .

There are around 10 million of european Rroma people in Europe, with a 60% Rroma youth citizens, and more than 50% are Rroma women. Spain, is the second country with more Rroma population in Europe, behind Romania, and however is very difficult for the spanish young Rroma women to access this kind of spaces of participación and representation, so for this reason my organization is very grateful for your invitation.

Youth Rroma women are the most discriminated sector because of the intersectionality. By one hand, we suffer a structural discrimination from the majority society and in the other hand we suffer the consequences of sexism inside our community. So, sir and madams, here we are a very complex, big and deep situation of violence against women, and against a culture which is apart of the european society. This is not a Rroma problem, this is an european problem, which include all of us, european Rroma and non rroma people.

For this cause, we seriously propose to osce and to the competent authorities, the urgent need to create a space for talking about it. Specially, we propose the creation a small group, as a first step, for preparing an european meeting or seminar focus in deepen in the intersectional discrimination described, with a special attention in Feminist point of view and including explicitly the Rroma women Youth. The situation is really worrying, and if we don't do anything we will find the consequences soon, in early marriages and dropout in european Rroma women youth. I have a question for all of us, Could a democratic society allow this situation in a big part of their society?