



## **Rato defends the importance of the social model of savings banks and renews Caja Madrid's commitment to society**

- **José Bono, Trinidad Jiménez and Rodrigo Rato present a plan to promote the integration of people with Down's Syndrome**
- **Obra Social Caja Madrid leads the investment in working with people with Down's Syndrome**
- **The company has invested nearly 8 million euros and it has helped more than 600,000 people**

**Madrid, 20/07/2010-** The President of the Congress of Deputies, the Minister for Health and Social Policy and the Chairman of Caja Madrid presented today the second Action Plan for people with Down's Syndrome in Spain, whose primary goal is to achieve real independence in the daily lives of these people, once the first step of integration into the job market is overcome.

In the presentation, the Chairman of Caja Madrid, Rodrigo Rato, defended the importance of “the social model of savings banks” and reminded the audience that Caja Madrid has one of the most significant social solidarity networks in Spain and the most important in the Community of Madrid, and it is the leading institution in providing support to those with Down's Syndrome.

The new plan, financed by Obra Social Caja Madrid and reflected in a guide published by DOWN España, is aimed at those who provide services to people with Down's syndrome and their families in areas such as early intervention, education, employment, aging, social and citizen involvement and other transversal programmes.

This agreement is part of one of the main programmes of Obra Social Caja Madrid, dedicated to supporting people with Down's Syndrome. In 10 years, the company has driven 252 projects, in which it has invested more than 7.6 million euros, for more than 630,000 people.

In this new phase, the primary goal of Second Plan will be to achieve “full integration” of people with Down's Syndrome, for which “independence is a priority target” that should jump social barriers such as exclusion and discrimination, as well as overprotection, as signalled in the new Action Plan.

### **30% of adults with Down's syndrome require attention**

Besides this new Plan, Obra Social Caja Madrid has just implemented a new line of work: attending the significant demand not covered in the adult phase of the lives of people with Down's syndrome. According to data from the company, up to 30% of people over 18 years' old with Down's Syndrome might be requiring specific attention right now, but in many cases this is not provided.

To cover this need, Obra Social Caja Madrid has implemented the CAIA project in Madrid. It is a national benchmark centre with more than 800 places, whose objective is to attend to mentally disabled adults. Caja Madrid has invested more than 3 million euros in the construction of this centre that has three attention units: a Day Centre, a Residential Centre and an Occupational Centre.

Obra Social Caja Madrid has carried out intense work since 1998 in support of people with Down's syndrome. Other action plans from the last few years include: the creation of a prize for non-medical research; publication of videos and magazines; development of a personal device that facilitates independence in daily life; programmes of intervention with families; training of professionals in the quality and updating of services; several editions of the Action Plan for people with Down's Syndrome in Spain and other awareness programmes.

Support to these people and their families is provided throughout the whole of their lives; even before being born, driving specific research, prevention and early detection projects.

Subsequently, they are accompanied in the natural cycle of the first phases of their life. Early attention and rehabilitation programmes are promoted for children, also family breaks, leisure and free time while they are growing up, and training to facilitate employability and to promote the individual's full integration and personal development. Investments have also been made in the creation of supervised housing, special employment centres and other resource centres, where they can develop their personal and professional skills.

For their integration in the workplace a system has been put in place with ordinary companies. For example, the CAJA MADRID Supported Employment Programme (ECA), through which 468 people have been introduced to the job market via ordinary companies (with an investment of 1,549,250 euros, in the years 2005 to 2009).