

# Training Course to Access Adult Education for Roma Women

---

## Methodological Guide for Working With Adult Roma Women



Adult Schools for Inclusion  
in the Diversity of Roma Women

2018-1-ES01-KA204-050783



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



This guide is a result of the project:

**ADULT SCHOOLS FOR INCLUSION  
IN THE DIVERSITY OF ROMA  
WOMEN**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

Subject to Creative Commons license:

This document is subject to a license that allows it to be downloaded and shared as long as the author is being credited, but it's not allowed to change its content in any way or to be used commercially.



## Participating organisations:

**Asociación Gitanas Feministas  
por la Diversidad** (Spain)

**Fundación Punjab** (Spain)

**RIBALTAMBIÇÃO - Associação  
para a Igualdade de Género nas  
Comunidades Ciganas** (Portugal)

**La Voix des Roms** (France)

**Centrul Rromilor “Amare  
Rromentza”** (Romania)

**E-Romnja Association for Promoting  
Roma Women’s Rights** (Romania)



Ribaltambição



More information: [skolaromani.org](http://skolaromani.org)



# METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE TO WORK WITH ADULT ROMA WOMEN

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	7
OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDE .....	8
THE REALITY OF ROMA STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOMS .....	8
GENERAL METHODOLOGICAL NOTIONS .....	10
Type of Activities .....	11
Proposal activities and dynamics .....	12
Teaching strategies .....	14
Plan classroom.....	14
Teachers and facilitators .....	15
TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS .....	16



# INTRODUCTION

Fighting and eradicating the social exclusion of the Roma community is to reclaim the role of the Roma community as a historical subject, capable of fully exercising their human rights, nutrition, health, housing and quality education, as well as their participation in the processes where they are they define the forms of life and coexistence that delimit and exclude from personal and social development. In this sense, formal education is a fundamental tool to achieve the social inclusion of the Roma people, and especially of their women, as it contributes decisively to developing basic skills that avoid marginalization, promoting socialization and providing essential knowledge to transform the social environment according to your needs.

Promoting the social inclusion of the Roma community involves ensuring that adult Roma women are reintegrated into the educational system and promote their options to access better jobs, create ties with society in general, become a political subject that aspires to change the system and end racism and inequalities.

The lack of access to training, employment, housing ... stems from structural inequalities that lead to the exclusion of the Roma population and, specifically, Roma women. To modify this

situation, just and equitable societies and systems are necessary, while we denounce these situations we must reinforce the situation of Roma women, correcting inequalities, in this case we consider that it is necessary to facilitate the educational return to the formal education system. Returning to the educational system supposes compensating part of the inequalities experienced, since the training and permanence of Roma women in formal educational systems is not comparable with that of the majority society due to the structural inequalities where asymmetric and exclusion relationships are reproduced towards the Roma population.

For this we present this guide, the result of the work of the different entities that participate in the KA2 ADULT EDUCATION project “ADULT SCHOOLS FOR INCLUSION IN THE DIVERSITY OF ROMA WOMEN (AGFD)”. This guide is the proposal and the sharing and reflection on the experience of working with adult Roma women that we carry out from: *Asociación Gitanas Feministas Para la Diversidad AGDF* (Spain), *Fundación Punjab* (Spain), *RIBALTAMBIÇÃO - Associação para a Igualdade de Gender nas Ciganas Communities* (Portugal), *La Voix des Roms* (France), *Centrul Romilor “Amare Rromentza”* (Romania), *E-Romnja Association for Promoting Roma Women’s Rights* (Romania).

This guide is based on the need to



transform the reality of Roma women, promote inclusion, compensate for inequalities and improve life options .

We raised the possibility of compensating especially the women, who are striving to improve their basic knowledge in training matters , trying and repair the difficulties they had in their childhood to study power.

This guide aims to collect training mechanisms and strategies based on formal and non-formal work with Roma adult women.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDE**

The objective of the Methodological Guide is to be able to offer teachers, teachers and facilitators the basic methodological guides as tools that enrich the training and teaching process.

This Guide aims to help prepare so that many other people, with your support, can grow in knowledge, skills, competencies, experiences and exercise their rights.

The Guide offers basic and general methodological orientations, analyzing the role we play as teachers or facilitators in the teaching-learning process.

## **THE REALITY OF ROMA STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOMS**

Despite having reached similar levels of schooling among the Roma and the majority population during primary school, we observed that over the years and formal academic training there are greater difficulties and school inequality than the rest of the student population. This phenomenon is observed and is more pressing in the transition from school to high school, where you can go from absenteeism to school dropout.

We observe how Roma students show a low academic performance compared to non-Roma students, being absentee in primary cycles and reaching a level of dropout and school failure in Secondary. Few female students go to higher education, high school, university and throughout the years of compulsory training they have lower performance and academic success than other students. This shows and reveals the shortcomings and weaknesses that the educational system presents concerning Roma women.

The neighbourhoods - ghettos in which the homes or slums of the Roma population are concentrated lack multiple infrastructures, including schools. There are no public schools, access to libraries, toy libraries, learning spaces, parks... sometimes the schools they can



access are precarious, prefabricated schools (barracks) limited in electricity, water, spaces, materials... accompanied by ethnic exclusion and segregation.

Talking about school and the Roma population leads us to talk about absenteeism, dropouts, and school failure. A lot of research is focused on explaining the reasons and causes of this situation, where the disproportionate absenteeism of the Roma population of school-age is emphasized and in a more intense way during secondary studies, with a very small percentage of students going to non-compulsory Roma studies. The explanations of this fact are varied, we believe that the explanatory centre is similar to the one that John Ogbu<sup>1</sup> made of the African American population in the US. The Roma community assumes the expectations of poor school performance as something normalized in contexts of unequal opportunities both academic, work, social... The unequal system has consequences and early impact on Roma students.

When we propose the analysis of the situation of Roma students in the process of formal and compulsory education, we find, despite the diversity and heterogeneous group that Roma women make up, with the difficulties they face at early ages and adolescents to complete a successful trajectory in

your training.

The fact that a significant number of Roma women do not complete compulsory education increasingly affects socio-labor insertion and social inclusion, leaving labor and social niches as the only life option in this economic and social system.

The logic of ethnic, racial and gender discrimination, school and social segregation are the main threat to successfully complete training itineraries, which have as a consequence the perpetuation of exclusion.

The relationship between the Roma community and the school has been officially and historically marked by inequality, rejection, and marginalization. Although at present the rights to education are formally guaranteed, the situation of exclusion, discrimination, and impoverishment does not guarantee that this right is a reality.

A change in pedagogical relationships throughout the educational community, curricular changes around learning, relating the environment and the educational centre in an integrated way in the curriculum with a political and social commitment would improve the permanence and school success rate of Roma women during their training itinerary.

---

1 John Uzo Ogbu Nigerian American anthropologist and professor. theories about observed phenomena involving race and intelligence, especially how racial and ethnic differences developed in educational and economic achievement.

# **GENERAL METHODOLOGICAL NOTIONS**

We want female students to develop and improve educational skills so that they can have better opportunities for their social, professional, and academic future to be able to exercise their rights as citizens and that of their communities. For this, it is necessary to know, use and apply the methodology that best adapts to the teaching-learning processes, which will depend on the socio-cultural context, age, situation, community, of each group of women with whom we will participate in the development of programming.

The application of an appropriate methodology is essential to carry out programming and develop the organization of meetings, resources, timing, arrangement of the classroom, the material presented, dynamic... It should be active, participatory, and varied to give a good pace to the class and facilitate the teaching-learning process. The participation of the students becomes the fundamental axis of the learning model.

What is intended to be achieved with this model is that each student begins a training process being herself the one who guides their steps during the learning process. They may be able

to organize their training according to their objectives and needs, in such a way that they will actively develop skills in accordance with their principles.

The organization and methodology of teaching for adults must be based on self-learning and must take into account their experiences, needs and interests, and can be developed through face-to-face teaching and also through distance education.

We present here an open, flexible training that adapts to the needs of each student or group of students, at their time and their learning pace.

1. The methodology of these teachings will be flexible, open and inclusive, based on self-learning and taking into account their experiences, so that it responds to the capacities, interests and needs of the students, with special attention to the specific needs of educational support.
2. The purpose of the methodology will be to promote the acquisition, consolidation and expansion of the key competences of lifelong learning, through meaningful learning processes for the students, through the implementation of projects connected with the daily experiences of adults and will be It must be established in the cultural baggage that each student contributes to their training activity.
3. The proposed tasks will facilitate self-learning and the development of

autonomy and personal initiative and will be adapted to the previous experiences of the students, so that they respond to their capacities, interests and needs.

4. The planning of the activities must take into account the social component of the learning process and contribute to the formation of communication and cooperation skills.

5. The teaching process will be designed to provide the students with basic instrumental learning in order to have certain guarantees of success in their current and future training itinerary.

6. The field curricular design, in which knowledge is integrated in a globalized way and not as a mere accumulation of didactic units.

A methodology based on participation

The methodology that we are going to use throughout the course is based on the participation of the students in their own teaching and learning process. For which:

- a) We will use the students' previous ideas as a starting point.
- b) We will use various sources of information, posing hypotheses about the topics studied.
- c) We will generate contexts where reflection and debate are possible using information sources and reasoned propositions.

In short, having considered the objectives, content and teaching resources, we will work with a varied, active, participatory methodology, inserted in what has been called meaningful learning.

Theoretical explanations will alternate with concrete practical activities in which the students get involved and collaborate in the construction of their own learning.

Arousing curiosity and maintaining the interest of the students is a continuous challenge for the teacher, that is why it is important to select the activities well, which are motivating and help to capture their attention, either at the beginning of a topic or a class, such as during its development. When selecting activities, we will take into account two basic principles: The presence of activities for understanding concepts and models and activities for solving a problem or carrying out an investigation.

Knowing the centre of interest of the students will facilitate the communication and learning process.

## **Type of Activities**

Several types of activities will be carried out:

1. Initial activities: aimed at motivating the students and making their previous ideas explicit. Be able to express and present in common in their

own words the ideas and previous knowledge of the proposed topics. These activities will allow knowing the centre of interest of the students.

2. Development activities, in which procedures specific to our subject will be worked on, such as analysis and commentary of films on topics of interest, practical exercises on defence and exercise of rights, recovery, creation and expression in the mother tongue, reading activities, observation, debate and presentation activities to acquire critical and reflective capacity

3. Activities of verification and assimilation of knowledge, among them: presentation of the research, synthesis activities, sharing of what has been learned and exchange of learning experiences with teachers

4. Reinforcement activities: we will do the continuous review through the sharing, the working method

5. Activities outside the classroom, you can plan activities of observation, analysis, reading, writing in hours outside the classroom or group space and concerning the neighbourhood and/or community

## **Proposal activities and dynamics**

The activities proposed at the end of each topic are related to collective and community learning, where part of

the work carried out and the knowledge acquired can be exposed, guided or explained both in the centre, in the community or the neighbourhood.

After each unit, a plenary group debate is proposed to explain what they think, what they feel, what they have learned, to consolidate knowledge, improve expression and participation, in addition to being able to know and evaluate the best of the knowledge of the subject.

As a proposal for dynamics and activities, we find it very useful:

1. The forum theatre<sup>2</sup>: Use the theatre or theatrical representation as a pedagogical and social change tool. A problem is posed that affects the community, it is represented with a script and the spectators are allowed to participate in the solution of the problem posed. The audience, the students, can stop the scene, exchange with the actors to propose a different way of acting, thus generating tools to express different points of view and experiences in a situation. The world is represented to be transformed, a mirror in which the students can transmit their wishes, experiences and express themselves. This dynamic makes it easier to detect problems and difficulties present among the students, making them understand that their hand can also be part of the resolution on occasions that they believe they cannot do

---

2 Created by Augusto Boal and inspired by the Critical Pedagogy of Paulo Freire



anything. This way of reporting and acting allows us to analyze and reflect on behaviours, power relations... and how to overcome and deal with them.

2. Community theatre. Community theatre is an expressive and useful tool performed by and for the community. Participating in community theatre experiences the growth of herself and the environment at the same time. The idea that community theatre is carried out by and for the community means that theatre returns to the neighbourhood as a vital space for the community itself. This activity supposes creating the responsibility of their social and vindictive being, being the actresses, amplifiers of the collective conscience. The proposed community theatre activity in Roma communities, stripped of history and rights, can be based on the collection of personal stories, social autobiographies, stories of the past or present, of their environment, which will be performed in the community.

3. Role-Playing. It is a group dynamics technique, also known as dramatization, role-play or simulation. It consists of the representation of a possible situation in real life. The representation is carried out in front of the class group, which will later be able to issue its assessment.

The representation and subsequent comments allow to know the attitudes before situations of daily life, analyze

the different points of view and reactions.

4. The Photovoice method. This method allows to identify, represent and improve the community through the use of the camera. The selection of photographs taken by the students is related to their community, well-being and defence of rights. This reporting method is intended to transform the reality and shortcomings of the communities where they live. They register, report and are catalysts for change in their communities through the captured images. From the experiences of the women, photographs are taken, one of the photos taken is chosen and a message is written. The identification and representation of the problem allows making the problem public. Defence of rights is exercised and it is intended to solve the problem.

5. Video forum, video debate. It is proposed as a group activity, where from the cinematographic or documentary language, and an interactive dynamic with the students, it is intended to reach the experience and attitudes of the group about society. This type of activity can encourage debate, expression and generate opinions based on values and beliefs.

6. Panoramic murals. Through collective realization, we present in a visual way the knowledge acquired during the sessions to be able to expose them

in the community, neighbourhood or classroom. It reinforces learning and creativity.

## Teaching strategies

The Method learning-teaching should be oriented to the discussion and/or to teamwork, we understand that sharing, cooperative learning, helps expand the knowledge of the students. This interactive approach to organizing work in the classroom in which the students are responsible for their learning and that of their classmates is a strategy of co-responsibility to achieve group goals and incentives. Develop active and meaningful learning cooperatively

The teaching-learning method, problem-based learning (PBL) whose starting point is a problem that, designed by the teachers, the students in workgroups have to address in an orderly and coordinated way the phases that imply the resolution or development of work around the problem or situation. Active learning is developed through problem-solving.

Learning through the virtual classroom. Teaching through the computer with a connection to the network as a communication system between teachers and students.

Through individual tutoring, personalized attention, project learning and learning contract.

Group learning and peer learning. Cooperative Learning and Problem Based Learning (PBL).

The methodology will be mainly face-to-face, but it is also possible and is contemplated in a non-face-to-face way since the materials, links and activities are available online.

The materials that we present are designed to motivate the educational processes of adult women, that is why we propose didactic units that can start from their centre of interest in order to motivate women to start or continue in these educational processes.

## Plan classroom

The didactic units that are developed in this program and we consider are necessary to improve the situation and motivate Roma women are the following:

1. Culture and inclusion. Identity, stereotype, prejudice, anti-Gypsyism
2. Ethnic pride and leadership
3. Digital competence
4. Language literacy
5. Society, Territories and Historical Processes
6. World of work. Rights, defence of rights, human rights and labour rights.
7. Social, civic, intercultural development. Romani feminism

To work on all these skills and development of the units we can establish a Classroom Plan. The classroom plan consists of planning how the sessions will take place, but it is always necessary to have the ability to make the proposals made previously more flexible. The figure of the trainer, the teacher is the catalyst for knowledge and pooling of accumulated knowledge, also transmitting the greatest possible knowledge. The classroom plan will help to organize the content that will be discussed during the sessions, always taking into account the prior knowledge of the students, since they are adult women, the centre of interest and their participation. A basic guide from which to start.

It is important to have a lesson plan in place to have the necessary resources, materials and tools available. It is necessary to previously know the subject to be discussed, to know the objectives to be achieved, to use the appropriate methodology that best suits the group, not all groups will be the same, nor will it be part of the same knowledge, that is why we must adapt our methodology. The timing of the classes must also be planned and agreed with the group, making them participate in the decisions and time they dedicate to their training.

Within the classroom plan we must consider in a special way the arrangement in which we will place ourselves with the students. If we intend to use

a participatory, peer-to-peer, collaborative methodology, we will arrange the learning situation mainly in a circle, placing the chair of the teacher in the same position, as a facilitator of the knowledge process from a level of equality with the students. For work in groups and pairs, the circle model is still maintained, maintaining the distance to be able to converse and develop the work.

## **Teachers and facilitators**

We refer to teachers and facilitators as the figures that will facilitate the path of learning and teaching. Understanding that these people must have a different participation than the traditional role of the transmitter of content and agenda. People who guide and participate in the learning process, facilitate, guide and stimulate learning, critical thinking and the desire to continue learning and knowing. The facilitator starts from another methodological approach. In classical teaching, and possibly to which the students, the participants, have had knowledge and access, the teachers facilitate the syllabus setting what must be learned and later it is necessary to be able to demonstrate the knowledge acquired. In addition, certain norms and rules established by the educational system must be met, the same educational system that has been a failure for these our



participants.

In this new learning-teaching approach, the facilitator assumes a different role, facilitates access to knowledge, learning, is a consultant and a facilitator. It recognizes the knowledge, experiences and experiences that each of the students carries. It will not be the authority of the class, but a guide, advisor, coordinator who accompanies and facilitates the group's critical thinking, reflection based on everyone's knowledge and encouraging participation.

In these spaces, education ceases to be vertical to become participatory, horizontal processes, where all participants contribute equally valid knowledge and knowledge.

The learning process will be carried out based on the knowledge, knowledge, experiences and experiences of the students, taking into account their cultural background. On the issues that are close to him, based on his own history and reflection, taking advantage of his notions on the issues. That is why it will be necessary to ask yourself when planning what is to be learned and how it can be learned. It is necessary to carry out an exercise of knowledge of the context, history and situation of the students.

When we consider participation as necessary, it is due to the enrichment of content, the increase in the expression of the students, creativity and

the improvement of coexistence and group cohesion. Without participation the learning process can be boring, not achieving its goal. Learning must be dynamic and in a group. Group work enriches peer learning.

Creativity through representations, exhibitions, murals... breaks with the old knowledge reproduction schemes, making knowledge participants and tangible, experiencing one's own thinking and expressing. This learning is gratifying when, in addition, results are obtained that can be exhibited in the community and can be useful and put to use in their closest environment. Experiential learning enables students to build their own knowledge, skills and enhance their experiences and values.

The facilitators must have the ability to make planning and methodology more flexible according to the development of the sessions.

## **TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS**

As basic advice and recommendations for teachers, professors and facilitators, it is essential that the topics that are going to be addressed in the

classroom are previously known. Be clear about the topics to be covered.

It is key for group cohesion and learning, that the students are known, individually and collectively. Interests, needs, previous training, family, social, economic situation, life experience, age, family relationships and the environment. Know in turn the neighbourhood and the communities to which they belong. Know the diversity of the group, know the relationships already established in that group.

As a suggestion, the proposal is that these facilitators or teachers be Roma in order to motivate Roma women and that the use of this material for the following training be given by the women trained. As far as possible, involve Roma women and associations in the training process.

We must not focus solely on academic knowledge, we must value the social and cultural knowledge of the students, recognizing and valuing the knowledge they possess (culture, social relationships, economic management, home management, relationships with the environment...) Respect the social and vital experience. Empathize, know and understand the situation of women. Understand and have the ability to analyze their social, cultural, geographical, economic, religious environments...

The teachers or facilitators must be placed, personally and culturally at

the same level as the students, understanding the sessions and the training as joint learning, which converges in the exchange during the sessions. The students can be the teacher's guides on a visit to the neighbourhood or community.

From the personal story of the teachers, trust and bond with the students can be generated, having them, as well as a reference. You can also count on Roma women to participate as references in the groups. Women should feel heard and respected at all times, where their values, life stories and beliefs are not judged.

The space where the sessions are held has to be assessed, better inside or outside the neighbourhood, in which activities it is necessary to travel outside and which are necessary to carry out with the community.

If we know Roma women who have gone through similar situations, they can participate as tutors or as references, since this life experience can influence the motivation of others.

The proposed topics must have a leisure component, where there is an exchange in a more relaxed space, for example, the debates of each unit can be carried out through a chat with coffee, to make the experience more personal and intimate, creating spaces for confidence.

The facilitator, teacher or teacher must be part of the defence of the cause of

Roma women. At the same time, you must be aware of the impact your relationship can have on learning for women. The main objective is to improve the situation of Roma women.

In case of detecting situations that violate human rights, ask the person, inform them of their rights, guarantee confidentiality. Always let him choose and make the decision and show and have the support no matter what decision he makes.

Be careful in the language depending on the community or country in which the sessions are held, in certain countries (Romania) do not use the word *țigan*, even though women do not feel offended, we will use the term *Roma* as a sign of respect.

As motivation, it can be transferred to the fact that they would improve their environment by acquiring new skills and knowledge, to teach your sons and daughters, to have greater respect in the community, to be able to speak with the teachers, to be an example for your sons and daughters to demonstrate that they and they also can learn if you learn.

The effort made by the students must be recognized and valued by the teaching staff. The message should always be that we are capable of doing everything we set out to do and that we can count on your support, advice and trust.

Thank you for your dedication,

support and defence of the rights of Roma women. Participating in our cause is improving the world where we live.





This project “ADULT SCHOOLS FOR INCLUSION IN THE DIVERSITY OF ROMA WOMEN” has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union