Joining Forces to Live Together
Keys to the Intercultural Community Intervention Project

5 Participation
“LA CAIXA” FOUNDATION. THE SPIRIT OF “LA CAIXA”
Joining Forces to Live Together

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Joining forces to live together

Increasingly, the whole world and its individual countries (including Spain) are facing the formidable challenge of managing diversity in terms of culture, ethnic groups, origins, languages and religions. This is a challenge that not only affects each country in itself but also regions and towns, additionally implicating their institutions and organisations and each of their citizens.

One of "la Caixa" Foundation’s commitments since it was set up over a hundred years ago was to take a good look at new social realities and develop programmes for people, with a sense of anticipation and social transformation that can be used as a model for future actions. This vocation paved the way for the Intercultural Community Intervention Project.

Since 2010, the ICI Project has been developed in 17 territories with high cultural diversity, proposing a model for social intervention and management of diversity focused on local communities taking centre stage, with an organised, effective and positive way of tackling the crucial challenge of living together and social cohesion. The ICI Project was extended to 40 territories in July 2014.

Without connections, it would be impossible to live together. Consequently, the ICI Project, along with local administrations and entities in the territory, promotes setting up programmes for meetings, connections and positive interaction between people with different cultural and religious origins and belongings, to ease social inclusion, equal opportunities, social cohesion and promote living together.

Joining forces is a basic yet innovative and transforming idea, involving political and institutional leaders, organisations working in the territory and citizens, prioritising joint-responsibility and shared commitment, focussing on living together. The ICI Project is promoting living together from this joint endeavour and aims to improve the standard of living within a territory.

Its work over the last four years has involved over 1800 professionals, including participation from over 280,000 people. The remarkable results and impacts obtained in terms of improving living together* and social policies in the intervention territories have emphasised that it is possible to adapt the ICI Project’s conceptual and methodological model to different types of territories with diverse socio-demographics.

* 2012 survey on local intercultural living together
Joining Forces to Live Together Collection. The Intercultural Community Intervention summarises the work carried out over the first three years of the intervention. Based on feedback between theory and practice, this work stems from building knowledge among the people who have participated actively in the process, making it available to any persons or institutions interested in developing policies to promote living together and social cohesion.

"la Caixa" Foundation is grateful for the collaboration and invaluable contribution of the experience, knowledge and political intention from all persons, entities and institutions that have taken part in the Intercultural Community Intervention Project.

"la Caixa" Foundation
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Presentation

A theoretical-practical collective work, working from a joint project targeting community praxis

This series of books summarises the experience, achievements, limitations and learning obtained during the first stage of the Intercultural Community Intervention Project, meaning the collective work for living together and intercultural citizenship and social cohesion carried out not by hundreds, but thousands of people in 17 local territories in 15 towns in Spain between September 2010 and August 2013. Currently (I am writing this in November 2014), the ICI Project has been extended to 39 locations and this work is, among other things, a key contribution to be able to tackle new and complex challenges with a shared view and collective intelligence.

By presenting the Joining Forces to Live Together Collection, please allow me to begin by highlighting two deficiencies that are seen all too often in plans, policies, programmes and social projects. Much as I do not wish to get off on a negative foot, I consider that it will help to frame the nature and value of what the reader is about to tackle. I will focus on social intervention projects as this is the ICI Project’s main field.

First stumbling block: in social intervention projects, the knowledge dimension does not always play its rightful role. These initiatives suffer all too often from a lack of due scientific and conceptual grounding. From there, the degree of accuracy or success of this initiative will start to decline. When the theoretical and conceptual grounding fails or is lacking, the practical work for the project players does not consist of dynamic and dialectic practice, receiving feedback on creative symbiosis between thought and action, theory and practice, knowing and transforming. Practice, in short, becomes practicism.

Second stumbling block: all too often again in social intervention projects, once the project or some of its stages have been completed, the experience that it has represented (always complex, by definition) is not systematised and published, thereby wasting its accumulated wealth. In other words, the corresponding action is not duly accumulated among everyone involved. In addition, it seriously weakens possible forthcoming stages, even more so when this project is collective, community and public; this lack (when summarising the experience and spreading the word on what was learnt, results and impacts) represents not giving back to the social, professional and institutional players that made the project and the experience possible.
So then, **these five volumes** that are now being presented to the many different players in the ICI Project, as well as anyone who is interested in these relevant, decisive and pressing matters of living together and local cohesion, **demonstrate the enormous relevance of collective and applied knowledge in this project on the one hand whilst representing a responsible exercise in systematising, publishing and giving back what has been done and learnt on the other.**

Actually, these books, devoted respectively to **focus, method, education, health and participation** (merely using the keyword for each text) were written from knowledge on managing diversity, local development, immigration, minorities, community intervention, conflictology or mediation that were used to design this project, with as strict a grounding as possible, around 2009 to promote living together and validate the hypothesis of community and mediating work. However, and this is important, this reach and collective prior baggage was applied, validated (or not), adjusted and developed, working from the **practice of 17 teams in 17 territories and the participation of institutional, professional and technical leaders, tens of organisations and thousands of citizens in these towns.**

In this intervention process:

a. A **database or control panel** was configured to compile a wide variety of weekly, monthly and annual reports.

b. **Listening and discussion** sessions were organised.

c. **Community monographs** were drawn up as the key product of **shared knowledge.**

d. **Surveys** were run on **living together in territories with high diversity** in 2010 and 2012.

e. Multiple and constant **discussions and contributions** were recorded.

Without all of this, without this intensity of applied knowledge and reflection on practice, this work could not have been written.

And, to do the above, it was necessary to draw up (also in this elaboration phase) some **systematisation axes** that will combine drawing up and writing work for the texts. As the reader might appreciate, the different volumes are structured around four central questions that are the common thread to the corresponding chapters in each work:

1. **How we approached** the matter in the ICI Project, for example, the methodology from volume 2, the education work in volume 3, etc.

2. **How we put it into practice**, for example, promoting living together in volume 1, the specific community health line in volume 4, etc.
3. **The specific achievements** in this field or issue, for example, the results from the specific line of social relationships and participation in volume 5.

4. And finally, **what has been learnt and what recommendations** can be made for the second stage of the ICI Project, begun in September 2013.

The Joining Forces to Live Together Collection is a collective work both in terms of design and development.

In fact, developing each of the volumes has fallen, jointly, to the ICI Project advisers and the members of the Scientific Management team. However, it can be stated that this collective work has an even greater reach as it would not have been possible without the local experiences developed by the ICI Project intervention teams jointly with professionals, citizens and institutional representatives in each territory.

The general editing work was organised by a technical publication coordinator working closely with the ICI Project scientific director.

It has been far from easy, due to being written up over many months, among other things, when the ICI Project not only continued running with new activities and challenges but it was also being expanded. Nevertheless, we achieved it. We would like to thank everyone for your valuable contributions and also the “la Caixa” Foundation and particularly the Social Area and its team, as it is not only making this wide-ranging and innovative project possible but also distributing this work.

All that remains now is for the Joining Forces to Live Together Collection to serve its purpose: continue creating **knowledge for action, giving back the experience** to anyone who has made it possible and **being useful** to whoever we are committed to in the fight against exclusion and discrimination by means of promoting real cohabitation - not only coexistence - in local and diverse communities of citizens.

Carlos Giménez Romero

*Scientific Director of the Intercultural Community Intervention Project*
Translator’s Note

The translation of this work has been quite complex in terms of adaptation of certain concepts from Spanish into English, especially regarding the word ‘convivencia’.

The difficulty arises from the general use of ‘pacific coexistence’ in English. However, this project wants to emphasize, as clearly as possible, the difference between the meaning of the concepts of ‘coexistence’ and ‘living together’.

‘Convivencia’ has been translated from the Spanish as ‘living together’ and occasionally more formally as ‘cohabitation’ in an attempt to express the concept of not only living in the same space or alongside each other but actually interacting with each other as well.

Having clarified this key difficulty, we are presenting other examples here of decisions which had to be made in order to adapt certain concepts within this work in the best possible way:
— Convivencia Ciudadana Intercultural: Living Together and Intercultural Citizenship
— Diagnóstico Comunitario: Community Assessment
— Espacios de Relación: Relationship Spaces
— Encuentros Comunitarios: Community Meetings
— Línea de Actuación Global (o Específica): Global (or Specific) Action Line
— Monografía Comunitaria: Community Monograph

We hope this translation is able to give English readers coherent access to the contents of this work and make positive contributions to challenging translations of relevant issues in this field of study: public policies and social intervention.
Introduction

1. Systematisation of an innovative social intervention experience

Joining Forces to Live Together Collection. The Intercultural Community Intervention comprises five volumes that systematise each of the dimensions in which the Intercultural Community Intervention Project experience has taken place during its first stage from 2010 to 2013.

Due to its new social intervention proposal that combines specific action lines (health, education, participation) with an overall backbone line for the whole ICI Project, and the enormous wealth and diversity of the actions carried out in 17 intervention territories, the systematisation of the first stage of the ICI Project was organised into five volumes that match each of its dimensions: living together and social cohesion, methodology, education, health and participation.

The ICI Project is an innovative proposal for social intervention and management of social and cultural diversity that is extending to new neighbourhoods, villages and cities all over Spain, validated by its good results and its impact on improving living together and social policies in the territories where it has been working.

For these reasons, after over three years of praxis, feedback between the theory and the practice and construction of shared knowledge by all people who have actively participated, the time has come to bring this knowledge to society to make it easier to transfer to other people, organisations and institutions that might be interested in setting up intercultural community processes for living together and social cohesion. Drawing up these five volumes is one way, among others, to make this transmission easier.

— Volume 1, *Living together and social cohesion*, tackles the theoretical focus and the purpose of the intercultural community intervention.
— Volume 2, *Methodology*, focuses on methodological development followed by implementation of intercultural community processes.
— Volume 3, *Education*, systematises what has been done from the specific line of education within the framework of the intercultural community process.
— Volume 4, *Health*, also tackles the specific line of health within the framework of the intercultural community process.
— Volume 5, *Participation*, finally, focuses its systematisation on citizen participation and how it relates to other players.
2. The first stage of the Intercultural Community Intervention Project

In 2010, on the initiative of "la Caixa" Foundation, the ICI Project adventure began in 17 local territories with intense social and cultural diversity, located in 8 regions. These territories varied in their sociodemographic features and locations: countryside, major cities, historical old towns, suburban areas, coastal zones or metropolitan areas.

A wide range of situations and contexts where the ICI Project has emphasised its flexibility and capacity for adaptation, being capable of obtaining considerable results in practically all territories thanks to active involvement from all players: public administrations, professional resources and citizens.

Developing the first stage (September 2010 - August 2013) made it possible to validate the working hypothesis in practice. Much of the success behind its implementation is due to combining the flexibility required by diversity in local contexts with the intervention’s unique focus and methodology, common to all 17 territories.

This combination of a unique focus and method with local action diversity was strengthened by the synergies established between the social entities responsible for implementation in each territory, working there for a long time, and the ICI Project Scientific Management (DECAF) from the Autonomous University of Madrid that trained, provided skills and carried out continuous monitoring of the intervention teams concerning the focus and methods for the intercultural community processes, using expert consultancy both in the general methodological approach and in specific action lines for health and education.

Another factor that has helped to explain the experience’s good results in its early stage was due to the combination of specific actions, in fields such as health and education, with the development of a global action line that provides a backbone and gives consistency to the intercultural community process.

These good results provide the basis for expanding this innovative, joint intervention model to another 23 territories in the second stage of the ICI Project, begun in September 2013. We understand a "model" not just as an something exemplary or untainted, but as a dynamic set of **hypotheses validated** by means of the articulating praxis of theory and practice. So then, in the second stage and as a consequence of validating the intervention model, the ICI Project has been extended to other local contexts, now spread over 11 regions plus Ceuta and increasing up to 32 engaged towns, all of which noticeably increases both the diversity and complexity of the ICI Project. The Joining Forces to Live Together Collection will constitute a useful instru-
3. The Intercultural Community Intervention Project proposal

The ICI Project proposal has consisted and consists of a really basic and yet innovative and transforming idea: joining forces (political and institutional leaders, professionals and technicians, organisations and citizens) on living together and social development of local communities (neighbourhoods, villages and cities) as joint-players in the community who share responsibility.

It’s that simple and, at the same time, that complicated. It seems like common sense to everyone and yet it does not usually happen in practice. Whilst the territories seem to have a wide variety of professional resources, NGOs, public services and associations working to solve the problems that affect the population, their enormous complexity and putting public and private resources into sectors make it extremely difficult to articulate them into common projects for living together and social development.

This is what the ICI Project proposal is all about, making it easier and supporting articulation of common projects where everyone fits in: administrations, technical-professional resources from the territory and citizens. All of them, taking centre stage in their own social development process to improve living together locally.

The intercultural community intervention has involved a transformation process in the local communities, facilitating a type of positive interaction between players that did not exist before. This process has generated relationship spaces which have mainly served to strengthen the local communities’ capabilities and opportunities to face challenges stemming from the economic recession and social and cultural diversity.

The intercultural community process has also eased communication, dialogue, collaboration and positive interaction between neighbours from different origins (foreign populations, gypsy populations, native populations), improving positive interactions, foreseeing conflicts and promoting living together in streets, squares and public spaces.

Joint work among so many people, groups, professionals and representatives from the different administrations is helping services and institutions adapt more successfully to the real needs of the population and its growing social and cultural diversity. This is particularly seen in two of the basic pillars of social welfare: health and education.
Maybe the most important achievement will be the qualitative leap involved in assuming that local issues should be dealt with fully and shared among all players. Naturally, that cannot always happen or cover all issues/problems that affect community life, but the process allows this to happen on major common and general matters that are directly related to effective living together and social cohesion. We think that no method is more effective and efficient to tackle issues and solve problems rooted in multiple causes and in the growing diversity, plurality and complexity of post-industrial societies.

The need to work together to tackle their community issues is usually a fairly widespread concern among professionals, members of social organisations and representatives from the administrations; however, in practice and in day to day work, time, method and the resources required to do this are usually in short supply. The ICI Project has helped to resolve these deficiencies, facilitating the conceptual focus, methodological development of the work and the necessary professional resources.

4. The Intercultural Community Intervention Project overall framework

The ICI Project has boosted collective and shared processes for transforming the social and institutional context to adapt it to diversity challenges and new social needs.

It has a clearly defined method, a flexible and adaptable road map, that has guided the entire process throughout its different phases, accompanied by a series of elements that have been used to promote, highlight and back its progress.

The ICI Process has made progress from day one in establishing collaborative relationships with and between technical-professionals, citizens and representatives from the administrations, to later back them through generating shared knowledge of the local reality and development of joint actions among the three key players.

This has thereby generated relationship spaces that have made it possible to articulate a new type of local community organisation. Participative research was carried out and its results encouraged the emergence of shared knowledge and drawing up community assessments. Action plans have been designed, working from the assessment, that we have called community programming to respond to community issues and the main problems and challenges that local communities are facing, thereby contributing to new approaches and a more appropriate articulation of social policies in the territory.

This whole process has been supported by information and communication actions and by organising community meetings demonstrating contributions made by the different players and shar-
Participation

ing the progress. To the same extent, general interest activities have been promoted that have made it possible to build up a culture of collaboration among the three key players, such as organising and carrying out **global citizen actions, open summer schools, learning and service activities, health promoting agents, business promotion sessions, holding public dialogue sessions, configuring socially responsible territories**, etc.

Due to their crucial importance in the population’s welfare, education and health are suitable fields to encourage the confluence of interests and joint initiatives. These specific work fields have made an enormous contribution to the overall community strengthening process.

Through preventive and health promotion actions, such as health promoting agents or service and learning programmes, in the field of education, to name just a couple of examples, not only was it possible to structure collaboration between institutions, professionals and citizens, but it has managed to involve families, young people and children, the three priority collectives for action in the ICI Project.

The overall view of the process and the connection between the different initiatives and actions undertaken within it have been achieved thanks to **community teams** in each territory that have connected up the three key players and their respective relationship spaces - technical staff relationship spaces, institutional relationship spaces, citizen relationship spaces and participation spaces.

The community teams have acted as a boost, facilitating the whole process, providing consistency to the whole set. Initially, professionals from the community teams were provided by the ICI Project through collaborating social entities, although they were subsequently replaced by professionals from the different public and private resources and services in the territories.

The intercultural community process also has a **mediating dimension** that has helped to promote living together and social cohesion in the territories. There are several social aspects that this has helped to improve, such as revaluing the different social and cultural collectives or transforming social relations, encouraging dialogue, positive interaction and equal recognition of all parties. However, the greatest mediating achievement being provided by the intercultural community process was promoting a new social context, thanks to mutual adaptation between persons and diverse collectives and adaptation of the institutions to this situation. This achievement can be used as the foundation for a culture of prevention, regulation and peaceful resolution of conflict and for living together and intercultural citizenship.
5. A brief guide to reading or consulting the five volumes of the Joining Forces to Live Together Collection

It is advisable not to take each of the volumes in this collection individually, ideally reading them in order, starting with number 1, followed by number 2 and so on and so forth because their contents are laid out to work from an overall view to a more specific focus. If it is not possible to read the five volumes in order and just one volume is going to be read, there is always the chance of consulting the other volumes to go into greater depth on aspects not developed in that particular volume. This is particularly important for numbers 1 and 2.

Within this collection, this volume has focussed on participation, provides the intercultural community intervention focus from the field of connections and citizen participation and its practical application.

Whilst the remaining volumes, to guide your enquiries, have focussed on:
— Living together and social cohesion: provides the intervention focus and the theoretical elements that help to appropriately interpret the purposes chosen and the expected results and impacts.
— Methodology: provides the methodological, procedure and operational elements that have made it possible to put the intervention focus into practice and give consistency to the resources used.
— Education: provides the intercultural community intervention focus from the educational field and the practical elements that have made this possible.
— Health: provides the intercultural community intervention focus from the health field and the practical elements that have made this possible.

However, in the event that it is impossible to consult the rest when reading any of the volumes, this common introduction to the five volumes will give readers a basic, overall understanding of the ICI Project, making it easier to frame that particular volume within the set.

6. Action territories 2010--2013
— Barcelona (Nou Barris / Torre Baró, Ciutat Meridiana i Vallbona) · El Torrent Sociocultural Association
— Barcelona (Ciutat Vella / El Raval) · Tot Raval Foundation
— Barcelona (Sant Martí / El Clot) · Surt, Fundació de Dones
— Daimiel · Fundación Cepaim Acción Integral con Migrantes (Migrant Aid Foundation)
— Elche (Carrús) · Elche Acoge Foundation
— **El Ejido (Las Norias de Daza)** · Cooperación y Desarrollo en el Norte de África (Aid and Development in North Africa), CODENAF
— **Getafe (Las Margaritas)** · Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (Spanish Refugee Aid Commission), CEAR
— **Granada (Distrito Norte)** · Asociación Gitana Anaquerando (Gypsy Association)
— **Jerez de la Frontera (Zona Sur)** · Centro de Acogida de Inmigrantes (Immigrant Shelter), CEAIN
— **Leganés (Centro, San Nicasio y Batallas)** · Fundación Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Autonomous University of Madrid Foundation), FUAM
— **Logroño (San José y Madre de Dios)** · Rioja Acoge Foundation
— **Madrid (Ciudad Lineal / Pueblo Nuevo)** · La Rueca Association
— **Paterna (La Coma)** · Secretariado Gitano Foundation
— **Salt** · Casal dels Infants
— **San Bartolomé (Playa Honda)** · El Patio Canary Foundation and Tiemar Women’s Association
— **Tortosa** · Associació per la Cooperació, la Inserció Social i la Interculturalitat, ACISI (Association for Cooperation, Social Insertion and Interculturality)
— **Zaragoza (Casco Histórico)** · Federico Ozanam Foundation
1

How did we approach participation in the intercultural community process?
Participation is a fundamental part of the intercultural community intervention methodology and an essential component of living together and social cohesion. Without it, there is no community process and we cannot talk about interculturality, essential aspects of the intervention proposal for the Intercultural Community Intervention Project (ICI Project). Little wonder as living together involves not only relationships and positive interaction between people, groups and collectives, but also collaboration and cooperation for the common good. All these characteristics of living together require active participation from persons or players within the local community which is the subject/object of the intervention.

Participation is a means as well as an end. It is a means because without it, it is not possible to move forward in the intercultural community process. And it is an end because participation is inherent to the concept of living together and social cohesion tackled by the ICI Project and reflects participative democracy in a more clearly political view. In this respect, participation is the *trait d’union* and represents the feeling of coherence between the ICI Project’s approaches and purposes and the methods applied in developing it.

For these reasons, many of the strategies, methodological elements and instruments in the ICI Project are focussed on facilitating and promoting participation in the different process phases (assessment, programming, etc.), activities (community meetings, global citizen actions, open summer schools, etc.) and in its relationship spaces (technical staff, citizen, institutional).

The ICI Project has worked on participation at two interdependent levels:
— Participation from the three key players in the local community: citizens, professionals and Administration representatives.
— Enabling participation from all citizens, without exclusions, in the actions promoted within the framework of the intercultural community process in order to facilitate positive interactions between socioculturally differentiated collectives.

The first level, joint participation from the three key players, has permeated all ICI Project actions, both in its overall, backbone line for the whole intercultural community process, and in its specific health and education lines.

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1 Please refer to volume 1 of this collection: Living together and social cohesion.
2 Please refer to volume 2 of this collection: Methodology.
3 Please refer to volumes 1 and 2.
4 Please refer to volumes 3 and 4, respectively.
The second level was the focus of a specific line within the ICI Project: citizen relationships. Along this line, work has been done on social and intercultural relationships between groups and collectives in the intervention territories, whilst promoting their participation in the community process and organising activities with highly symbolic meaning for local communities. Work was performed with associations and other formal groups, with informal groups and with individuals.

To get a better understanding of the participation approach within the framework of the intercultural community intervention, its main component parts will be described, helping us to interpret the focus correctly:

— What is participation from an intercultural community perspective?
— Evolution and context for participation
— How was the participation strategy designed in the ICI Project?

Section 1.1, below, offers a definition of participation and generically highlights the different social and political dimensions in which it shapes up to later go into greater depth into the current context where participation should be worked on, finishing off with the intervention strategy followed by the ICI Project.

1.1

What is participation from an intercultural community perspective?

Participation is a basic human need, a right and a requirement for the intervention to be a success.

Actually, participation is a basic human need whilst also a means to wield some of the most important human rights, including fundamental rights recognised in the Spanish Constitution. However, participation is also a key aspect for intercultural living together and social development of local communities. All these dimensions, to a greater or lesser extent, are present in the ICI Project and should be taken into account.

Working from the most essential characteristics of participation, it can be stated that this is a fundamental need for human beings that, along with satisfying other basic needs, such as survival, protection or freedom, brings about personal development and social wellbeing⁶.

Just like other fundamental human needs, participation requires a series of “satisfaction factors”: In the same way as a home provides us with protection, and only the shape changes how this factor is satisfied in each culture and social context (for example an igloo for Eskimos), participation requires its own series of satisfaction factors, adapted to each social situation. These satisfaction factors should make it possible for people from different aspects of society to participate: politically, economically, socially and culturally. To a large extent, participation will be feasible if the political order allows it, as democratically as possible, and if there are organised citizens who are aware of their rights and responsibilities to consolidate and promote a participative culture.

To be able to participate in the different fields of society, persons, groups and collectives have a series of requisites, each related to a dimension in which participation takes place:

— *Having* dimensions require a series of institutions, rules, mechanisms and tools such as: rights, responsibilities and obligations; economic, material and human resources; places for participation and work, etc.

— Within the *having* dimension, participation should be specified in personal and collective actions such as: joining, associating, cooperating, proposing, sharing, collaborating, disagreeing, complying with, communicating, agreeing, giving an opinion...

— Within the *temporary being* dimension, there is the particular participation of some programmes that generate fields of participative interaction: associations, cooperatives, trade unions, parties, communities, neighbourhoods, churches, citizens’ advice, etc.

— Within the dimension of *permanently being*, participation requires and, at the same time, generates attitudes, individuals and collective capabilities and skills, such as: adaptability, receptivity, solidarity, disposition, dedication, respect, passion, humour, cooperation, mutual recognition, living together...

Participation is the fundament of many civil, political and social rights recognised in most democratic countries’ constitutions, including Spain, such as freedom of expression, freedom to hold meetings, form associations, hold demonstrations, be a member of a trade union or the right to

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⁶ MAX-NEEF, M., ELIZALDE, A. & HOPENHAYN, M. (1998) According to these authors, there are nine fundamental reasons: survival (health, food, etc.), protection (safety and prevention systems, housing, etc.), affection (family, friendship, privacy, etc.), understanding (education, communication, etc.), participation (rights, responsibilities, work, etc.), leisure (games, shows), creation (skills, abilities), identity (reference groups, sexuality, values), freedom (equal rights).
Participation is a basic mainstay of human and social development on any scale: be it at community, local, regional or state level. This is how the conception of human development, maintained in works by Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen, appears in the United Nations Programme for Development.

This conception was reaffirmed by the UN at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen. At this summit, we were reminded that “social development is central to the needs and aspirations of people throughout the world”, understanding that meeting this goal, in all development processes, requires active participation from persons and collectives without any type of discrimination.

Locally, participation has been a key element in “community development” proposals encouraged by the UN and international institutions from the 1950s onwards in Asia, Africa and Latin America, to promote development of the most disadvantaged and poorest rural areas. This type of initiative consisted of local and national authorities promoting citizen participation in their own economic and social development process, also making use of implication from professionals and technical resources. These initiatives were changing, extending to marginal urban areas and also incorporating civil society organisations to promote them, often separately from local and national governments, particularly in Latin America.

The community development focus, similar to approaches from social work traditions such as “community organisation” (emerging in the early 20th century in industrialised countries) inspired community intervention initiatives in very different contexts to Latin America. Essential traits of some community social work approaches include coordination of interventions and organisation of technical-professional resources existing in the territory, as well as promoting citizen participation in the projects being driven.

There has been constant concern for participation in social work, to the point of turning it into an in-depth debate between conceptions that favour handouts and conceptions that are more likely to promote participation. The former, far more focussed on resolving people’s needs directly through social services, has considered persons to be mere service users and has excluded them.
from any type of active participation in determining how to solve their own problems. The latter, with a clear intention to socially promote more disadvantaged persons and social groups, has considered them to be responsible citizens and has attempted, with varying degrees of success, to involve them actively in the process of solving their own problems. This social work dilemma has been extended to other disciplines and professional profiles within social intervention. Emblematically, the way that medicine is eminently handed out can be taken as an example.

The latter conceived persons as subjects of their own social promotion process, with the capabilities and potential to solve their own difficulties and any emerging in their surroundings, so social intervention professionals have taken on the role of facilitators for this process, promoting autonomy for persons, their social revaluation and human and social development of their communities. This concept, considering people as citizens and not as users, has implied an equality and alliance relationship with social intervention professionals overcoming intervention focuses based on expert-only identification, definition and resolution of problems.

Community intervention emphasised the capabilities of persons, social groups and communities to deploy all their potential and generate individual and collective, organisational and institutional strategies and instruments to prevent and resolve collective or more general interest needs and problems. This focus makes citizen participation essential but also requires participation from all other agents present in any community, professionals and representatives from the administrations.

Alongside structural topics that have traditionally been tackled by community intervention and that could be synthesised into improving living conditions, social promotion of disadvantaged groups and social development of the entire local community, we have also recently seen concern for the population's growing social and cultural diversity. The phenomenon of international migration, alongside the existence of ethnically differentiated groups, gypsy and non-gypsy population, in many cities, villages and neighbourhoods all over Spain, has considerably enriched diversity in local communities, although also complicating the needs and problems to be solved. Living together has become a strand of social intervention policies and has made it necessary to incorporate the intercultural perspective into the community intervention and work on relationships between ethno-culturally different collectives.

Once again, participation takes on a key role. Working to improve relationships between collectives implies positive interaction and common participation, essential to build on living together. Its role is clearly revealed in the following quote:
Participation is “being present in, being part of, being taken into account by and for, getting involved, intervening in, etc. Participating means having an impact, influencing and taking responsibility. Participation is a process that necessarily binds the subjects and the groups; someone participating in something relates this one person with another who is also engaged. Being a participant implies being a co-agent, co-participant, volunteer, co-author and jointly-responsible.”

Participation implies interaction and communication, so necessary in living together, but it also incorporates a series of verbs that suggest action “making an impact, influencing, intervening in” and therefore the capacity to work collectively to transform social relations and the real situation in which they are intervening.

Participation sets up channels of communication between collectives, social organisations and institutions, it promotes mutual knowledge, dialogue, cooperation, solidarity, joint-responsibility, the feeling of belonging to the community and, consequently, as a result of all the above, it builds on how we live together and social cohesion.

Further outstanding potential for participation is its pedagogic function. The freely and spontaneously created collectives and organisations in civil society are real citizenship schools where people learn to take an interest in their community’s issues and problems and exercise their civil, social and cultural rights. There is a lot to be learnt when living together in the communities we belong to merely due to living in society: school, work, neighbourhood, residents’ community, village, city, etc. Active participation through social organisations (associations for students, parents, trade unions, neighbours, youth, leisure and free time, immigrants, supporting social integration, international cooperation, etc.) strengthens knowledge of the real situation and commitment to problems that affect the environment where people live.

Participation as a citizenship school and exercise ties in with its socio-political dimensions, closely linked to social movements and governance of public issues.

Social movements have been fundamental to understand the progressive democratisation of societies. Thanks to them, citizenship rights have been increasingly extended to broader layers of society. Citizenship, as we understand it today, thanks to T.H. Marshall’s formulation in

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the mid-20th century, is made up of political, civil, social, economic and cultural rights. From a restricted conception of citizenship to the start of the liberal states (19th century), when only bourgeois men had full civil and political rights, thanks to the workers movement and the feminist movement, universal suffrage became a reality for the majority of the population and social, economic and cultural rights joined civil and political rights. Over the last few decades, new social movements have managed to include in-depth debates into the social and political agenda, making it possible to acknowledge new rights (anti-discrimination and anti-racist movements, movements defending sexual orientation and gender identity, etc.) and approaching struggles inherent to new problem issues faced by post-modern societies (ecologist movements, international solidarity, pacifist, global justice movement, etc.).

Participation in new social movements has been possible thanks to the existence of a democratic framework of freedoms but the type of participation, its new forms and variants, have come from a specific moment in history: welfare states and the emergence of post-materialist values.

Current societies are characterised by their complexity: the homogeneity that characterised industrial societies for much of the 20th century has given way to the heterogeneity of post-industrial societies and the diversity and interdependence pertaining to the era of globalisation. This new reality has transformed ways of participating and has brought about the emergence of new and multiple social demands related to corporate interests (consumers, internet users, etc.) with collective identities (sexual, gender, etc.) or with new social challenges, some with worldwide scope (immigration, the environment, north-south inequalities, etc.).

In the more political field of managing public issues, the continuous increase of societies’ diversity and complexity makes it difficult to take care of citizens’ demands and solve their needs. For this reason, citizens have claimed greater participation in making decisions that affect them and in managing public policies; meanwhile from public administrations, especially municipal administrations, citizen participation has been perceived as an opportunity to legitimise institutions and improve local governance. In this respect, several citizen participation experiences have been implemented, with varying success, in different towns, namely: citizen councils, strategic city plans, citizen juries, digital democracy, community plans, neighbourhood plans, sector-based councils, participative budgets and so on and so forth.


The previous description of participation’s characteristics and dimensions infers that they must all be taken into account from an intercultural community perspective as they will be present, to a greater or lesser extent, in the local reality.

Consequently, participation in the ICI Project should be tackled:
— as a fundamental human need,
— as the essence of human rights,
— as an element of local development,
— as a social intervention strategy,
— as the essence of living together,
— as an exercise in citizenship
— and as participative governance of public issues.

The key to the intercultural community intervention is understanding participation as a common element for the three main community figures (citizens, professionals, administrations), not reducing it to an exclusive citizen participation issue, although there are specific strategies to mobilise citizens.

However, to get a better understanding of how participation has been worked on in the ICI Project framework, we should take an in-depth look at how it has evolved over the last few decades and at the current context for enabling it.

1.2
Evolution and context of participation

This is a question of knowing where we come from, to know where we are right now and where we are heading. For this reason, it is advisable to take a brief look at how participation has evolved historically in Spain, to thereby facilitate an understanding of its current context.
1.2.1 How participation has evolved in Spain

The last years of Franco’s rule, in the 1960s, saw an upsurge in the workers’ movement in Spain and the citizen movement was created, mainly represented by tenant associations whose claims went from improving living conditions in neighbourhoods, particularly in the workers’ districts on the outskirts of cities, to requiring better democratisation of institutions.

During the transition to democracy in the 1970s, participation was characterised by a widely varying social sphere, united around tenant associations in each neighbourhood. These associations saw themselves as a transforming social movement, often coming up against the institutions.

Within the tenant associations there were youth, women’s, cultural, artistic groups and close relations with other associations in the neighbourhood such as school parents (later called AMPAs), and with tenant associations in nearby neighbourhoods. Tenant associations gave neighbourhoods an identity, many of which lacked their own history as they were built in the sixties and seventies on the outskirts of large cities to deal with internal migration. The associations organised all types of cultural, social, sports events in addition to neighbourhood festivals and set up internal support networks.\footnote{ALBERICH, T. (2007) “Contradicciones y evolución de los movimientos sociales en España”. Revista de Documentación Social, 145. Madrid: Caritas in Spain.}

Tenant associations, and the groups within them, were configured as democratic programmes contrasting with the autocratic power of Franco’s institutions. They were citizenship schools where people learnt to participate in a community and defend their rights. They were also capable of organising people joining forces, even forming alliances, with professional teams (particularly urban advisors), with left-wing parties and with the media.

After the first municipal elections in 1979, a process of social change began that had an enormous effect on the citizen movement. Institutions became democratic and so underwent significant transformations, whilst also absorbing part of the higher ranks of tenant associations who became mayors, councillors or members of political parties and institutions. These processes, combined, broke the unity of the citizen movement against the institutions leading to a period of association fragmentation; the tenant associations were no longer the place to come together and unite.

Alongside this association fragmentation, sectarian trends followed strong ideology in part of the tenant movements. These trends could also be seen in the administrations thereby compli-
cating their relationships with social entities. In addition, public administrations began to create cultural and social services that, until then, had been run almost exclusively by the associations. Once again, there was a process of absorbing members from the associations, now as workers for the departments of youth, culture, sport, women, etc. from town councils and autonomous communities. In parallel, the administrations failed to acknowledge associationism as it was perceived as competition. All this was often corrupted by the political machine.

Within this context, it was hard for associations to reformulate their role; they were incapable of renegotiating their social function with the administrations, mainly due to mistrust around power and their fear of being controlled. The first citizen participation rulings emerged in this period, perceived by many associations as an attempt to control and confine social movements.

The severe economic recession in the 1980s, with high unemployment rates, unstable jobs, juvenile delinquency, drug-addiction, scarce resources and loss of legitimacy for the traditional solidarity networks (trade unions, tenant associations, etc.) caused radical changes in citizen movements and in society. The typical “disenchantment with democracy” at this time, like the lack of new global horizons, new mobilising socio-political projects, led to a search for more individualist and corporate departures.

This period was characterised by low association member numbers and insufficient social recognition for volunteer work, so typical of the Mediterranean culture. As opposed to other European countries, in Spain it was considered that public social work should be run exclusively by the Administration and that volunteer action was “for odd people” (priests, ‘reds’ or people engaged in politics). Association sphere fragmentation and tenant associations’ internal crises led to the upsurge of a large number of small associations, a phenomenon encouraged, in turn, by sector-based subsidy policies, the political machine and the trend towards individualism and defence of corporate interests.

In the nineties, the panorama started to change. Although the association fabric continued to be fragmented and atomised, ideological conflicts and mutual indifference began to fall away to timidly re-establish relationships between different types of associations, even setting up new federations and local, regional and state unitary platforms. We also saw the appearance of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), a more pragmatic, subsidised and professionalised way of forming associations. This type of associationism was prioritised by public administrations.

12 Idem.
13 Idem.
The nineties saw a boom period for volunteering, highly encouraged from then on by public administrations, just like outsourcing public services to NGOs and administrative associations that occasionally acted more like companies than social entities. But it was also the period for strengthening and bringing out new social movements (squatters, LGTB, ecologists, international solidarity, etc.) in parallel with professionalising associations in different sectors (disabilities, childhood, sports, etc.).

As the decade went on, a change in paradigm began to take place, as an increasing number of associations became aware that the answer to the problem could not be local and isolated. This was the time of the pro-human rights, ecologist and international solidarity movements (with movements against foreign debt or for 0.7%). In the nineties, there were international summits organised by the UN featuring international NGOs and social movements, such as the Rio Summit in 1992. We started talking about the “global civil society” and the ecologist slogan “think globally, act locally” was widespread. Towards the end of the decade, after mobilisation against the World Trade Organisation in the city of Seattle in 1999, the alter-globalisation movement (or global justice movement) emerged that would have such a great influence in the following decade.

In parallel, within the associative movement there was a process for training new managers that, along with incorporating volunteer and contracted professionals, would provide new participation and management techniques, leading to more professional, better organised and more democratic organisations.

The process of outsourcing public services, begun by the administrations and identifying NGOs with civil society, was not without its own problem issues. The neoliberal strategy, boosted in the 80s by Ronald Reagan’s conservative administration in the United States, advocated withdrawing the state in favour of civil society, understood to be companies and social volunteer organisations. This neoliberal strategy progressively spread throughout Europe. In this context, for many critical social sectors, outsourcing public services seriously undermined the welfare state and took place in collusion with the NGOs.

In comparison with this negative interpretation of the term civil society, many organisations would feel comfortable with belonging to the global civil society that was emerging around social movements with a worldwide scope and whose best expressions were “counter-summits” to the summits held by world powers. Seattle, Genoa, Washington, Cancun, Seoul, Davos... Protests were repeated all over the world, wherever there was a summit for the International Monetary
Fund, the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, G8 or the World Economic Forum. This was the context for holding the first World Social Forum in 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, as a place for social organisations and movements from all over the world to meet. Many Spanish organisations and platforms would take part in its successive editions, at different locations across the planet.

The 2000 decade brought with it a re-politicization of social entities, although not partization, around an important cycle of social protests, both sector-based against reforms to educational and working laws, and unitary, against the War in Iraq or the Prestige oil tanker disaster off the coast of Galicia. It was also the period of important movement upsurge to support immigrants, uniting them in their own organisations. However, this re-politicisation and bringing together the association sphere around shared battles did not mean the end of sector-based associations, but rather more global awareness than participation in coordinators and platforms, mostly topic-based, from the field that each association might provide.

With the arrival of the economic recession from 2007 onwards, considerable changes came about in the aforementioned dynamics. On the one hand, the welfare state was dismantled to a greater extent, not so much through outsourcing services but through significant cuts in social spending that affected many public services. This had a negative impact on many associations and the NGOs that administered them. On the other hand, social entities’ excessive and generalised dependency on subsidies, at a time of drastic cuts, weakened the classic association sphere enormously.

At the same time, new associations were created to defend sectors of the population that were particularly affected by the recession (mortgages and losing their homes, banking swindles, etc.) and the emergence of new social movements, also sector-based, defending education or public health. Although there is a highly political component to their demands, even a social mobilisation strategy way beyond the affected collectives, they continue to be clearly sector-based, occasionally corporate, only taking on more generalist connotations when joining broader movements, but deep-down they are merging different sector-based claims. However, in parallel, we are seeing the emergence of movements with a more global vision, calling on new social-political horizons; a good demonstration of this is the 15M indignados movement.

1.2.2 Participation from foreigners

This section tackles the topic of participation from people of foreign origin due to their specific characteristics. This one-off differentiation is merely descriptive as it does not imply distinctions when applying the intercultural community intervention methodology between foreign and native persons when working on participation within the ICI Project framework.

In order to understand how participation from foreigners in our country has evolved, it is best to look at different points in time as the foreign population settled in the receiver society. Although the connection made between immigrant and native population is initially merely work-based and even marginal, needs subsequently emerge in terms of the foreign population putting down roots in the territory, bringing more family members over, access to social, educational and health resources or organisations and institutions being set up out of concern for immigrant integration. And then a third period when the receiver society has to tackle the political exclusion of hundreds of thousands of foreigners who live, work and pay taxes and the need to be listened to and actively participate in their adopted society.

Although Spain only became an international migration receiver relatively recently, in the late nineties, the phenomenon’s intensity and volume quickly propelled our country into the second and third stages\textsuperscript{15}. Social integration policies were developed for the immigrant population, making it easier to access standardised health, education and social services whilst implementing specific programmes and projects intended for this population profile. Growing socio-cultural diversity and possible problems for living together became a concern for the different administrations and local, regional and state integration and cohabitation plans were drawn up. Within these plans, promoting social participation for immigrants stood out as a strategy to encourage living together and as an alternative to exclusion from their political rights. The different levels of exclusion that foreigners might experience, depending on their legal situation, aroused an in-depth debate on the limits of the classic concept of citizenship and we began to talk about social citizenship as an alternative. From this perspective, it became fundamental for the immigrant population to actively participate in different fields of the receiver society. Associations, NGOs and public administrations deployed a great many initiatives in this respect.

Many immigrant associations were set up and their participation was promoted in local and regional cohabitation boards. Participation was also boosted in the national Immigrant Social

Integration Forum and even when drawing up the two state plans for citizenship and integration. Immigrant associations developed welcome and integration programmes and services that were either their own, receiving subsidies for this work, or public, due to administrative concessions. However, most immigrant associations focussed on specific national collectives (Ecuadorians, Colombians, Moroccans, etc.) and their social participation was sector-based, on specific topics related to foreigners and integration of immigrant population.

Social participation of foreigners was demonstrated to be deficient in many aspects. On the one hand, immigrant associations were few and far between and weak, with extremely limited economic and professional resources, although in some cases they had the ability to bring together a large number of people around their own cultural and identity-based activities. In addition, on many occasions, just as we saw with native associationism, they became trapped by the administrations’ patronage system.

On the other hand, and this is extremely significant, there was remarkably scarce participation from foreigners in associations related to the general aspects of public and social life, meaning in the common fields that natives and immigrants share, such as being parents and participating in educational institutions, using public services, being neighbours, workers, members, contributors, activists, etc. This provided lines of potential participation through parent associations, tenant associations, trade unions, consumer associations, NGOs for social action, feminist movements, ecologists, etc.

Post-recession, participation from immigrants has not varied significantly. What has changed is the direction of public policies, taking some serious backwards steps in terms of foreigners’ rights and setting limits for access to public services. Excluding administratively illegal foreigners from the public health system is the clearest symptom. This is happening alongside serious cuts in integration policies that have mainly affected resources available for towns and subsidies received by immigrant associations and supportive NGOs.

1.2.3 Participation context and framework in local communities

The historical evolution of participation, described in the pages above, will help us to put current local community participation characteristics into context. There are five key aspects to take into account to correctly interpret the local context and the focus that intercultural community intervention will take on participation:

— Participation as a citizenship right within the framework of a democratic state, with rule of law and social welfare.
— Participation as reinforcement, integration and deepening of democracy.
— Within the framework of social policies, participation is fundamental to correct their handout-based, individualist drift.
— Participation occurs within a context of obsolescence of politics, parties, trade unions and the bodies and programmes for institutional citizen participation.
— The surge in new overall (Indignados) or sector-based (evictions, preference shares, solidarity in times of crisis, etc.) participation programmes and fields, in many cases separate from working with institutions and even in direct confrontation with them.

Key aspects of participation will be influenced, to a varying degree, by a series of phenomena and social trends appearing in local communities:

— Economic, political and social changes over the last two decades have been characterised by their great speed and complexity that, along with undeniable social and institutional progress, have been creating a reality that is much more difficult to analyse and understand. Social homogeneity that used to characterise industrial societies has given way to heterogeneity as a rule, allowing clearly new social differences to emerge: if not a matter of class then status, values, priorities, etc. These social differences are added to growing cultural diversity as a consequence of foreign population settling in local communities, or structural changes that are being caused by the recession (precarious jobs in general, cuts in the welfare state, etc.). As a result, it becomes more complex to come up with an assessment for the social reality in neighbourhoods, cities and villages and find general priorities that are truly shared by the vast majority of the population.

— The handout drift of social policies has led to abandoning the collective and community field, or in other words educational, preventive and intervention against causes, to focus exclusively on the individual consequences of social problem issues. The theoretical universal voca-
tion of services has been left by the wayside in favour of increasingly marginal services and assistance. However, there have never been so many technical and professional resources in the territories, although fragmented and sector-based, without effective coordination making it possible to intervene fully among the population.

— Citizen participation in political life and in governing public life has been noticeably absent, except for a few uneven experiences, neighbourhood plans, strategic plans for cities, citizen councils, participative budgets, etc. However, it can be seen that increasingly often citizens are asking to be able to take part in decision-making on the policies that affect them. Local programmes are suitable participation fields as town councils are public administrations with the most citizen contact that can immediately perceive how daily life is affected by phenomena such as unemployment, housing problems, child poverty, social exclusion or multicultural issues. Citizen demands are firstly sent to the town councils so their implication is not only a democratic responsibility but it is also essential for fast and effective identification of newly emerging social needs and so that satisfactory, lasting and sustainable solutions can be found. With a highly relevant contradiction: the town council has all the political and social responsibility but it does not manage the authorities and all the resources, many of which are managed (in the health and education fields for example) by the regional Administration, sometimes governed by a different party.

— The complex reality of the globalisation era has, in turn, added greater heterogeneity to local communities, a phenomenon that necessarily influences the feeling of belonging and implication in them. Spatial borders have become unclear and identification ties with the territory and local communities have weakened. Mobility and the chance to find out about other realities, persons and groups (thanks to transport, internet, international migration, etc.) mean that proximity ties (neighbourhood, school, etc.) do not play such a determining role in identification and collective belonging. In this respect, we find associations identified with global issues (ecology, international cooperation, feminism, etc.) but their actions are out of touch with the reality of the neighbourhoods where they are located; people meet others through virtual communities on the internet and that they feel they have more in common than with their neighbours; transnational communities tied to international migration and workforce mobility; a whole host of people who are “passing through” a neighbourhood (for work, renting property, etc.) and who do not develop a feeling of belonging to it, etc.

Modifying these trends, facing new needs, adapting to new social phenomena all implies challenges that require the three key players to want to work together: citizens, professional resourc-
es and administrations. Dispersion, sectorialisation, corporativism, lack of action compatibility, poor cooperation between persons, groups and collectives making up local communities could prevent us from getting the right answers.

The emphasis in this stage has to be put on participation and boosting global and collective projects. There has been and continues to be too much passive delegation from citizens to administrators and to technicians to solve collective and general problems. Too much progress has been made over the last few years on defending corporate interests and the global dimension of social problems has been neglected. Although in some cases it has been possible to look more deeply into specific problem issues for certain collectives, appropriately identifying causes and solutions, in other cases, sector-based issues have been pitted against general or global interests. Administrations should help to break this trend that they have promoted so much through sectorialisation of public actions, restoring a universal focus on social policies and promoting complete interventions. In this context, local and specific culture has prevailed over collective and community culture and new global sociopolitical horizons need to emerge.

The intercultural community intervention is an answer to the aforementioned challenges, providing an overall, community focus and a methodology that makes it possible for the three key players to participate. In turn, it encourages implication from citizens and their organisations when solving local needs and problem issues. In fact, participation is the essence of the intercultural community intervention. What differentiates this social intervention methodology from others with similar aims to improve living conditions in a given community or population is not what is done but how it is done. And participation is implicitly and explicitly present in this ‘how’.

1.3 How was the participation strategy designed in the ICI Project?

Participation makes up a cross-discipline, permanent strand of the ICI Project. It is a fundamental element of its focus and its methodology, just like a result of its application. It is a means and, over time, an end. From a focus point of view, participation is the main issue when conceptualising the three central ideals of the project’s initial target, meaning that participation is essential in living together (it is one of its dimensions), in interculturality (focused on positive interaction and building something in common) and even more so in citizenship (key to exercise rights and responsibilities). From the point of view of the community and mediating methodology, participation was also present in all methodological elements of the ICI Project, both in its process aspects (assessment, programming, community meetings, activities) and in its community organisation (technical staff, citizen, institutional relationship spaces). Participation has also been an indicator making it possible to measure the results and impacts of the intercultural community process on the territory.

When talking about participation, within the ICI Project framework, we have always referred to the three key players and not just citizens. However, boosting citizen participation required its own specific action line as a means to implicate it in the whole process, along with professional and administrative resources; and as a strategy to promote strengthening the local, social sphere and improving connections between differentiated social and cultural collectives. Consequently, an attempt has always been made to encourage participation from all types of groups, associations and social organisations, whilst paying particular attention to diversity in the territory, making sure that no collective of immigrants, ethnic minorities or excluded groups were left out of the process.

All ICI Project activity has tended towards participation also becoming an autonomous organisation of persons, technicians, citizens, collectives, associations and that each one increases its capacity to manage its own needs and ends.

From the intercultural community perspective, individual, collective or group autonomy does not have to swim against the global, common or general tide. The ICI Project has worked to resolve this apparent contradiction, promoting a move beyond a culture of individual interests and helping to integrate specific aspects into general concepts and sector-based ideas into global concepts.

With this concept of participation in mind in the framework of an intercultural community process, the ICI Project:
— Has acknowledged and, as far as possible, strengthened all existing associative resources.
— Has helped to promote new professional and social resources for local communities.
— Has helped to generate times and places for meeting and participation among the three key players, to establish new synergies, collaboration, cooperation, etc.
— Has helped to build common and shared projects.
— Has helped to establish programmes for communication, mutual knowledge, positive interaction, collaboration, cooperation and common participation among social and culturally differentiated collectives.

These contributions have always been the result of the methodology and applying its specific methods and instruments to promote participation. Some of these methods and instruments (looked at in greater depth in chapter 2) were:
— The three circle theory
— Community information
— The intercultural community intervention team / community team
— The meeting, connecting and organising programmes and times for each key player and among all three
— Shared knowledge and other common products
— Intercultural community mediation

Although all these methods and instruments have made participation easier, this has happened from the viewpoint of the following premises:
— One: the community process does not consist of offering activities but offering specific, real occasions to participate actively in organising them, just like the programmes for connecting and making decisions created by the process.
— Two: participation should be general, even if only participating in part of the process, infor-

19 To go into greater depth, please refer to volume 2, Methodology, chapter 2: “How have we put the intercultural community intervention methodology into practice?”
Information should be provided on the whole process and all participants should be given an overall view, taking in what is being contributed to a common project for the neighbourhood, village or city.

— Three: the process should be open and flexible, ensuring that nobody is excluded from the chance to participate and that there will be the capacity to incorporate new people who would like to join. It should adapt to people’s circumstances and their real availability.

— Four: participation should not become a “dead weight”; standardised ways of participating should be set up, meaning that anyone should be able to participate without affecting their life too much. If participating becomes a commitment, this is a very large personal effort and only a few people will participate. For this reason, care should be taken with scheduling, how long the meetings last, how often they are held, etc.

— Five: the process should be sensitive to factors that can make participation difficult for excluded collectives, foreign population or people from ethnic minorities, facilitating strategies or tools that allow everyone to participate with no exclusions. Factors such as language, cultural key aspects, educational levels, socioeconomic conditioning factors can become obstacles that need to be overcome.

— Six: the process is independent of the persons participating in it; it is not bound to them; it remains over time despite the comings and goings of the people involved or collaborating in it (citizens, professionals, administrators, etc.).

The community intervention team was essential to facilitate and enable citizen participation and encourage the three key players. Its fundamental role consisted of helping the three key players get organised and generating relationships and real participation programmes. In turn, the ICI team’s role promoted a pedagogic dimension within the process as citizens, technicians and administrators learnt to participate within the framework of the intercultural community process. As the different players took more central roles in the process, the community intervention team changed.

With all this grounding of conceptions, methods and premises, participation in the ICI Project, as mentioned at the start of this chapter, has been worked on at two interdependent levels:

— Common participation in the local community for the three key players in initiatives that were promoted and the actions developed around them.

— Enabling citizen participation, from all citizens, without exclusions, on the actions promoted within the framework of the intercultural community process.
The first level, common participation from the three key players, has permeated all actions deployed by the ICI Project, both in its overall line and in its specific health and education lines.

The second level was the focus of a specific work line within the ICI Project known as citizen relationships. This line answered two basic needs in the intercultural community process: Firstly, it actively involves citizens in the process actions; and secondly, it promotes positive interactions between the different social and cultural collectives in the territory.

To do this, in addition to permanent enabling work for the intercultural social relationships in the territory, it has promoted organisation and carrying out activities at a community level and to mobilise citizens. These activities included topic-based sessions, neighbourhood festivals, community meetings, enabling public spaces, recovery of the territory’s historical memory, global citizen actions, etc.

The following chapter will go into greater depth on all questions mentioned here, giving details of the methodological strategy followed, the methods used, the instruments used, the techniques applied and the results obtained.
What have we done in participation and how did we do it?
Now that the ICI Project’s focus on participation has been revealed, as well as the context and the intervention strategy that has been designed, it is time to describe what we have done and how we did it.

This chapter will take a close look at the methodology we followed, understanding it to be much more than applying a set of methods and procedures; we are actually referring to coherence between theory and practice:

“A methodology is, then, the coherence with which we should articulate the aims to be achieved, the methods or procedures used for this and the techniques or instruments applied in relation to the theoretical framework at the heart of the objectives.”\(^{20}\)

Participation is the essence of the intercultural community intervention, both the means and the end. For this reason, it is not about what is done but how it is done that determines and differentiates this type of social intervention from other intervention strategies that, in theory, seeks similar objectives to improve living conditions for a given community or population.

Promoting autonomy for persons, groups and the association sphere, their revaluation as the key players in their respective local communities, strengthening their capabilities to undertake their own projects, joint participation to encourage local communities that are weathering the recession and the challenges of globalisation, building on living together and social cohesion are just some of the purposes of intercultural community intervention. These purposes cannot be achieved without active participation and implication from the people living and working in the intervention territory.

Within the ICI Project methodology framework, the how it’s done within the intercultural community, participation has been promoted through specific strategies with each key players and among the three, where respecting the focus, the methods and the techniques from the actual ICI Project has guaranteed coherence between its theory and its practice.

Participation in the ICI Project has been worked on, on the one hand, as a cross-disciplinary strand for the entire methodology, with each key player and among the three key players; and, on the other hand, as a specific line intended to encourage relations among citizens, strengthening their social sphere and their active implication within the intercultural community process.

Keeping in mind these two major lines of work in participation, this chapter revolves around two major blocks:
— Participation from the three key players in the local community in the intercultural community process.
— Citizen relationships and the intercultural community process.

2.1 Participation from the local community’s three key players in the intercultural community process

Participation from the local community’s three key players is possible thanks to the methodology deployed by the intercultural community process, encouraging, creating and provoking meeting points between citizens, professionals and administrators to carry out shared actions.

Applying different methodological elements such as shared knowledge, assessment, programming, community meetings or community information will make this participation possible without confusing each one’s roles and functions. It will be no less important to apply the focus and the methods of the ICI Project’s mediating dimension, to guarantee that nobody, independently of their national origin or belonging to an ethnic or social minority, is left out of the process.

Applying methodological elements should not lose track of the approach that the ICI Project takes with participation and its fundamental premises, but nor should it forget the following consideration on the nature of participation and the socio-political demands that it meets:

The methodological community intervention approach falls decisively within the framework of participative democracy, as a demand for greater citizen participation in managing public affairs and as a fundamental element of integration, development and looking in greater depth at formal and representative democracy. In addition, this is a general interest “political” proposal that contemplates improvement and modification of existing social policies, where the handout view prevails over active implication of citizens in solving the problem issues affecting them.
Intercultural community intervention not only takes place from a citizen-based viewpoint but it also works with administrations as legitimate citizen representatives. Both, administrators and citizens, are the fundamental key players of any democratic system. The third key player, the territory’s professional and technical resources, provides their technical-scientific knowledge and their work to be used by the process and the other two key players.

The methodological approach highlights how important it is that the three key players are engaged in their own roles, without confusing their functions. On the one hand, it aims for people who are democratically elected to govern to be able to do this in the most participative way possible, working with citizens during their term of office. On the other hand, it aims for public and private technical and professional resources not to limit their activity to hand-out-based management of services, but that they contribute to the population being able to actively participate in improving its real life situation and individual and collective autonomy. Finally, it aims for citizens to break with the “passive delegation” dynamic of the last few decades and constitutes a central element of the intercultural community intervention.

Bearing in mind these considerations on the nature of joint participation for the three key players, the following pages will develop the methodological elements that will make it possible. A first group will describe the elements with a cross-discipline nature, the second group referring to specific times and actions.

2.1.1 Cross-discipline participation elements

Cross-discipline elements are common methods to facilitate and promote participation among the three key players. They will be described in the following order: three circle theory; characteristics of intercultural community participation; the ICI team; community information; and mediation for participation. The majority of these elements were tackled in depth in volume 2 of this collection, focussed on the ICI Project methodology. For this reason, we will now exclusively develop aspects related to participation from the three key players.
2.1.1.1 The three circle theory

The three circle theory\textsuperscript{22} is used, from what has been the specific ICI Project praxis, to systematise dynamics that arise when people and players participate in the intercultural community intervention process. Essentially, this theory reflects the process's stability despite people's varying implication over time so that participation is not related to people but to the actual process.

The three circle theory establishes three levels of participation in the process framework:
— Implication level: people that share the initiative and support it entirely, participating actively in the process.
— Collaboration level: people that share the initiative but that participate in it only occasionally, partially, provisionally, etc.
— Information level: people that cannot or do not want to participate, for any type of reason, but that might participate in the future. They will be informed of everything that happens in the intercultural community process.

It works from the premise that a person's degree of participation in the process might vary over time. People that have been highly engaged might slow down their participation for different personal, family, work-related reasons. Others who have been collaborating occasionally might become more engaged on a more permanent basis. And even people who have been inactive or that initially were against engaging in this type of process decide to collaborate or engage later.

With this idea that situations might change, the process is conceived with open and flexible methodology in terms of incorporating new people. Community information, informing all people in a local community, meets the function of maintaining the connection between them and the process, making it easier to take the plunge towards greater implication if they decide on this. This works from the premise that, although informing people does not guarantee that they will participate, participation would be impossible without any information at all.

On the other hand, it is conceived that when anyone ever says that everyone participates, this is rarely true. Everyone cannot participate in everything; it will depend on the moment, personal circumstances, possibilities, etc. For this reason, when the ICI Project states that "everyone participates", it wishes to express that the process is open to everyone. The question is that anyone who wants or can participate should be able to do so at any time.

\textsuperscript{22}Please refer to volume 2 of this collection.
Another basic idea of the theory is to assume that within a local community only a minority will participate, not the majority. It is crucial that the process methodology guarantees that new participants can be integrated and that there will be capacity to incorporate as many people as wish to get involved. This is what happened in the 17 experiences developed by the ICI Project where it has been seen that, little by little, the number of people has been growing, participating in the 17 processes that were implemented. The different initiatives, activities, projects, actions and relationship spaces that run simultaneously in the project have made it possible for people to find participation spaces to suit them, meeting their personal interests and respecting their availability.

The following overall data reveals how participation evolved during the ICI Project’s first stage lasting three years, referring exclusively to citizen participation. As far as participation in activities is concerned, a total of 30,308 persons participated; 38,340 in the second year and 33,323 in the third year. If we focus our attention on participation in work meetings, either with citizens or along with other key players, it can be seen that 13,699 participated in the first year; 18,771 in the second year and 14,552 in the third. In total, 148,993 persons have participated in activities and meetings. This data shows the enormous flexibility of the methodology to assume participation variations that occur throughout the process and that depend on different moments and phases23.

The previous data refers to overall citizen participation without breaking it down into different modalities involved, collaborators or simply people invited to take part in the activities.

Instead, if we focus our analysis on the data for engaged people belonging to the three key players, it can be seen that, just on the overall line for the ICI Project, without taking into account the specific lines, 997 persons have been actively engaged from the administrations, 2151 professionals from public and private technical resources and 4060 persons belonging to social organisations or as individuals24. This data reaffirms the methodology’s capability to integrate different ways of participating, independently of whether they belong to one type of key players or another and their volume.

2.1.1.2 Characteristics of intercultural community participation
The ICI Project has intervened in the territories to promote participative and collaborative processes among all players engaged and to thereby help improve living together and social cohesion. This is an innovative approach that, after running for three years, has demonstrated its


potential to overcome the predominant, sector-based, corporate and individualist culture and build bridges towards a culture of common good and general interest.

This approach has been developed through global work that articulated a general and integral view, connecting individual with sector-based aspects. This integration has not only encompassed topics and interests, but also players and key players, and the methods followed to get all of them to participate have been particularly important.

The intercultural community process is *dialectic* because it implicates the three key players and the transformations that occur in the relationships established between them, leading to synthesis that moves beyond the initial situation, from fragmentation to integration. The ICI Project, and its participative methodology, has made it possible for all three key players to share a process.

Although the relationship between the three key players has been assumed to be equal, they have not participated in the same way due to different roles and functions, and their actual participation has its own differing characteristics (regarding availability, circumstances, responsibilities, etc.).

The ICI Project is also an *auto-educational process* as the new relationships established between the different players, the way of educating among them, of participating and joining forces, has required an individual and collective learning process built up through practice. This practice is generating its own intercultural community process culture, a new culture that should certify the consolidation of the social transformation process that has been undertaken.

It is a *transforming process* that should be interpreted from two dimensions, the substantial, what is done, and the relational, for whom. The *what is done* aspect is defined by the new way of tackling questions related to improving living conditions for people and living together through active participation, fleeing from handout culture. The *for whom* aspect has clearly defined the ICI Project focus, centring on the community’s strength, from its three key players, but particularly from citizens, all citizens with no exclusions. This focus has also centred on transforming social relationships between collectives that are socially and culturally differentiated in order to improve living together and social cohesion. On this point, work to incorporate connection and participation programmes for new neighbours and foreign citizens has been essential alongside their professionals and associations.

Factors that have made it difficult to set up the aforementioned processes have often been related to gaps in participation from the three key players or one of them. These deficits can some-
times be related to a focus error. To quote a hypothetical example, the ICI Project runs the risk of becoming perverted if participation is reduced to a few activities that are run and organised by technicians, attended by people as if they were simply customers or users. They would be once again falling into the handout, paternal model that we are trying to move beyond.

In order to overcome these risks, the ICI Project has been equipped with a series of principles, extracted from real practice, guiding work on participation and giving it consistency:
— Without participation there is no process, or substantial and sustainable change.
— Citizens are not users, customers or patients; they are people with rights and responsibilities, with the capability to exercise their citizenship actively and claim their role within community life.
— It is not true that people do not participate: people, different groups and organisations in a community participate in whatever they consider to be important, anything that is related to these needs and interests, to their expectations for wellbeing and happiness, etc. The ICI Project has to find a way of connecting with people’s interests and expectations and also work out how to channel them through the intercultural community process.
— The process cannot exclude anyone from the possibility of participating. The methodology ensures that whosoever wishes to participate can do so, whilst anyone who does not wish to participate, naturally, can exclude themselves; but it will not be possible to say that “the community process excluded them”.
— Participation is not about attending events or activities. Participation means implication; it means feeling part of something, a common project and having the chance to contribute to it.
— Participation from people is not tied to their physical presence in all activities, meetings, encounters, etc. The fundamental aspect is maintaining the connection with people and keeping them informed about the joint progress of the process.
— Participation should be linked to processes that facilitate autonomy and auto-organisation. If the people participating do not feel part of their own organisation, they will always feel as if they depend on others.
— A participative process makes its different players assume increasing protagonism, while in parallel, the people promoting participation become less important.

These principles have been strengthened by applying the premises described at the end of chapter 1 and that, without intending them to be redundant, we are summarising here, as a reminder, as they are essential to complete the vision of characteristics of intercultural community participation:
1. The community process does not consist of offering activities but offering specific, real occasions to participate actively.

2. Participation has to be general. If you only participate in part of the process, you should take on board what you are contributing to a common project for a neighbourhood, village or city.

3. The process should be open and flexible, ensuring that nobody is excluded from the chance to participate and that they will have the capacity to incorporate new people who would like to join.

4. Participation should not become a “dead weight”; anyone should be able to participate without it affecting their life too much.

5. The process should be sensitive to factors that can make participation difficult (language, cultural key points, educational levels, socioeconomic conditioning factors) and the means should be provided to overcome them.

6. The process is independent of the persons participating in it; it is not bound to them.

2.1.1.3 The ICI team / community team

This is another cross-discipline methodological element that is crucial throughout the entire process. The ICI Project has been driven by the ICI teams in the 17 intervention territories from the start, encouraging relationships to be established with and among the three key players, promoting focus application and the intercultural community intervention methodology. Whilst the process went on through its different phases, the methodology’s own participative methods have been applied, encouraging more and more people to join the process.

Its main functions consisted of facilitating and enabling participation from the three key players, helping them to get organised and generating relationship spaces and real participation. Thanks to this work, it was possible to deploy the pedagogic dimension of the process as citizens, technicians and administrators learnt to participate within the framework of the intercultural community process. To the extent that this pedagogic, auto-educational process has made it feasible to increase the different players’ protagonism in the process, the ICI team’s protagonism has been changing. It is no longer an eminently promoting team, and has progressively become a co-promoting, co-organiser, co-responsible agent and in many cases, just another collaborator in the initiatives boosted by the other players. Throughout this process, the ICI team has been incorporating professionals belonging to public and private resources in the territory, meaning that it has abandoned its original designation of community team to reflect its new nature appropriately.

Along with these general functions, there is the ICI team’s mediating role within the process. It has mediated between the three key players to incorporate them into the process so that they
can work together to solve any possible discrepancies and conflicts, etc. It should not be forgotten that the ICI team work has been run in neighbourhoods, villages and cities with wide social and cultural diversity and that intercultural community mediation principles had to be applied to encourage communication, positive interaction and common participation for the socioculturally differentiated collectives. For these reasons, the ICI teams have had to assume and respect a specific and fundamental principle of the world of mediation: neutrality and equal distance between all parties.

ICI teams, from their mediator role, have maintained the appropriate distance between the different parties so they do not take sides or favour one in particular. Its only positioning in terms of the parties was its commitment to the intercultural community process and to its purpose: living together and social development.

It carried out this role with considerable success thanks to two factors. Firstly, in their work as mediators, ICI team members have not taken centre stage in solving possible conflicts, their strength has come from actively listening to the parties, positively reformulating conflict, offering alternatives to resolve it and, always, acting from the absence of authority and power, only as an external support accepted and legitimised by the parties.

Secondly, the mediating focus centred on transforming social relationships. As opposed to other views of mediation, emphasis was not on achieving an agreement, but the mediating process’s capability to strengthen people’s autonomy and capability to make connections with others, promoting their recognition and revaluation within the intercultural community process.

2.1.1.4 Community information
Community information is an essential requisite for participation. The community process requires systematic production of an information flow that allows everyone to follow how the process develops. This information will encourage people to join the process whenever they wish and as they are able, either collaborating fully or just getting involved.

Community information has met many different functions that have made it possible to participate in the process. On the one hand, there is the function of transparency and socialisation of the process’s progress, knowledge and results, by extending it to the whole population. On the other hand, there is the function of motivation, as the information received by people has been able to connect with their interests, concerns or needs, and they have been able to perceive that they might satisfy them by participating in the intercultural community process. And final-
ly, there is an instrumental function, such as an invitation, continually reporting on initiatives and programmes where people are invited to participate, making it easier to take the plunge.

The following criterion or fundamental principle has been applied in all community information actions, regardless of the medium (information sheets, leaflets, posters, blogs, social networks, etc.): the information has to be the same for the three key players although adapting it to the language, shape and media of each protagonist, player or collective to make sure that it is received in equal conditions.

In order to promote participation in local communities, it was necessary to use languages, codes, symbols, images, references, identity signs and forms of cultural expression and communication from each community, each player and each socioculturally differentiated collective.

Within the ICI Project framework, community information has been produced through two different spokespersons. On the one hand, actual information from the process produced by the ICI team and distributed through different supports and channels: information sheets, leaflets, blogs, reports, social networks, videos, posters, etc. On the other hand, information produced by the media (television, radio, press, digital media) thanks to positive interactions established with them and the work developed to make them aware of the process’s characteristics and its activities. In total, all 17 territories in the ICI Project have had 627 hits in the different national, regional and local media, with a positive impact on public discourse and the image that territories offer the media25.

In both cases, collaboration from “la Caixa” Foundation, particularly support provided by its PR Department, has been fundamental to generate supports and instruments for community information and to manage media relationships.

There were many different supports, instruments and channels used to socialise community information, as mentioned. In order to look at them in greater depth, please refer to volume 2 of this collection, focussed on the intercultural community process methodology.

### 2.1.1.5 Mediation for participation

The intercultural perspective and its mediating dimension have run through the entire community process and have been shown to be particularly useful to work on participation from the three key players and the different groups and collectives within local communities.

25 Idem.
Participation is essential from an intercultural perspective, as it is based on positive interactions that take place within a diverse community, working to improve them. This improvement of social, intercultural and inter-ethnic relations necessarily implies active participation from the different protagonists, players and collectives to meet up, communicate, interact positively, collaborate, cooperate, mutually recognise each other and join in common projects\textsuperscript{26}.

Participation has encouraged intercultural meetings and created ties between the different social and cultural collectives; it has laid foundations to promote feelings of belonging to the community and begin intercultural living together processes.

Community scale intercultural mediation methodologies and techniques were applied as a strategy to tackle this aspect, both on the methodological elements of the process and on the relationship spaces promoted by it.

Attention was focussed on communication difficulties to overcome language or interpretation barriers. This took into account how each protagonist, player or collective saw the situation according to their different cultures, making an effort to translate and mediate to encourage forging common ties and cooperation. Common ground was strengthened, avoiding diverging interpretations, promoting the importance of focussing work on whatever might be done together. The eminently mediating project methodology has turned out to be highly useful to prevent and resolve communication conflicts derived from different interpretations of the situation, regulated within the community process.

The intercultural perspective was essential to guarantee that all social and cultural collectives were integrated within the different relationship spaces (technical staff, citizen, institutional) as well as encouraging their active participation in community meetings and the different activities promoted by the ICI Project. In addition, work was done to help the different collectives reevaluate themselves within the different relationship spaces, particularly the most disadvantaged, and take on protagonism by generating appropriate conditions. To do this, an important role was played by training the different players and collectives in skills, and a willingness to provide them with the necessary resources for this purpose.

Combining the aforementioned actions promoted and led to acknowledgement for the different parties engaged in the community process, leading to revaluation of their protagonism with-

\textsuperscript{26} Please refer to volume 1 of this collection: Living together and social cohesion.
in the process. This revaluation has also implicated levelling resources on a community scale, making sure that no collective, association or social organisation, particularly organisations for migrants, ethnic minorities or disadvantaged social collectives, is left out of the technical staff relationship spaces and can benefit from their shared resources.

Within the framework of work carried out by the ICI Project to strengthen the local association sphere, they have actively promoted participation from all citizens but particularly migrants and people belonging to ethnic minorities, in associations, organisations and community networks: tenant associations, citizen platforms, parents’ associations, sports associations, leisure and free-time associations, NGOs, festival boards, etc.

The migrant population and any belonging to ethnic minorities have been provided with equal access to public services for education, health, social services, employment, sports, etc. working with professionals and administrators to guide regulatory and institutional changes that will make it possible to adapt technical resources to social and cultural diversity and adapt institutions to this diversity. These changes are beginning to appear in the second stage of the ICI Project, as the technical staff relationship spaces are consolidated and some proposals are developed in this respect, compiled in the community programming. Setting up institutional relationship spaces, also in the second stage, will surely contribute to promoting institutional changes.

The existence of programmes for participation, connection, meeting, dialogue and agreement between the three key players has made it easier to lay foundations for a civic and institutional culture of peace, as they are still programmes and mechanisms for mediation in themselves and, therefore, used to regulated conflicts. In this way, the process has helped to generate common participation programmes where the three key players, with no exclusions, have felt comfortable and acknowledged.

Some results from this community and mediating approach

The synergy produced between the strategies and the aforementioned methodological ele-
ments, once the specific reality of each territory has been applied, has had a significant impact on local communities:

- Participation in associations increased by 2.7 points on the start of the ICI Project in 2010.
- Positive interaction and common participation between associations, groups and socioculturally differentiated collectives has improved the image that the actual neighbours have of their neighbourhoods, villages or cities, improving their feeling of belonging by 4.5%.
- The perception of meeting social rules has improved by 5.2 points among neighbours in the intervention territories.

2.1.2 Process and participation elements

The elements tied to different moments in the intercultural community process are described below plus their connection with joint participation from the three key players. This will start with the meeting and relationship spaces for the three key players, particularly community meetings, and continue with shared knowledge and other joint products.

2.1.2.1 Meeting, connecting and organisation programmes for the three key players

These are fundamental methodological elements to guarantee process continuity and sustainability. There are two types: each key player’s own relationship spaces, as new ways of organisation emerging from the intercultural community process and community meetings, as moments that have helped to bring the three key players together.

Relationship spaces

Over the three years of the ICI Project, institutional relationship spaces (IRS), technical staff relationship spaces (TSRS) and connection and citizen participation programmes have been set up in the different territories. The former, IRS, have been used to coordinate implication from different administrations in the process. TSRSs have made it possible to connect and coordinate the technical-professional, public and private resources to work together to implement joint actions within a full, overall perspective. Citizen connection and participation programmes have made it possible to bring together social organisations and individuals to work together on driving and coordinating common initiatives, actions and programmes.

They will not be looked at in depth here given that they were tackled in volume 2 of this collection. However, space will be given over to participation in citizen relationship spaces towards the end of this chapter.\(^{30}\)

\(^{30}\) In section 2.2.2.3 The citizen relationship space
Community meetings

Community meetings are the occasions when the three key players met to share common initiatives, such as monograph results, assessment, programming or other initiatives or projects that they are working on between the three of them. These are the times when it could be stated that the three aforementioned relationship spaces (IRS, TSRS and the citizen relationship space) have come together.

Methodology was fundamental in community meetings to guarantee participation from everyone in equal conditions, fleeing from hierarchic, anti-democratic views where the only thing that makes the key player stand out is the role they play in the local community.

These are highly symbolic moments that have required prior work among the three key players and a considerable effort in terms of information and socialisation of results, products, decisions, etc. They also have an important process milestone component, showing the progress made to the entire local community, demonstrating the different phases it is passing through (assessment, programming, assessment) or socialising important new initiatives for the territory.

Some of the most powerful symbolism for community meetings lies in its potential to call on the territory’s diversity. In a project targeting living together and social cohesion, it is crucial to look at progress in this respect. This being the case, it is a question of guaranteeing partici-
participation from persons belonging to different nationalities and the gypsy population in the meetings. The implication of persons and organisations from several socioculturally differentiated collectives in designing and preparing the meetings has turned out to be crucial. For example, a total of 608 people with non-Spanish nationality took part in the different community actions held during the third year among all the territories\textsuperscript{31}.

Meetings were designed to focus on possible communication difficulties, providing the means to overcome them (translators, leaflets, information to hand out, etc.). The design also considered times and dates making participation possible from the greatest possible diversity or, if necessary, using additional resources such as babysitting services or children’s play groups. In the recreational part of the meetings, it was also fundamental to incorporate diversity through choosing meals or the artists and enablers for cultural, musical activities, etc.

Community meetings have acted as process progress indicators in the territories. In most of them, community meetings have boasted a high level of general participation, particularly from the three key players. Although only in its third year, 29 community meetings were held. Most territories held two meetings this year.

As showcases of progress made by the intercultural community process, the meetings have met many functions:
— Reporting on what has happened over the year.
— Raising awareness on joint initiatives driven by the different programmes in the process and by the three key players.
— Presenting the community focus cases, presenting the assessment or working together on it.
— Presenting the proposals compiled in community programming or even joining forces on the programming content.

Sociocultural entertainment activities were often held, within the framework of the meetings, as in San Bartolomé (Lanzarote), or videos have been presented that were put together within the ICI Project such as the case of Raval (Barcelona) or Las Norias de Daza (El Ejido). A recurring resource is closing the meetings with clownclusions, a fun activity using clowns, often finishing off with a buffet snack or an intercultural meal. Jerez, La Coma (Paterna), Las Margaritas (Getafe), among others, have used this resource. They have even managed to broadcast community meetings live, as occurred in the 2nd Meeting in Clot (Barcelona).

Recreational activities are sometimes organised prior to holding the community meeting as a tactic and a way of drawing attention to the intercultural community process. For example, in Las Margaritas, in the days prior to holding its 4th Community Meeting, recreational activities were organised in schools, in the neighbourhood centre and in the main avenue through the neighbourhood. Activities such as oriental art exhibitions, modern dance, break-dancing, table tennis, baseball, chess, Ecua-volley, traditional games, etc.

As we can see, community meeting formats vary widely, depending on local creativity, the point in the process, the topics to cover, etc.

2nd Community Meeting in Clot

The report on the meeting by the actual community team is reproduced below:

Citizens, professionals and administration together in a radio programme, with a live audience, to talk about the present and the future of the neighbourhood

El Clot held the 2nd Community Meeting on 28th June to share and highlight the assessment and intercultural community programming results along with actions that are being boosted by the process in the neighbourhood. The meeting took place in radio format and was led by the young radio programme team known as 2 quarts de Clot. Apart from the audience in the Ateneu del Clot, the programme was broadcast via streaming on the Radio Ateneu del Clot website.

32 Source: News from sources working around the ICI Project, drawn up by the actual intervention teams
The programme began by presenting the intercultural community programming results and they spoke about the process of drawing it up and its three main strategic lines: citizens living together, participation and social action. The neighbourhood technician and the ICI team were there to explain.

After opening up the microphone for the audience to join in, a video was shown on the process of creating the 2 quarts de Clot youth radio programme and the programme team talked about their journey since the beginning of the academic year, in the presence of the Ateneu del Clot president and the director of Radio Ateneu del Clot who grilled the young people in a light-hearted discussion.

Towards the end of the programme, a community experience board was organised involving representatives from the “En verano muévete por el Clot”, “Brujas de barrio” and “Comidas saludables interculturales” projects that highlighted community work. Along these same lines, the institutional board was presented: Mercè Oller (neighbourhood councillor for Clot-Camp de l’Arpa), Sira Vilardell (responsible for Community Action and Interculturality at the Surt Foundation) and Mireia Petitpierre (contact from the “la Caixa” Foundation Social Integration area).
To finish off the special *2 quarts de Clot* programme, after over two hours of radio, neighbourhood group The Bombins played a set, delighting the audience with their best known song *Ritmo clotenc*.

### 2.1.2.2 Collaborative relations: shared knowledge and other common products

Collaborative relationships, as cross-discipline elements, have been established to boost joint actions between the three key players. The ICI Project focus has worked for constant collaboration through initiatives, activities and projects that implicate citizens, professionals and administrations.

All this work has not taken place in neutral contexts or in simple situations, but in complex contexts with their own dynamics, sometimes very deeply rooted, and not particularly open to forming relationships or collaborating with others. Collaborative relationships have managed to overcome these dynamics little by little, encouraging a move towards situations of cooperation and mutual trust.

Collaborative relationships have been brought about by developing methodological elements such as shared knowledge, assessment or community programming and from the activities and initiatives boosted from the specific ICI Project lines: health, education and citizen relationships.

#### Shared knowledge

In intercultural community processes, participative construction of shared knowledge on what is really happening becomes crucially important along with an assessment to identify common and general priorities. This makes it possible to jointly design a schedule of actions to improve living together and social cohesion.

The starting point in the territories was the nonexistence or weakness of common aspects, sector-based fragmentation and the dispersion of discourse, interventions and resources. This was the prevailing situation. In this context, building shared knowledge emerged as an innovative element of living together, making it possible to articulate a common story, legitimising and making the intercultural community intervention process more coherent. Although common aspects have been emphasised ever since the beginning of the ICI Project, the participative research process was fundamental to build a local community story that will be shared by the three key players and by all collectives and players. Throughout this process, it was essential to integrate all existing views in the local community and put together discourse where all collectives and players feel they have been acknowledged. This has helped to lay the foundations on which to improve relationships and living together.
Unfocussed, disparate knowledge among players and collectives on what was really happening also brought about widely varying assessments and hypotheses for intervention to change the situation. This made it difficult to bring out common projects and collective horizons, making it necessary to start a process to acquire a shared view easing collaborative relationships.

Without producing shared knowledge, the intercultural community process would have petered out as it would have lacked the elements that really allow improvement and change proposals to be drawn up together. Proposals were made afterwards in the community programming.

Attaining shared knowledge required prior participative research. This allowed different positive interactions to be built between the community’s key players: trust relationships that have later converged in joint actions. In this way, participative research has constituted an enabling element for connections between players, collectives and key players, to transform social relationships within local communities.

Participative research worked from the actual interested parties’ knowledge of the situations to be transformed in their local communities. The method, highly supported by La audición (listening), rather than asking, has listened to people, working from the assumption that these people’s opinion and participation are fundamental for any action involving change and social transformation. In this way, they have felt that they belong and are acknowledged in the result of this participative knowledge: the monograph and the community evaluation. This was essential to motivate collective action.

The participative knowledge construction process also considered it to be essential to incorporate objective data that they held on the real situation (statistics, studies, etc.). From the set of all these qualitative contributions and quantitative data came better understanding and better knowledge of the real situation, set down in the community monograph.

From the integrating capacity of the shared knowledge process and its potential to connect the three key players together in collaboration, the following participation data was produced in all the ICI Project territories:

— 100% of the town councils took part.


— Regarding participation from technical-professional resources, they participated in 100% of the municipal technical territories; 68.8% of professionals from teaching centres; 87% of professionals from health centres and 93.8% of professionals from social service providers.
— Regarding citizen organisations, associations (neighbours, parents, others) participated in 87.5% of the research; associations for immigrants and ethnic minorities participated in 68.8%, and individual citizens in 56.3%.
— Finally, the total number of people that have participated in drawing up focus studies for the territories rose to 7642, from different nationalities and ethnic groups.

Socialisation of monograph results and subsequent collective participation in drawing up the community evaluation have made it possible to strengthen new relationships, as well as offer new spaces for collaborative relationships between the three key players.

**Some knowledge socialisation experiences**

A session was organised in El Clot to present the community monograph and propose actions through different activities. The closing event was highly symbolic: participants built a gigantic jigsaw together that read "The Voice of El Clot".

The community monograph was presented at the 1st Community Meeting in Las Norias. To do this, the meeting revolved around three key moments staging the process construction. Firstly, participants presented existing relationship spaces before the start of the ICI Project. Then, they demonstrated the ad hoc spaces created by project development. And they finished off by presenting the monograph and the itinerary for community programming.
In Logroño, after presenting the monograph within the framework of a community meeting, they used a strategy to socialise it through the local media. Media appearances reflected the three key players coming together to strengthen the ICI Project shared process message. Alongside this strategy, it was possible to download the monograph from a blog to make it easier for everyone to access its contents.
Other territories, such as Carrús (Elche), Las Margaritas and Tortosa, also brought the community monograph into the public eye, using different formats and activities.

The shared knowledge process not only obtained a monograph and an assessment as a result but it also made other types of collaborative relationships possible, focused on drawing up products for community use such as guides and resource maps.

**Participating in drawing up the community evaluation**

Two experiences of participating in drawing up the community evaluation are given below: one with the three key players working together, in Pueblo Nuevo; the other, working with young people, in La Norias de Daza.

Within the framework of the 2nd Community Sessions in Pueblo Nuevo, Madrid, presenting the community monograph, they made the most of the event to run a joint assessment among professionals working in the district, administrations and citizens, in addition to drawing up a first battery of action proposals.

The assessment, worked on during the sessions, reflected the different needs detected during the months of participative research and laid the basis for joint work to draw up the community programming.
In Las Norias, they held talks with young people to work towards assessment and community programming. Talks were held with students and teachers from the Las Norias Secondary School, focused on a particularly interesting topic for young people: sport, culture and leisure.

The Las Norias ICI team introduced the monograph contents through participative dynamics and dramatised actions. The young people then worked in groups, bringing up problem issues they considered important to tackle: the use of spaces; promoting communication between young people–administrations–older people; making better use of existing resources such as school playgrounds; refitting the library with WiFi, etc.

**Community programming and other common products**

One of the most outstanding milestones in the intercultural community process, a direct consequence of shared knowledge, was collective design of community programming among the three key players in 16 intervention territories.

The programming consisted of drawing up a proposal (intervention hypothesis) to improve the existing situation and the state of living together that, at the same time, included the complete framework of activities, initiatives, programmes, technical and community resources, services, etc. to be developed and deployed in the community field.
This intervention hypothesis, working from existing resources, belonging to each key player and player, and from community priorities established in the assessment, has made it possible to go into depth and reinforce collaborative relationships set up since the start of the ICI Project. In this way, a qualitative step has been taken to equip the community with a collective work horizon and implement projects and services implicating many different players and collectives.

**Participating in drawing up community programming**

**The report below was provided by the actual ICI team regarding the participative process carried out in Salt to draw up community programming**

**Second community meeting on children and families in Salt**

As a result of the 1st community meeting held on 19th April, socialising the information compiled in the *Quadern de la Plaça*, different technicians, associations and neighbours have worked on an assessment over the last few months leading to community programming on children, young people and families in an open medium.

In this respect, on Saturday 15th June, around twenty people attended the second work session in the Mercat de Salt multipurpose room in order to agree on and prioritise actions that might meet the main key ideas: complementary educational actions to school, living together and social cohesion and basic needs covered in the community.

This work space approached some initial lines that will allow them to build up a common calendar influencing the main needs that were worked on; consequently, collaboration between places of worship and educational projects, participation from AMPAs in socio-educational projects to promote actively incorporating families in these projects, the importance of strengthening actions aimed at children and teenagers as well as setting work lines that can dignify public space, strengthening the feeling of belonging, were major outlines to keep in mind in the common calendar and in the community programming that would be drawn up after the meeting.

Programming has revolved around two major fields: organisation, organising what already exists, and development, focussed on promoting new projects that make it possible to take a better approach to priority topics defined by local communities.

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35 Source: News from sources working around the ICI Project, drawn up by the actual intervention teams
The new, innovative projects have required complete contributions from the different public
and private administrations, from the set of technical resources and more direct and commit-
ted participation from citizens.

From the specific lines of the ICI Project, collaborative relationships have also tackled health, educa-
tion and citizen relationships, through activities and initiatives they have promoted. Some of these
activities were open summer schools, learning and service actions, health promoting agents, etc.

A learning and service action

Collaborative relationships were coordinated between several players and key play-
ers through a learning and service action with young people from Leganés, aiming to
promote volunteering and knowledge of the disabled world. This is the news article
published by the ICI Project:

Young people from Leganés step into the world of disabilities and volunteering

On 13th, 14th and 15th February, the first phase of a learning and service experience took
place, promoted jointly by the Municipal Social Affairs Board, through the Disability and Vol-
unteering areas, and the "la Caixa" Foundation Intercultural Community Intervention Project. It consisted of a 12 hour course in which 23 young people found out first-hand about what life is like for people with disabilities. The activity was organised by the AMÁS Group with support from the Madrid Region Volunteering School, alongside other entities from Leganés working with disabilities and children, young people and families.

The young people taking part in this experience were aged between 16 and 25 years old. The group was made up of eight girls and fifteen boys from Leganés with different origins (Spain, Romania, Ecuador, Colombia, Ukraine, Morocco and Equatorial Guinea) who, over three days, looked in greater depth at the world of people with disabilities, analysing how they spend their leisure time and discovering that they are not so different from the rest of the population. They were also able to find out about the daily lives of people with a disability in the city, thinking about existing stereotypes, prejudices from the collective imagination and difficulties that they come across in different places in the city.

In parallel they have worked on standardisation strategies and providing support to avoid falling back on over-protection as well as the roles and profiles for volunteers who work with disabled people. Finally, they covered criteria that should be taken into account when drawing up an inclusive leisure intervention project, aiming to shine the spotlight on the person and not their disability.
When presenting this programme, the councillor for Social Affairs, Ángel Juárez, demonstrated that “with this initiative, in addition to finding out about the characteristics and needs of persons with intellectual, physical, sensory and development disabilities, we want young volunteers to receive training, draw up and carry out inclusive leisure and sports entertainment activities in the town with this type of person.” Juárez added that “our main aim is to promote knowledge and skills among young people that might be useful to help them get a job in the future, as well as generating a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood for them through providing a service to the community. In short, this is a matter of learning to do things with and for people.”

Over the next two weeks, the young participants will attend centres that care for people with disabilities in small groups to come into contact with them and find out first-hand about their concerns, needs and motivation so they can learn to organise inclusive leisure activities. With all this knowledge and experience, at the end of the programme they will design and organise a family activity open to the whole community that will be carried out at the start of March working with the Disability and Volunteer areas of the Municipal Social Affairs Board and other entities working in this field in Leganés.
Results from collaborative relationships between the three key players

Some of the main results obtained by the collaborative relationships established between the three key players in all aforementioned fields are given below:

— **16 community monographs** were carried out as a collective product involving all three key players.

— **16 shared documents were drawn up with the local administrations** that were used as a basis to develop the second stage intercultural community programming.

— **Active participation** was achieved in performing and developing the ICI Project from over 40 schools, 21 primary care health centres and health centres belonging to the town administrations and 76 citizen resources.

— Synergy generation and coordination was promoted among **over 642 technical resources and citizens**, encouraging a whole host of shared actions to meet local demand, bringing about more effective, efficient and sustainable social intervention.

— In addition to the 864 regular activities that were run, 27 extraordinary activities were especially designed and developed (global citizen actions, open summer schools, etc.).

### 2.2 Citizen relations and the intercultural community process

Three fundamental reasons encourage a specific work line in citizen relations to be designed within the ICI Project: raising awareness on the intercultural community process and getting citizens involved; strengthening the local community’s social sphere and, above all, as this is a project intended for living together and social cohesion, transforming social relations through communication, interaction and collaboration.

At the start of the ICI Project, a joint work framework was clearly defined for the 17 intervention territories. From this framework, and as the process went on, a series of strategies was established that involved carrying out actions with enormous symbolic weight, actively implicating citizens. Global citizen action stands out amongst this type of actions as it is a common action for all 17 territories, although adapting to each specific reality.
2.2.1 Definition of the citizen relations field

The field of citizen relations, within the ICI Project framework, has been understood as interpersonal or inter-group relations with a varying degree of intensity, proximity and daily routine that is established between the subjects present in the territory (resident neighbours, shopkeepers, professionals and workers, etc.) and in the context of local spaces, whether they are public (streets, parks, schools and public health centres) or not (stores, leisure spaces, private associations, sports clubs, cultural entities, social networks, etc.) and where contacts and links take place between people with differentiated social and cultural experience.

Social, community, mediating and intercultural work within this framework of positive interactions has been key to boost social cohesion, intercultural living together and local citizenship.

From this perspective, an attempt was made to expand and strengthen civics, active and inclusive citizenship and formal and informal meeting spaces. All associations or groups, even informal ones, were conceived as community resources that the process should tend to reinforce, both in terms of their capabilities and their autonomy. But they should also tend towards creating new independent groups and associations. Without losing sight of the fact that this whole process should facilitate positive interactions, meetings and collaboration between the different groups and associations in joint community projects. Nor should the process neglect participation from individuals and mechanisms should be envisaged for this.

Working from this basic approach, a series of specific objectives were outlined:

1. Encouraging relationships between socio-culturally differentiated persons, groups and collectives, to get full and mutual recognition for everyone as neighbours, and create meeting programmes that facilitate collective interest actions and as programmes for equality, respect and positive interaction.

2. Building bridges between civic associations and public and private institutions to develop initiatives that have emerged from and for citizens that help to develop participation in community life and encourage local living together.

3. Facilitating appropriate communication channels for the social and cultural diversity present in the action territories, helping to promote common social participation.

To implement targets correctly, some premises were established that should be taken into account when developing actions in the field of citizen relations:
— Considering formal and informal citizen organisations and individual persons as assets in the process.
— Identifying which factors influenced participation, if there was passive delegation or if there were inclusion phenomena for some people and exclusion for others due to their origin, age, gender, religion, among other reasons. This identification was necessary within the framework of a process that did not exclude anyone for any reason.
— Identifying which situations were occurring in the territory (co-existence, cohabitation, hostility) to facilitate spaces for connection, collaboration and living together and help to reduce or eliminate hostility situations.
— Detecting the quality of the social relations in the territory or in other words which formulas and experiences of exchange, reciprocal behaviour, etc. were occurring.
— Promoting the reformulation of social relations, promoting citizen competences to manage sociocultural diversity (ethnic, linguistic, religious) positively, or in other words in a pacifistic, preventive and participative way.
— Ensuring coherence with the intercultural community intervention.
— Understanding intercultural community work as a means of facilitating citizen organisation.

Keeping in mind both the targets and the premises when designing the actions, the following potential topics were identified for action and influence:
— Racism and xenophobia
— Citizen security
— Conflicts for the use of public spaces.
— Absence of intercultural relationships
— Lack of neighbourhood support and social commitment
— Situations where co-existence prevails over cohabitation.
2.2.2 Approach for the intervention strategies

From the beginning, a roadmap was established to begin working on the specific line of citizen relations in the intervention territories. This made it possible to recognise the social field of action, a key element to define subsequent intervention strategies.

This roadmap began with exploration and knowledge of the territory in general and a specific observation on interpersonal and group connections that took place, with particular emphasis on positive interactions between people belonging to differentiated ethno-cultural groups.

This exploration and observation work made it possible to draw up diversity maps for each territory, alongside collecting and compiling data, studies and materials that could be used to get an initial idea of citizenship connections in the territory.

Once all this information had been collected, it was essential to run an evaluation on the connections between the neighbours, particularly if they felt affected by belonging to different national or ethnic collectives. This evaluation also had to include the type of uses made of the public spaces (streets, squares, parks, sports courts, etc.) and whether there was ever any con-
flict around access and use of them. The overall evaluation had to be done from the perspective of prevailing situations, if this was cohabitation, coexistence or hostility.

Alongside analysis and evaluation work for social situations in the territory, association sphere knowledge was also looked at in greater depth. This involved analysing the type of associations in local communities, if they were weak, if they were highly fragmented, if their work was sector-based or if, on the contrary, they were strong, they worked together and had an overall view of the territory. The real valuations fell between these extremes.

The social fabric analysis included “ethnic monitoring” that made it possible to find out about how cultural diversity was represented within the different existing participative programmes, associations, non formal groups or institutional organs for citizen participation (citizens advice, etc.). Within this analysis, it was fundamental to study how collectives of foreigners or ethnic minorities (gypsy or mercher) were being organised, if they had their own associations, if they revolved around religious groups, if they were made up of non formal groups getting together around cultural or sports activities from their country of origin, etc. This analysis should end up assessing the type of connections produced between these associations and groups and the rest of the social sphere in the territory.

Once all this work had been done, making it possible to “work from what already existed”, they had to start up the necessary actions to generate programmes for citizen meetings and living together, strengthening social fabric and coordinating common projects.

Due to the complexity of obtaining in-depth knowledge on local communities, actions were often begun before the aforementioned studies and analysis were complete. The actual experience of coordinating collaborative relationships between the different groups, associations and persons to run joint actions would increase knowledge on the territories’ social dynamics.

One of the initial approaches to define the type of actions that should be undertaken consisted of demonstrating the path to follow: it had to pass from multicultural coexistence, prevailing situation in practically all territories, to intercultural living together.

Setting up collaborative relationships through specific actions would be one way but there was also a general framework that had to be promoted, acknowledgement and revaluation of persons and collectives within the social sphere and the participation programmes in the territories, particularly from collectives that did not traditionally participate or that were being excluded.
Processes had to be generated to promote participation from persons belonging to culturally diverse collectives in existing associations in the territory, such as tenant associations, parent associations, etc. This involved moving from the role of “immigrant” to “neighbour”, where the local community acknowledged this fact.

In this reassessment and acknowledgement process, it was fundamental to demonstrate contributions from all groups, associations and collectives in the territory, emphasising that “everyone wins” with this type of dynamics: tenant associations or parent associations are strengthened with more participation; people of foreign origin find programmes for integration and for channelling their demands; immigrant associations and groups are coordinated in a network with other organisations in the territory to jointly set up local community strategies to adapt to cultural diversity, etc.

Participative research played an important role to promote participation processes as described. Bringing together different views on the local situation and the consensus that made it possible to establish an assessment shared by everyone contributed enormously to that dynamic. In one way or another, everyone helped to build a common story on the community that encouraged rewriting local history and defining a collective horizon that would overcome the initial situation.

Acknowledgement and reassessment of the different collectives, particularly immigrants, who do not have the same political rights as the rest of their neighbours and, occasionally, depending on the administrative situation, even social rights, made it possible to develop social citizenship that breaks down borders and exclusions established by law. It was an opportunity to work on intercultural, exclusion-free and equality programmes. These programmes worked as schools for tolerance, respect, living together and citizenship. Citizenship in its widest sense, not simply as passive subjects of rights and obligations, but as active and supportive citizens, committed to each other and to their communities.

All these approaches appeared in a series of actions for collaborative work and mediation among the different groups and players that could be classified in two well-defined lines:

— Sociocultural activity and enabling as a tool to promote interaction among all the different collectives: global citizen actions, local festivals, etc.
— Street work and positive management of existing conflicts: in public spaces, in the religious field, etc.

In addition to these two lines of work there is the “symbolic milestones” strategy, understood as actions and activities with enormous potential for: citizen mobilisation; collaboration between
groups, associations and key players (professionals and administrators as well as citizens) and dissemination of the intercultural community process throughout the entire local community.

Some actions that could be milestones were related to the local communities’ historical memory, theme-based or festival days, enabling public spaces with activities open to the whole community, etc.

Finally, the set of all the actions described in this section made it possible to weave relationships on which the connection and citizen participation programmes have been built.

Following the same sequence for presenting actions as seen in previous paragraphs, the following pages will look in greater depth at:

— Sociocultural entertainment and enabling actions.
— Preventive enabling actions for public spaces.
— The citizen connection and participation programme.

It is mainly hard to distinguish between actions for sociocultural entertainment and enabling of public spaces as they share the same philosophy, methodology and type of actions, many of them in open public spaces (streets, squares, etc.). However, it was considered relevant to make this distinction to strengthen the value of actions carried out in highly symbolic spaces in the community, with different, occasionally conflictive, uses as sometimes seen in parks and sports areas.

2.2.2.1 Sociocultural activity and enabling actions

From the start, these types of action were planned to fit in with the actual situation in the 17 territories. In other words, this refers to different strategic actions with a direct impact on the territory and, as a consequence, on its three key players. The actions generate progress in the form of continuous and highly collaborative processes based on coordinating and strengthening programmes and key players throughout the year.

The intervention teams understood that the participative process involved continuous work to forge relationships, strengthen existing relationships and create other new relationships with a feeling of permanence over time. To do this, it was necessary to work on specific initiatives that made it possible to coordinate these types of connections and participative processes. This followed the idea that they had already achieved the primary aim around a relatively unambitious action or activity that would nevertheless make it possible to organise an initial
programme for collaborative relationships that did not exist before. Consequently, they would be in a good position to progressively achieve more ambitious aims and consolidate the relationships they had built over time.

These initiatives worked from a systemic focus on the territorial situation, using the inclusive cultural diversity management model and taking great care with the different programmes. This involved emphasising what the different groups, collectives and associations had in common and how they affected commitments to the community and to the overall ICI Project process.

In addition, from the start, the participation programmes generated around the different actions were encouraged to manage themselves and meet the needs explicitly expressed by the different collectives and by the three key players.

This focus allowed an enriching variety of types of actions, with relevant progress and evolution. The methodological strategy consisted of locating a starting point in each territory and, from this point, establishing a scale of actions that would allow collaborative relationships between the different collectives, groups and associations to be strengthened. The actions and activities carried out, as learning experiences and as milestones that could coordinate connections that did not exist before, made it possible to take increasingly firm steps that gradually turned into a process.

Once the strategy has been located by territory, the existing resources and the local social fabric profile, the work approaches were specified and actions were designed. Depending on the territory, these actions might emerge in spaces that did not exist before or from existing informal or formal spaces. What is important is that these spaces had potential to add in new players and groups and that work was done from a community and intercultural perspective, connected to the ICI Project’s overall process.

Although actions varied widely in the 17 territories, the majority shared similar methodologies supported by sociocultural activities and enabling. This involves active methodologies that claimed to modify attitudes and behaviours through the action, with the following fundamental premise: “When something is actually experienced or lived, it is easier to assimilate it”. Social enabling methodologies encouraged collective participation through dynamic, recreational and motivating actions and awareness-raising on the real situation in the environment surrounding the participants, their neighbourhoods, their villages and their cities.
The actions and activities mainly answered the need to promote living together and make the intercultural community process visible. That being said, actions not only seek to provoke positive interaction and common participation of socioculturally differentiated collectives, fundamental for the intercultural method, but raise awareness among the rest of the local community on mutual respect, cooperation and living together. This type of action also brings to light implication from the three key players in the community.

A significant number of the sociocultural enabling actions were group-based (working with specific groups), such as the Intercultural Family Leisure programme in Leganés, the Youth Street Culture Meeting and the Intercultural Games Fair in San Bartolomé; the Family Meeting and Conversations in the Park in Logroño or the Family Network in Salt.

Work has been done with groups of women on specific topics, such as historical memory of the neighbourhoods or prevention in the field of health. *Los Recetarios: entre sabores y fogones*, from Clot, (Recipe books: flavours in the kitchen) constituted a good example of this type of action. Conceived as events closing an intercultural healthy food programme, developed throughout several workshops in the annual edition, they brought to the community’s attention the work carried out with the groups of women.
Not only was work done with specific groups of young people, families or women; actions were also carried out that brought different groups together, such as the Inter-generational Festival in Granada involving groups of young people, old people and women.

The local festival framework provides an ideal space for sociocultural enabling, making it possible to carry out all types of activities with widely varying groups and interaction and collaboration between socio-culturally differentiated collectives. Festivals are a good intervention framework, both to encourage joining forces and to raise awareness among the whole local community. They are also useful to promote the feeling of belonging to neighbourhoods and villages, by establishing a common space open to everyone, independently of their national origin and their ethnicity. Making the most of the local festivals has been a constant for territories, such as Getafe, Zaragoza or Raval.

Local festivals

The following text, drawn up by the Getafe ICI team, is highly illustrative of synergies between collectives, players and key players that are encouraged by local festivals:

37 Idem.
The festival events were organised by the Festival Commission, supported by the Getafe Town Council

Las Margaritas held its traditional festival between 26th and 29th September with a variety of activities intended for everyone in the neighbourhood, such as sports, kids’ workshops, graffiti workshop, tea dance, bands, youth disco, etc. in addition to the already traditional community meals.

The aim of the festival is to generate a meeting space, recreational in this case, that can be used to strengthen intercultural social cohabitation relationships. This aim was fully taken on board by the heterogeneous and diverse group of neighbours making up the Festival Commission.

It is noteworthy this year that neighbourhood shops are helping to finance the festival via advertisements in the programme.
MALOKA Sociocultural Association, ATLAS Association, DIAFRAGMA Association, C.D.E. Pool Xetafe Baloncesto, LUCAS NGO, CEAR, ICI team ("la Caixa" Foundation), UCDIMA (Unión Cultural y Deportiva Internacional), ARANEA Collective, Regional House of Andalusia, Regional House of Extremadura, Liceo Bougor, Maranatha Evangelical Community, APANID, AMPA CEIP Sta. Margarita de Alacoque, volunteers from the Neighbourhood Centre, residents from the neighbourhood, neighbourhood stores, Sector III Youth Commission, Las Margaritas Civic Centre and Getafe Town Council.

Some of these actions became actual milestones. It was these actions that were considered to be strategic in terms of presenting the intercultural community process to the majority of the population in the territory and making an impact on the collective imagination, either by raising awareness on a specific topic or by helping to promote the feeling of belonging to the territory. In addition, they have undeniable potential to implicate the three key players and strengthen the territory’s social sphere: both its associations and its informal groups.

The actions known as *global citizen actions* constitute a shared milestone between the 17 territories developing the ICI Project. This is a set of actions that open up a work space in time between citizens and technical-professional resources, as well as support from institutions, particularly municipal institutions.

These actions were designed both in the local field (in the process, the action and the strategy for each territory) and in the national field (by setting up a joint work space for the 17 intervention teams, their entities, the ICI Project scientific board and the "la Caixa" Foundation). The collective design of global citizen actions made the most of the teams’ wide ranging, varying knowledge and global strategies were defined to make the ICI Project more visible and stronger, beyond the actual territories. The first global citizen action shared the same corporate image in the 17 territories and a similar message: the idea that, through sharing, everyone wins.
Activities linked to global citizen actions in the territories gave rise to a wide ranging collective preparation process allowing them to work on collaborative relationships between players and implicating many people. The activities consisted of preparing a festival session, lasting one day, that deployed all the potential expected of an global citizen action: joint work between the three key players; strengthening the local social fabric; citizen mobilisation and impact on the collective imagination.

A global citizen action: ArtXiBarri 2013

What better way to describe this action than using the report provided by one of its key players, the ICI team... 38

38 Idem.
Back on 1st June, the streets and squares in Tortosa old town neighbourhoods enjoyed a day where we could all see the results of a collective, continuous effort over time to improve cohabitation relationships among everyone living and/or working in the city.

ArtXiBarri was possible thanks to the implication and dedication of ever more entities, neighbour associations, technical resources, professionals and neighbours from the city, that, along with Xarxa per la Convivència, have been working together for over three years, with varying implication, to promote a community process that improves living together and social cohesion in Tortosa.

Consequently, during the session on Saturday 1st June, a series of activities offered the chance to get together in one of the best scenarios the city has to offer, the old town neighbourhoods: colours transforming an urban space, discovering interesting features and little known facts about our neighbourhoods, playing a long game of football, listening to stories, dancing a jota, taking photos, snacking on chocolate and playing traditional games, watching the lipdub recording from ArtXiBarri 2013, dining in great company...

The global citizen actions were diverse in terms of content and activities, even their names: el Festival de los Abrazos (Hug-Fest) in Las Margaritas; La Carrera del Gancho (Hook Race) in
Zaragoza old town; ArtXiBarri in Tortosa; Comparkte in Pueblo Nuevo (Madrid); Calles Vivas (Living Streets) in Logroño, or the Intercultural Games Fair in San Bartolomé, among others. However, as previously mentioned, they shared many elements in common as a result of coordination and national design, among the 17 intervention teams, from the characteristics that this type of action should display.

The space for shared knowledge and transfer of experiences that was set up around the citizen global actions made it possible not only to design an appropriate instrument for participation and mobilisation with ICI Project characteristics but also improve its development in later editions. The data is clear in this respect, from overall participation of 29,159 persons in 2012, year of the first actions, to 33,603 in 2013.39

2.2.2.2 Preventive actions enabling public spaces
Street work constituted an essential method for identifying conflictive situations, many of them linked to uses of public spaces: where people and groups from different national and ethnic origins tend to meet up.

Public spaces (streets, squares, parks, sports courts, etc.) are places that meet many functions at the same time: exchange, relaxation, leisure, and collective meeting and identification. They provide both a physical and social dimension implying that public spaces are not used in the same way by everyone and all groups.

The arrival of many foreigners in city neighbourhoods and villages has meant that uses for these public spaces need to be rethought, and this phenomenon sometimes causes tension. For some local social sectors, these readjustments have represented taking over and undue use of public places.

On many occasions, immigrants actually use public spaces in similar ways to internal immigrants in the 1960s and 70s in neighbourhoods on the outskirts of big cities; this was low cost leisure, meeting up with other fellow emigrants.

Public spaces are often used as leisure places due to meagre economic resources and inappropriate housing for leisure and meeting up. However, it should come as no surprise that parks and other public places are used as places for socialising and meeting up with friends and families in a broad sense as they have always had this function. It is the way that immigrants socialise and enjoy leisure, alongside other groups (young people, drug addicts, etc.), that generates conflicts when perceived negatively by other neighbours.

Occasionally, these perceptions are objectively unfounded, simply based on fear of anything new or unknown. On other occasions, some of these practices damage the surroundings such as generating noise and rubbish. Finally, uncivil behaviour, such as drunkenness or fighting, has caused bad press and aroused a feeling of insecurity among traditional users of parks, squares or sports courts. Circumstances as described above can derive from hostile situations between different collectives and preventing them is a key aspect for ICI Project work.

In order to prevent and even intervene positively in latent or manifest conflicts, in addition to possible direct mediation among collectives, enabling actions were carried out in public spaces, particularly parks and sports areas. Following a very similar methodology to what was used in sociocultural entertainment and enabling actions, described in the previous section, all types of recreational and sporting activities were organised with a strong intercultural and intergenerational nature.

Different types of actions with this focus were carried out by the territories. This includes the Skate Park in San Bartolomé; the Popular and Traditional Games Festival in El Clot or Comparkte in Pueblo Nuevo.
The first experience, Skate Park, worked on interculturality and living together among young people through urban sports such as skateboarding. This initiative appeared in the community programming and aimed to encourage educational and healthy alternatives for leisure, sport and free time. Making the most of the youth sociocultural diversity in San Bartolomé, an agreement was made with young people to design the multi-sport space in the Playa Honda area. This also meant adapting spaces and public resources to the territory’s actual social and cultural diversity with support and backing from the town council.

The Popular and Traditional Games Festival, held within the framework of El Clot’s Main Festival, used this Barcelona neighbourhood’s sports courts to organise football and soft tennis tournaments involving people from different nationalities living in the neighbourhood and even the Popular Games Olympics where groups from different origins demonstrated traditional games from their countries and regions.

Comparkte

This is a global citizen action that has been held twice at Arriaga Park in Pueblo Nuevo. This place has seen its fair share of conflicts around different collectives’ use of its facilities, particularly the sports courts.

Around 1200 people took part in the latest edition, enjoying traditional games such as rana, sack race, petanca or face painting and also sporting activities such as human table football, Ecuavolley, basketball, football, etc. Different types of music played alongside aerobic, salsa, merengue, dembow and flamenco dance workshops. All activity participants and enablers were people from the neighbourhood who demonstrated their skills and art.
Comparkte was organised by the Ciudad Lineal Cohabitation Board, preparing the event by working with Madrid City Hall, Madrid Health, Quintana Neighbours Association, the Rumiñahui Association, CAF2, Barró Association, Candelita Association, the Manantial Foundation and La Rueca Association. In addition to these entities, 30 neighbours engaged in organising and running the event.

It is highly likely that the preventive enabling actions in the public spaces have contributed to data improving the image of the intervention territories (remember that the feeling of belonging rose 4.5 points) and concerning the perception of abiding by social rules (5.2 point improvement)\(^{40}\).

Conflict situations tend to arise in the use of public spaces around compliance (or not) with social rules, leading neighbourhoods, villages and cities to be perceived positively or negatively.

Maybe actions in public spaces, along with the rest of the ICI Project initiatives, have had a hand in the fact that there has been no significant increase in data for discrimination or deterioration of living together in the intervention territories, as seen in other places in the country due

\(^{40}\) Data taken from the 2012 Survey on intercultural social living together in high diversity territories (GIMÉNEZ, C. & LOBERA, J., 2014)
to the recession. As an example, there has been a minimum drop of 1.6 points in living together and just 1.1 points in discrimination.

2.2.2.3 Citizen relationship space

The actions deployed in the line of citizen relations, promoting and strengthening collaborative networks among associations, groups and collectives from the territories, opened up opportunities to create stable relationship spaces, known as citizen connection and participation spaces, particularly in the last year of the first stage intervention.

Setting up these relationship spaces followed different strategies depending on the initial situation for each territory. The two main strategies followed started from scratch or from an existing initiative that has been strengthened. Other strategies have consisted of connecting several experiences in a common space or boosting the relationship space from an initiative that several players already shared.

All types of programmes have been set up and given different names: Neighbour Commission in Las Margaritas, Network Group in La Coma (Paterna), Citizen Meeting in Salt, Community Talks in Logroño, Citizen Space in El Ejido, Citizen Driving Force Group in Jerez or Public Dialogues in Tortosa.

The Citizen Driving Force Group

The Citizen Driving Force Group from the south-side of Jerez was in charge of defining strategies to develop actions to promote citizen participation.

They held several meetings and debate programmes on participation among the social fabric and individuals with participation from over 30 collectives and associations. The analyses carried out in these meetings were incorporated into the community evaluation and were used to identify priorities when designing community programming.

A series of actions was planned from this analysis:
— Open day for south-side area associations, reporting successful participation and collaboration experiences.
— Drawing up a community guide to bring to light the great wealth of associations in the area and the work they perform.

41 Idem
— Enabling neighbourhoods with proposals such as environmental routes, organising film-forums or training.
— Continuing to organise citizen meetings within community programming.

The Driving Force Group, as a living participation space, has been open to new incorporations, including implication from new citizens who have individually joined the group’s work and debate.

In territories with existing formal participation bodies, district boards or others, the ICI Project has relied on all of them and has helped to strengthen them. In territories where there are plural organisation embryos, representative of more general interests, the ICI Project has worked with them. This involved tenant associations, entity coordinators, citizen platforms, association federations, parent associations, etc. This has helped to strengthen what already existed and broaden the spectrum of collaborative relations for these organisations with others in the territory. These elements have made it possible for the ICI Project to establish positive relations with everyone.

Citizen relationship spaces have helped to strengthen citizen participation within the intercultural community process. This has strategic transcendence given the central role of citizen participation.
Within the framework of citizen relationship spaces, activities have strengthened the social sphere through training and skills, such as the Associations School in Las Norias, El Ejido or the Association Strengthening and Social Organisation Workshop in Getafe.
What were the main achievements in participation?
3.1 Involvement of the key players in promoting living together and intercultural citizenship

Perhaps the ICI Project’s most important achievement over its first three years was starting a process of change in a world that seemed unchangeable, where fragmented interventions and relationships made it impossible to build shared projects. The intercultural community intervention process is making it possible to make the leap from a culture plagued with individual and corporate interests to another world where the three key players participate to build common horizons and work for the communities’ general interests.

The ultimate purpose of the Intercultural Community Intervention Project targets appropriate management of an ever more culturally diverse society as an opportunity to enrich and strengthen local communities. This challenge could only be met by participation from people living and working in the territory. The project has managed to make important progress in promoting living together and cohesion and it has affected:

- **a.** Formulation of the local political agenda, through commitments reflected in action plans for social services, town planning, etc.
- **b.** Bringing in the topic of living together for the first time ever in fields such as health, town planning, security, the economy, etc. along with others (social services, culture and education) that were already covering this aspect in one way or another.
- **c.** Focussing on citizens, not as recipients, consumers or users but as a protagonist and key element to improve or change what is actually happening in the territory where they live. This makes it possible to engage everyone, regardless of ethnicity or age, etc.
3.2
Driving common initiatives and shared experiences

Applying the methodology was essential to encourage collaborative relationships and participation from the key players and get this social change started in the communities. The different methodological elements, with their own methods and instruments, have made it possible to drive common initiatives and get shared products during the first stage of the ICI Project.

Let’s take a quick look at the relevant achievements to illustrate this point: 16 community focus studies, with their respective assessments, were produced and used as a basis to draw up many other intercultural community programmes. These products have required wide-reaching participation processes from very different players with often opposing interests and positions, often having to overcome lack of mutual knowledge or previous relationships.

Achieving these products was decisive in terms of:

a. improving knowledge among all local players,
b. learning how to constructively manage differences, interests and positions,
c. participative and shared knowledge to agree on an assessment for the actual territory as a starting point for priorities, plans and actions.

3.3
Macro-magnitudes for participation in the ICI Project

Active participation was achieved in carrying out and developing the ICI Project in over 40 schools, 21 primary care health centres and health services and 76 citizen entities and community resources (associations, NGOs, informal groups). In addition, synergy generation was pro-
moted alongside coordination among over 642 professionals and technical and citizen resources, driving a whole host of shared actions.

As the result of all this hard work, the three key players participated in 2128 activities, mobilising a high proportion of citizens in the territories. In total, 101,971 persons participated in activities promoted by the ICI Project. This figure rises to 148,993 persons if participation data also includes meetings and other work spaces set up by the intercultural community process.

Overall, the intercultural community process has managed to actively involve 997 persons from the different administrations, 2151 professionals from public and private technical resources and 4060 persons belonging to social organisations or individuals.

**Macro-magnitudes for participation in the first stage of the ICI Project**
*(September 2010 - August 2013)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect or line of work</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Quantitative indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General participation</td>
<td>Activities carried out within the framework of the ICI Project</td>
<td>2128 activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons that have participated in ICI Project direct activities</td>
<td>101,971 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total persons that participated in the ICI Project (activities, meetings and work spaces)</td>
<td>148,993 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global action line</td>
<td>Implication of administrative managers</td>
<td>997 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implication of public or private resource technicians</td>
<td>2151 professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implication of members of social and citizen organisations</td>
<td>4060 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific lines</td>
<td>Schools engaged</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health centres engaged</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Citizen resources engaged</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Control panel for the ICI Project information and documentation system
3.4

Common products, participative spaces and collaborative relations

Community meetings have acted as process progress indicators in the territories. On the whole, community meetings have boasted a high general level of participation, particularly from the three key players. Although the project is only in its third year, 29 community meetings have been held.

As a whole, this data validates the ICI Project intervention hypothesis that has been demonstrated to be effective in terms of coordinating collaboration networks among the key players and all players within the local communities. In turn, it corroborates the methodological approach designed to promote participation, capable of adapting to different circumstances and contexts.

Several tools were used to get citizens engaged and participating in the ICI Project that have turned out to be highly valuable and effective such as: global citizen action, open summer schools and other sociocultural and public space enabling initiatives. This has led to progress on inclusion and participation concerning many social organisations, youth, women’s or old people’s groups, plus many individuals. All these tools have been crucial in terms of bringing about citizen participation in the intercultural community process and improving social relationships and living together in the territory.

From a strategic point of view, some lines of work have been essential and prioritised:
— The 17 global citizen actions carried out using the same specific methodology.
— Implementation of open summer schools and learning and community service actions, connecting specific health and education lines with participation from citizens and the three key players.
— Creation or strengthening of formal, non formal and informal relationship spaces.
— Opening up and implementing several group-enabling processes that have made it possible to work on intercultural relationships.
— Skills work and training on intercultural community participation from the three key players in the 17 territories.
— Intergenerational and intercultural participation actions.
— Preventive enabling actions for public spaces
— Creating institutional, technical staff or citizen relationship spaces.

Combining all these actions has made a significant difference in terms of making the intercultural community process visible in territories and promoting citizen participation in this process. However, it has also made it possible to work on social relationships between collectives with different national and ethnic origins. Preparing and carrying out the actions has generated communication programmes, positive interaction and cooperation, helping to improve local living together.

It is very likely that bringing together all these activities, within the framework of the intercultural community process, has helped to improve the image of the intervention territories and shape a positive perception of compliance with social rules, reflected in surveys carried out within the ICI Project framework. Maybe they have had a hand in the fact that there has been no significant increase in figures concerning discrimination or deterioration of living together in the intervention territories, as seen throughout the country due to the recession.

The shared knowledge and experience transfer programme that was set up around global citizen actions made it possible not only to design an appropriate participation and mobilisation instrument with ICI Project characteristics but also improve it in later editions. The figures speak for themselves: overall participation by 29,159 persons in 2012, the year of the first actions, rose to 33,603 in 2013.

Finally, thanks to applying the methodology and deploying the aforementioned actions, programmes, bodies or nuclei have been created in all territories that bring about and promote citizen participation in any initiative or activity, along with the technical-professional resources that work on the territory; and, of course, without forgetting commitment and connection with public administration managers with particular emphasis on democratically elected municipal representatives.
What recommendations could be made to improve community and intercultural participation?
In this last section, and working from experience accumulated over the first three years of the ICI Project, some suggestions have been made to intensify and broaden participation from the three key players in the intercultural community process underway in the intervention territories.

We will organise these recommendations into two blocks. Firstly, we will highlight two absolutely essential issues: relating to the ICI team and acknowledgement of the process by all players. After that, we will list a series of complementary suggestions on different aspects such as how to nurture the process phases and maintain pace, relevance of the information, assertiveness issues, planning or sustainability, among others.

4.1

Core recommendations concerning the ICI team and the process standing

First of all, we can highlight two fundamental aspects:

4.1.1 Expansion and diversification of the ICI team

The team components’ qualification and authority to run a project with all social players is, doubtlessly, a crucial part of the intervention. In this respect, the following will be essential: their communication and interpersonal skills, their knowledge and mediating skills, their strategic capacity, their experience in developing community methodologies such as participative research, sociocultural enabling, etc. On the other hand, it would be important, although not essential, for teams to have plural and diverse components. The first stage of the ICI Project began with a team made up of four people from a single entity. This composition began to change, in many teams, until the end of the initial stage by including contributions from other resources in the territory. Whenever possible, it would be important for resources from different administrations to work together in the actual team, especially at a local level, along with entities and private institutions. Finally, and given that work is done in increasingly multicultural contexts, it is important for the actual ICI team to represent this diversity. It is a real chal-
lenge for society to include people in the technical and political field or in the social fabric who are well-established and working to improve and develop the territories where they live and in many cases where their children have been born; if not, it will be complicated to move forwards in terms of building intercultural living together.

4.1.2 Institutional and social standing of the process

An important part of promoting intercultural community process development involves acknowledgement and some institutional legitimacy. In order to achieve this, the ICI Project set out some fundamental elements: a) signing an agreement with the municipal administration committing to working on living together and intercultural citizenship; b) agreement with collaborating entities with a decisive role, given that they initially contract the community team and allow the methodology to be applied and c) the existence of documents where a significant part of the association sphere endorses or recognises the collaborating entity as a promoter of the process and commits to providing experience and knowledge to help develop the intercultural community process.
4.2

Ten extra recommendations on pace, assertiveness, impacts, synergies, existing aspects, planning, sustainability, symbolism, interaction and information

Other elements allow work and implication from local players:

4.2.1 Get it right with phase coordination and the right pace for each territory

Each territory has its own characteristics and circumstances that will mean it invests more or less effort, taking into account its own pace adapted to the real local situation. Dedicating the right time, resources and strategies for it to run correctly has a considerable effect on the degree of participation in intercultural community processes.

4.2.2 Consolidate and intensify building assertive relationships

The importance of building assertive relationships with all the key players represents initial capital for the community work, considered fundamental to be maintained and reinforced throughout the whole process, as it contributes to developing participation to a large extent.

4.2.3 Keep in mind the planned overall impact

It is decisive to work from the very beginning, and throughout the whole process, by integrating elements into all participative actions that promote intercultural living together and by targeting the five overall impacts of intercultural community intervention: social cohesion, citizenship, living together, interculturality and community strengthening. In this way, it will be
decisive in each action to wonder not so much about the actual initiative assessment but its capacity to contribute to these impacts.

4.2.4 Make the most of synergy between intervention lines

Combining and inter-relating **global and specific action lines** is decisive when developing the intercultural community process and a determining factor for participation. Each line requires work that, whilst sharing the same philosophy and focus, requires a different type of participation. So, the overall line is characterised by more prudent action although it is guided and open to participation from everyone. Its results are more difficult to understand and bring to light in the short term as our culture is unfortunately more concerned with immediacy and activism.

Consequently, it is decisive to combine the global action line with another type of action, organised to contribute to the process from specific situations, demands or problem issues. In the ICI Project, we have backed these types of actions in general interest fields such as education, community health and actual citizen relationships. Consequently, we have come across contributions from sociocultural activity, learning and service, work on the territories’ historical memory, encouraging reading, playing as an educational resource, etc. that, from sector-based or specific contributions, has allowed many people, groups and collectives to join the intercultural community process.

4.2.5 Keep insisting on the need to work from existing aspects

Experience from these first three years indicates that it is decisive to highlight the spaces and the participative initiatives that already exist in the territory to integrate and connect them with the intercultural community process. Many of these initiatives are the result of previous processes that, whilst maintaining their name and purpose, lack participative community methodology. In this case, how these local situations are managed is highly relevant. Experience shows us that the most useful thing is to invite them to participate in new community dynamics and methodology as the community process’s own future will make them take a new approach to their own role within the community. In other cases, some organisations prefer to exclude themselves from the intercultural community process, but we would like to make it clear that nobody has excluded them.
4.2.6 Take good care of operative planning

From the start, it is essential to design a strategic calendar with key points in time and steps to move forwards in the participative process. To do this, the actual dynamics, schedule and culture of the territory must be taken into account. On the other hand, process milestones and products must be correctly combined both in the global and specific action lines. We have thereby discovered and proven that combining global citizen actions with the phase of establishing relationships plays a decisive role in the first year of the ICI Project; or that summer schools are a really significant experience to demonstrate the need to prioritise and programme joint general interest actions.

4.2.7 Always focus on participation sustainability

Work must be focussed from the outset on future participation sustainability in the intercultural community process. Initially, it will be necessary for the ICI teams to take on a promoting role (generator) that, as the process goes on, should turn into a more collaborating role. In turn, it is decisive that existing resources are assessed in terms of efficacy and efficiency, avoiding actions that, due to their complexity or cost, are difficult to continue over time. In the long term, this would cause disenchantment that might affect participation. On the contrary, maintaining actions over time has a direct effect on participants’ positive assessment and motivation.

4.2.8 The relevance of symbolic moments

The intercultural community process requires moments that can bring to light everyone’s participation. Community meeting represent one of these moments as they offer the chance to pool everything that has been done, meet up and share future challenges. It is also important to make the most of any significant ICI Project achievements to symbolise them as the result of a shared action: inauguration of the open summer schools, global actions, publishing certain materials, the community monograph, signing a protocol, an exhibition, etc.
4.2.9 Guide activities towards positive interaction

Backing interculturality requires each action to be designed to promote meetings, positive interactions and participation from all the social and cultural diversity in the territory. Within this framework, it is fundamental to contribute to intercultural mediation and innovation of tools as we created during the first stage. The experience accumulated over these first three years of action allows us to be convincing in our belief that the best way of working for and through living together and social cohesion consists of creating the necessary conditions for bringing together people from different origins in everyday spaces, organising initiatives, etc. This does not mean that they do not have their own spaces due to cultural or religious affinity or simply due to their origin, but we see participation from interaction with each other as fundamental and transforming, as a way of building the present and the future of increasingly diverse local communities.

4.2.10 Community information

The greatest transverse element to tackle the topic of participation is doubtlessly information. Working from the beginning to design and jointly draw up information and communication materials (resource guides, drift protocols, educational leaflets, information sheets, magazines, educational backpacks, audiovisuals, documentaries and radio programmes, etc.) is as relevant as it is fundamental for participation. As Marco Marchioni frequently says: with no information there is no participation, but just information gives no participation either.
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Complementary bibliography


Glossary
This glossary compiles the main terms used within the framework of the Intercultural Community Intervention Project according to the meaning this project has given each one. This is not a scientific-technical catalogue claiming to exhaustively compile the entire range of interpretations for the same concept, although it does intend to often a simple explanation for the specific and operative meaning given to each term from the ICI Project focus and methodology.

A

Assimilationism
This is a sociopolitical model or proposal, contrary to the ICI Project philosophy, to manage diversity in multicultural contexts based on cultural uniformity, understanding this to be a process where the minority acquires the values, language, culture and identity of the majority.

B

Belonging
Belonging is usually considered to be a person’s self-assignation and identification with a collective. The ICI Project perspective has promoted the feeling of belonging for persons and collectives with their local community as a necessary step to encourage cohesion and living together.

C

Citizenship
Beyond the concept of citizenship bound to belonging to a political community, normally a Nation-State, and the rights and responsibilities derived from this, exclusive to the nationals of this State, the ICI Project considers citizenship from its social and living together dimension above all, with the defining traits of community participation, working together to achieve general interest and implication in building an intercultural and inclusive local community, independently of national origins or cultural belonging.
Coexistence
Coexistence is a type of social situation where, as opposed to cohabitation, there is barely any relationship between the people belonging to different social and cultural collectives living in the same space and time. They coexist but they do not cohabit. This is the predominant social situation in most local contexts, characterised by passive respect between persons and collectives, with no positive interaction between them and failing to tackle any latent conflict that might exist.

Cohabitation/Living together
Cohabitation/living together is a type of social situation where people, independently of their social or cultural belonging, communicate and relate to each other, respect each other mutually, share values and common interests, work together and interact positively and prevent and resolve conflict creatively. Living together requires continuous learning and it is a dynamic process that we can always build on.

Collaborators
Participation from persons, players and protagonists in the ICI Project framework revolves around three circles that define the degree or level of participation in it: informed, collaborating and engaged. Collaborating persons or players participate from time to time in ICI Project actions or activities. Depending on their availability over time, they could become engaged or simply informed. The actual flexibility of the intercultural community methodology makes it possible to change how much they participate.

Collaborative relations
These are the essence of the intercultural community process; without collaborative relations between the three key players in the community, we cannot talk about emergence, existence and consolidation of the process. The ICI Project methodology is channelled towards bringing about this type of relationship, deemed “improbable” due to being practically exceptional in the local socio-political context.
Community
Although there are different definitions of community that cover spatial frameworks (local community, regional community, national, European, international community, etc.), or look at traits shared by human groups or collectives (values, interests, customs, language, culture, etc.), for the ICI Project, the community will always be local (a neighbourhood, a zone, a village or a city) and it will be made up of four structural elements: territory, population, resources and demands from the population.

Community-based
This is the type of social intervention promoted by the ICI Project where the community not only receives the actions but it is also the key player in its own social and cohabitation development process.

Community information
This is a fundamental element of the intercultural community methodology: it is used to inform the local community as a whole about progress within the process and the existing initiatives and participation programmes. This consequently helps to make the process public and motivate people and players to take part or get involved in it. Community information can be put across in the following ways: information sheets, posters, leaflets, websites, social networks, blogs, etc.

Community meeting
A community meeting constitutes a symbolic meeting place between the three key players in the local community, sharing and pooling the work done by each one within the framework of the intercultural community process.

Community methodology
This is a set of methods that guaranteeing cohesion between the focus inspiring the ICI Project and the specific practice of working in local communities. It is made up of a series of methods, instruments, techniques and actions to promote the local communities’ starring role in their own social development process and when constructing living together and intercultural citizenship.
Community monograph

This is an indispensable community methodology instrument that has the fundamental purpose of allowing analysis and overall understanding of the intervention community plus shared knowledge, making it possible to establish an assessment and planning aimed at improving the existing situation and connecting the different initiatives with the overall community and intercultural process.

Community organisation

Community organisation is the process by which the three key players in the local community come up with participation programmes, the relationship spaces, and the community adapts them to develop community programming as effectively as possible.

Community programming

This is a key methodology element to make progress in the intercultural community process. It marks a qualitative leap in collaborative relations between key players by jointly programming a series of actions to meet the priorities set in the community assessment.

Community team

This is a fundamental element in the intercultural community methodology, acting as a resource for the actual process, enabling collective relations between the three key players and making it easier to move forwards in the different Project phases (shared knowledge, assessment, programming, etc.). Initially, the community team was essentially made up of the ICI Project intervention teams but, as the intercultural community process went on, it incorporated professionals from other public and private resources in the territory.

Conflict

Conflict is not conceived as negative in the ICI Project but as an opportunity to improve situations involving inequality or exclusion that might occur in a local community. From this perspective, conflicts, even latent conflicts, are tackled creatively and resolved positively.

Culturalism

Excessive or one-sided emphasis on the cultural factors that have a negative effect on appropriate management of diversity. The ICI Project philosophy rejects this type of differentiating emphasis, preferring to work on common values and shared interests.
Culture
We understand culture to be the set of guidelines for behaviour and meanings for reality (rules, values, beliefs, customs, etc.) expressed symbolically and forming a relatively structured whole shared by a population (differing according to gender, age or social class) that is transmitted from generation to generation, as a device for adapting to the natural and human environment and therefore a changing reality.

Demands
This constitutes one of the community’s structural elements comprising explicit or implicit requests among the population to solve problem issues or satisfy their needs and interests. It comes down to the intercultural community intervention process to identify them, make them visible, prioritise them and respond to them.

Difference
The ICI Project has applied the principle of the right to difference that implies respecting identity and rights for each differentiated person, group and social and cultural collective.

Discrimination
Discrimination consists of treating persons or collectives unfairly, compared to other persons or collectives in similar situations, due to their national origin, gender, age, social collective or belonging to ethnic or religious groups. There are two types of discrimination: direct and indirect. The first essentially matches the previous description. The second occurs when an apparently neutral rule, criterion or practice puts some people or collectives at a specific disadvantage compared to others.
Engaged

Participation from persons, players and key players in the ICI Project framework revolves around three circles that define the degree or level of participation in it: informed, collaborating and engaged. Engaged people or players include anyone continuously participating in actions, activities or relationship spaces for the ICI Project. Depending on their availability over time, they could change to collaborate or simply be informed. The actual flexibility of the intercultural community methodology makes it possible to change how much they participate.

Equality

Democratic principle that recognises equal rights and responsibilities for all citizens and proposes equal treatment in the eyes of the law. Enforcing this basic principle occasionally requires policies that promote equal opportunities, overcoming social, economic and cultural obstacles that affect more disadvantaged persons and collectives. This principle guides the intercultural community intervention’s own actions.

Ethnic group

The ethnic group is characterised by having cultural, physical, linguistic or religious traits assumed by its members or attributed by others that form part of wider societies where they relate with other majority or minority ethnic groups within it.

Ethnic minority

Any ethnic minority is an ethnic group but not all ethnic groups are an ethnic minority. This is usually characterised by a situation of subordination, marginalisation or lower status compared to the majority groups in society.
Ethnicity
Ethnicity refers to social identification of a human group working from the cultural, physical, linguistic characteristics that they supposedly share. Ethnic group is often confused with race, meaning sociocultural attributes with genetic attributes. While the ethnic group has scientific and sociopolitical recognition, race lacks scientific validity as, on the one hand, the boundary of the racial group depends on as many and whichever classification criteria are taken into account (cranium shape, eyes, hair, etc.) and, on the other, genetically inherited traits neither determine nor explain sociocultural traits. Beyond “physical race”, “sociopolitical race” is relevant meaning representations and discourse on the racial aspect.

Ethnocentrism
Attitude that judges or values other cultures from our own perspective, considering the customs, values, belief, etc. of our own group as the best, normal, correct and even superior.

Foreigner
Citizens who do not hold the nationality of the State where they are living, subject to the specific laws that regulate their stay in the country and that establish the civil, political or social rights of anyone with access to them.

Ghetto
This refers to a concentration of population belonging to a social or ethnic group or groups in determined urban areas that are usually segregated off from the rest of the city, normally perceived negatively by the rest of the population. The term ghetto is associated with negative connotations - poverty, poor housing, lack of security, etc. and this is usually due to combinations of discrimination, social exclusion and spatial segregation.
Global action line
This is the backbone of the intercultural community processes, as the action line that has defined the focus and methodology of the whole ICI Project, establishing the guidelines and the process, organisational and technical elements required for development.

Global citizen action
Global citizen actions are strategic due to their potential to involve the three key players and present the intercultural community process to the majority of the population in the territory and make an impact on the collective imagination, either by raising awareness on a specific topic or by helping to promote the feeling of belonging to a territory.

Hostility
As opposed to cohabitation and coexistence, hostility is a social situation where relationships between people belonging to differentiated social and cultural groups are charged with lack of trust, suspicion, avoidance and rejection, including non regulated conflict and clear demonstrations of verbal aggression and even physical and symbolic violence.

Identity
This refers to how persons and human groups are perceived and define themselves. Identity has a self-conception component as well as attribution and even recognition by other groups or society.
Impacts
Impacts refer to the effects and changes that intercultural community intervention has caused on the social context. Impacts should be measured in the medium and long term in relation to the ICI Project’s goals: social cohesion and living together and intercultural citizenship.

Inclusion
This is the process that, by identifying the sociocultural differences between people and collectives and their specific needs, promotes the policies and social changes required for their equal presence and incorporation in society. From this perspective, in intercultural community processes we would be talking about inclusive local communities: a) when there is an increase in positive interactions between collectives and a re-assessment within the community of the most disadvantaged; b) when there are mutual adaptation processes between collectives and standard and institutional changes that acknowledge this situation, and c) when the shared image of the community is improving.

Indicators
The ICI Project indicators make it possible to permanently monitor and assess the progress of the intercultural community processes in each territory and from the overall perspective. This includes qualitative indicators that can identify the different situations the territories are going through and quantitative indicators that make it possible to measure how far goals have been met through results and impacts. Depending on what we are trying to identify or measure, both types will be classified according to: 1) initial indicators, 2) process indicators, 3) results indicators and 4) impact indicators.

Informed
Participation from persons, players and key players in the ICI Project framework revolves around three circles that define the degree or level of participation in it: informed, collaborating and engaged. Informed persons or players are any that do not participate in actions, activities or relationship spaces in the ICI Project either because they cannot or do not want to, but they are always informed about how the process is progressing. Depending on their availability over time, they could go on to collaborate or become engaged.
Integration
There are many conceptions of integration but from the perspective of intercultural community intervention this is the process of mutual adaptation between differentiated sociocultural groups where minorities are incorporated into society by means of equal conditions, rights, responsibilities and opportunities without this representing the loss of their identity or cultural traits whilst the majority accept and incorporate the standard-based, institutional and ideological changes required to make the above possible.

Intercultural community assessment
This is a crucial element in the intercultural community methodology as it makes it easier to pass on shared knowledge of what is really happening in community programming. Assessment can prioritise the local community’s demands, obtained from the participative research process and express them as specific actions that will be reflected in community programming.

Intercultural education
Approach to education that takes into account cultural diversity, strengthens exchange between different cultural subjects and that, in turn, guarantees own cultural knowledge and facts, strengthening common elements and not differences. It is developed from a global perspective that involves all parties: school, students, families and environment.

Intercultural mediation
Intercultural mediation emerged as a mediation method in contexts with a significant multicultural aspect that has been applied to different fields: education, healthcare, legal, social, etc. Its more community-based dimension has been applied to the ICI Project, providing the focus to bring together the entire intervention in terms of purposes to achieve and the specific intercultural methods that have inspired the community methodology and made it possible to resolve conflict creatively.

Interculturality
Compared to the multicultural approach that recognises sociocultural diversity through the right to difference but without creating real interrelation situations between the different collectives, interculturality is a sociopolitical approach that aims to overcome this situation, promoting a new social context, emphasising points in common rather than differences and where positive interaction and collaboration between sociocultural collectives is the norm.
Key players

Community processes are framed within the social, political and institutional context of local communities, where their key players are representatives from the democratically elected administrations, professionals belonging to the public and private technical resources working in the territory and citizens who live in this territory.

Learning and service

Learning by carrying out community service. This is an educational proposal where learning takes place by means of people providing services to their own community, thereby helping to improve the society around them.

Living together and intercultural citizenship

The ICI project’s intervention focus is living together and intercultural citizenship, understood to be a framework to build positive relations and interactions between citizens from the same local community, independently of their administrative situation or social or cultural belonging, where they share rules, values and common interests.

Milestones

These are actions or specific achievements that take on strategic and symbolic transcendence to demonstrate qualitative leaps in the intercultural community process. Some examples of this type of actions would be: holding the first community meeting, the first technical staff relationship space meeting or presenting the community monograph, among others.
Objectives
These are the goals or achievements to be attained in the ICI Project or in any of its action lines, making them both general and specific. The ICI Project has two general aims that can be summarised as generating local processes to promote social cohesion and living together and intercultural citizenship and validating and transferring an innovative and sustainable social intervention practice.

Open summer school
This is an element that accelerates the community process thanks to its potential to connect collaborative relations between key players and due to the visibility of the community process in the territory because it satisfies an important citizen need, covering part of children and teenagers’ leisure time during their summer holidays (although not only then) by means of recreational-training actions.

Participation
Participation constitutes an essential, cross-discipline element running through any intercultural community intervention, as a means as well as an end. Without participation from the three key players and citizens, there is no intercultural community process. It has been tackled from its different dimensions: as an exercise in citizenship and participative democracy and as an element of social cohesion and living together, among others.

Positive discrimination
Treating people differently in a way that aims to correct negative social conditions originating from discrimination towards a group or person. This is the only type of discrimination that has a place in the ICI Project and only when it is considered relevant.
Prejudice
This is a prior presumption about a person or group based on partial, biased, indirect or incomplete knowledge.

Products
Products are the results that appear in any type of material required to make the process visible and make progress within it. Examples include the monograph, community programming, publishing a guide or editing a video, among others.

Public
The adjective public has two fundamental meanings in intercultural community processes: on the one hand, it means that the community process is public, open to everyone who wishes to participate whilst on the other hand, it means that it should inform the community about any progress and allow access to the documentation and knowledge that the process is generating.

Racism
Active discrimination of persons or groups for reasons related to their origin or ethnic or cultural features. ICI Project approaches fight racism, along with other types of discrimination.

Relationship spaces
These are programmes bringing together participation from key players in the local community and the organisational structure being given to the intercultural community process. Due to the different roles played by the key players within the process, there are three different types of programmes: technical staff relationship spaces, institutional relationship spaces and citizen relationship spaces.

Resources
Resources are one of the community’s structural elements where public and private technical-professional resources are essential both in terms of attention to persons and collectives’ specific needs and when resolving local demands from a complete and community perspective.
Results
ICI project results are the specific effects or consequences of the set of activities developed within the strategic action lines. They can range from the number of participants in certain activities to carrying out the community assessment as a result in itself.

Segregation
Institutional or social practice consisting of separation and isolation of persons or differentiated sociocultural collectives, either physically or spatially, or in certain fields of public life.

Social cohesion
There are different conceptions of social cohesion, the majority of which emphasise common wellbeing, equality vs inequality, resolving conflicts through democratic frameworks, citizen participation or respecting sociocultural diversity in their approaches. The ICI Project, from the local community perspective, promotes cohesion through social ties, participation from the different key players in the community, resolving any possible conflicts positively and legitimising institutions.

Social exclusion
Process by which a person or social group cannot be fully developed as an integral member of society in full right, supposing a loss of rights and responsibilities, characterised by lack of access to resources that this subject or group require to feel part of society.
Specific action lines

Intercultural community processes have developed three specific action lines (health, education and citizen relationships) that, revolving around the global action line, have inspired and strengthened the whole process. The fields of health and education, due to their focus on common social rights for the whole community and implication among different administrations, resources and players, are strategic programmes to establish collaborative relationships between key players and to bring together collectives and players’ common interests. In exchange, citizen relationships have been decisive in terms of involving citizens in the process and encouraging positive interactions between people belonging to different sociocultural collectives.

Territory

This is one of the community’s structural elements. It refers to the intercultural community intervention’s geographic and spatial field, marked out by its political-administrative dimension: municipality or part of a municipality (zone, neighbourhood, district, etc.).

Unit

Principle of unit in diversity: implies full recognition and constant search for real and effective equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities as values and purposes shared by distinct sociocultural collectives.