



**PROJECT**

**Balance among personal, family, and professional life in Spain and Norway**

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**GENERAL REPORT**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This report defines and explains the project "Balance among personal, family, and professional life in Spain and Norway" –ES04–. The project has been conceived and designed within the context of the cooperation established

among the European Economic Area donor countries (Iceland, Lichtenstein, and Norway) and the government of Spain (in the case of this project, through the Ministry of Health, Social Services, and Equality's Institute of Women), with the collaboration of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP by its Spanish acronym) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS by its Norwegian acronym).

Consequentially, 15% of the costs related to the project's execution have been allocated to the Institute of Women, with the project also receiving compensation for 85% of its expenses from the cited international institution (the EEA's Financing Mechanism). The general framework for this funding ratio has been pre-established by the applicable general framework of the European Economic Area's 2009-2014 Financing Mechanism, based on the corresponding Memorandum of Understanding signed by the parties. The budgetary contributions allowing this activity to be carried out were accommodated in the Institute of Women's expenses budgeting.

Inclusion of the present project in this funding scheme is clearly justified since the general objective pursued by the EEA's Financing Mechanism is that of contributing to reduction of economic and social inequality within the European Economic Area and strengthening bilateral relationships between the donor and beneficiary countries, through financial support for the development of a set of sectors considered priorities. In the cited Memorandum of Understanding, a variety of key action areas are indicated, with one of those emphasized being the area of human and social development. The present "Equilibrio-Balance" project is contextualized within that area, and it is pursuing efforts to find new solutions in the area of personal, family, and professional life balance.

In Spain, the Program Operator entity is the State Secretary of Social Services and Equality. This project's Promoting Entity, one of the default elements established in the scope of the collaboration, is the Institute of Women through

the General Sub-Office of Studies and Cooperation, within the context of collaboration with other public entities as described above.

## **BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION**

### **1. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING BALANCE IN THE LOCAL SETTINGS:**

- **THE CONCEPT OF BALANCE**

The concept of “personal, family, and professional life balance” has been analysed in social sciences throughout a variety of disciplines, and multiple meanings have been attributed to it. From a sociological perspective, the concept of reconciliation is understood as a process of change to a rigid initial social structure founded on traditional values, towards gender roles that are conducive to emancipation of individuals (especially women) in terms of their decision-making capacities involving their time and their dedication to various aspects of the personal and professional spheres. From the perspective of economics, on the other hand, balance is conceived as an externalization of the costs associated with family tasks, with pursuit of a model of co-responsibility shared among the various economic agents (families, the market, and the government) that is more in agreement with the potential benefits each of these groups may derive from family caregiving. Proper valuation is therefore essential in terms of the “invisible costs” of domestic work, which will allow an equitable distribution of domestic and working functions among the members of the family unit.

Finally, from a perspective closer to the reality experienced by people, conciliation tends to fall under the scope of individual liberties, as a right to decide how to use one's own time within the limits imposed by work and family obligations. However, this better approximation of the reality experienced by people does not have to be interpreted as a purely individualistic and individual perspective on conciliation. To the contrary, an appropriate balance among the various areas of private and professional life occurs through more involvement

and co-responsibility of the societal agents involved, including in addition to the families and their members, the private sector and public administrations.

These days it is rare to refer to conciliation without mentioning the concept of co-responsibility, as these terms have become intimately related. Co-responsibility involves the assumption of equal sharing between men and women of the responsibilities, rights, duties, and opportunities associated with the domestic environment, the family, and caregiving. It also implies that societal agents and institutions (the government, businesses, unions, associations, etc.) take on effective management in terms of personal, family, and professional realities.

Starting with the premise that achieving a balanced distribution of time and reconciling or harmonizing aspects of people's lives results in an increase in their well-being and, to the extent that any local administration has improvement of the quality and conditions of its residents' lives as its main objective, it means that all local governments must aspire to make their municipality, province, or community a "good place to live".

Conciliation is thus revealed to be a multi-dimensional phenomenon characterized by the wide range of agents involved (families, working people, employers, the public sector, service providers, etc.) and the diversity of issues that must agree in the sectors of life (work, recreation, family life, care for dependent persons, etc.).

The background for conciliation exists as a complex system of relationships and interests, dominated by various public initiatives put into action at various territorial levels of decision-making.

- THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN CONCILIATION

In recent years, we have seen intensification in the policies, programs, and activities that have been developed by European and national institutions in order to promote equal participation in society by men and women, and to guarantee not only formal equality but also real equality between the sexes. In agreement with this process, Spain has followed the lead of European Union directives and has substantially advanced its establishment of specific laws, including among others:

- Law 39/1999, on Conciliation of Family and Work Life for Working Persons (Law 39/1999, of November 5, Official State Gazette (BOE in Spanish) no. 266).
- Law 3/2007, for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (Law 3/2007 of March 22, BOE no. 71).
- Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education (BOE no. 106).
- Law 39/2006, on Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependents (Law 36/2006 of December 14. BOE no. 299).

In the context of equal opportunities, the debate over conciliation of life spaces and co-responsibility in terms of the equitable distribution of domestic tasks and care between women and men has acquired, in a very short period of time, a significant importance in Spain, as had occurred earlier in other European countries.

The impact produced has given an enormous impulse to the advancement and positioning of women in the social, economic, and political spheres. There are an increasing number of public and private organizations aware of the positive implications that these impacts have for equality and for a country's social and economic development. Regardless of their areas of authority, such organizations are making equality between women and men, and specifically conciliation, an emerging area for their strategic actions.

Given their proximity to their residents and thus greater knowledge of social realities and their enhanced ability to identify needs, local entities and specifically municipal governments must act as managers of this change. They must lay out strategies for actions directed to improve local public policy, in order to achieve more opportunities and improved conditions for conciliation of their residents' personal, family, and professional lives.

Along these lines, Spain's Law 7/1985, of April 2, on Regulation of Local Ordinances (LRBRL by its Spanish acronym) establishes that Spanish municipalities:

- May in order to look after their own interests, promote all types of activities and provide any public services that contribute to satisfying the needs and aspirations of the local community. May establish the authorities of the municipalities themselves, which include issues related to personal, family, and professional life balance, such as: public passenger transport and traffic regulation; provision of social services; organization of cultural, sporting, and recreational events; and participation in school scheduling and in the creation, construction, and sustainment of public teaching centres in cooperation with the educational administration (art. 25 of the LRBRL).
  
- In addition to their own authorities, the national government's administrations and those of the Autonomous Communities may delegate the exercise of authorities to municipalities for matters that affect their own interests (art. 27 LRBRL).

## **2. PRIOR INITIATIVES RELATED TO CONCILIATION. THE "EQUILIBRIO-BALANCE" PILOT PROJECT.**



Between 2008 and 2011, the Institute for Women led the trans-national project entitled "Equilibrio-Balance". This project, which also included the participation of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS), was also funded by the European Economic Area.

The project was carried out in two phases, and its purpose was to support an exchange of experiences between Spain and Norway in terms of conciliation, in order to develop and implement conciliation plans in a series of Spanish cities.

- ***First Phase: Production, publication, and distribution of a guide to best practices*** for conciliation of personal, family, and work life by Spanish and Norwegian Local Entities.

To accomplish this, contact was made with municipalities selected based on a series of criteria that ensured objectivity and geographic and political diversity. Study visits were organized for Spanish entities to visit Norway and Norwegian entities to visit Spain.

In the end, the guide compiled 62 experiences in total, which were the most illustrative of the 100 analysed. There were 46 municipal governments that participated, 42 of them Spanish and 4 Norwegian.

The guide's contents were structured into four sections:

1. *Introduction*, where the guide is described along with its objectives, its target audience, the reason for its production, and the structure of its contents.

2. *Joint analysis of best practices*, emphasizing common elements as well as the most innovative and successful aspects. The experiences identified as best practices are presented as classified into four thematic headings:

- Experiences that apply a methodology of intervention, based on a comprehensive focus and acting on multiple dimensions of the phenomenon.
- Best practices that have the objective of balancing the distribution of time through more efficient time management, both in the business environment and in the government administration itself.
- Initiatives designed to promote access by residents to services and infrastructure involved with achieving balance among personal, family, and professional life.
- Experiences with the purpose of increasing societal awareness and education about this phenomenon, as well as about the absence of a model of shared responsibilities, not only within the family organization but also among the various socio-economic agents.

3. *Conclusions, recommendations and proposals of interest*.

4. *Annex*, which includes as a summary a description of the best practices analysed, with information about the entity promoting the practice and the initiative itself: objectives, persons and/or entities targeted during the initiative, description, successful elements, and difficulties.

- ***Second Phase. Production of Conciliation Plans.***

In this project's second phase, the Institute of Women and the FEMP promoted a series of activities designed to develop conciliation plans, with the close collaboration of ten municipal governments (A Coruña, Alcalá de Henares, Aranda de Duero, Barbate, Eivissa, Icod de los Vinos, Jaén, Puente Genil, Valls and Vilagarcía de Arousa). It was specified that these plans should have an impact on the government personnel as well as on the city's residents.

The activities carried out in the pilot study in these 10 municipal governments were structured in three consecutive stages:

1. *Performance of a diagnostic study of the initial situation.* This allowed a clearer image to be obtained of each local reality and its positioning in terms of personal, family, and professional life balance. These diagnostic studies also showed, among other conclusions, the strengths and weaknesses that were detected in relation to this subject in the human resources management of the municipal government itself and within the city, in terms of the residents.

2. *Production of conciliation plans* based on a consensus, which systematically organized the proposals that arose from the initial diagnostic studies, conclusions, and proposals for improvement.

3. *Putting the conciliation plans into operation* once they were approved by the government teams, along with a process for tracking and evaluating the advances achieved.

The 10 municipal governments produced two plans that were different but complementary. The first emphasized their role as employers, with HR management formulas laid out to provide solutions for the conciliation needs of the municipal government staff (internal environment). The second emphasized their relationships with the city's residents in general (external environment) in their role as service providers, to serve as a guide for increasing awareness and education for the city's residents to whom the municipal policies were directed.

The plans and contents produced by this pilot experience are described below:

<b>PILOT PROJECT 2008-2011. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANS</b>	
<b>INTERNAL PLAN</b>	<p>Each plan focused internally on a municipal government contains a strategy for motivation and commitment for the government workers, which in the end would result in improvements to the quality of municipal services and to the work environment. They also focus on the exercise of societal co-responsibility, since a city government must also be seen as setting an example with a paradigm to be followed by other employers and organizations. They are structured around five axes of intervention, the first being crosscutting in nature (strategic) and the other four being more specific in nature. These in turn are integrated by a set of objectives, measurements, and actions. Specifically, the axes of intervention are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conciliation and co-responsibility: Information, awareness, and regulations.</li> <li>2. Increased flexibility: Organization of time and space.</li> <li>3. Leaves and absences.</li> <li>4. Social benefits.</li> <li>5. Professional and personal development.</li> </ol>
<b>EXTERNAL</b>	The strategy laid out by each External Plan is related to the support that a

<b>PLAN</b>	<p>municipal government can offer to a city's residents in order to achieve harmonization among the personal, family, and professional spheres. These strategies are structured around four axes of intervention.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Attention to socio-economic and cultural changes in the society that favour conciliation. This axis is directed towards:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ On one hand, the city's residents in general, focused on co-responsibility and uses of time.</li><li>▪ On the other hand, businesses and working men and women.</li></ul></li><li>2. Improvement of municipal services and spaces dedicated to serving dependent persons.</li><li>3. Involvement of other services that promote optimization of the residents' time.</li><li>4. A coordinated and integrated strategy for intervention, agreed upon by the persons responsible for its execution.</li></ol>
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## **PARTICIPANTS**

The project is taking place within the framework of a general program resulting from an agreement for cooperation between Spain and Norway. The Program Operator is the State Secretary of Social Services and Equality and the program is being led by the Institute of Women, with the collaboration of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS).

The experience will include the participation of 12 Spanish municipal governments and two Norwegian municipal governments, to be selected based on the criteria explained in the following section.

The entities cited above will for each case determine the rest of the parties that will take part in the development and execution of each of the respective plans (businesses, unions, universities, etc.).

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

One of the main conclusions reached by the Pilot Program described above, which was carried out between 2008 and 2011, was the need to "externalize" the conciliation plans in a manner such that when the plans are produced and put into operation, it is not just the municipal governments participating but all parties involved. Specifically these include societal agents (unions and businesses), educational entities, and of course the residents in general.

As such, this project's fundamental objective is to develop conciliation plans in 12 Spanish locations and 2 Norwegian ones, and to do this from an integrated perspective since the societal agents in each location will be involved from the very beginning. The design, development, and subsequent implementation of the plans should be the fruit of a participatory building process that facilitates the involvement of the municipal governments and the societal agents in a consensual manner. This will undoubtedly result in a better performance by all parties involved.

This element is considered fundamental given that one of the weaknesses detected during the Pilot Project was specifically the difficulty of applying the conciliation plans to an environment beyond the work staff that provides services within the city government itself, when the commitment of the other agents involved is not obtained from the very beginning.

Therefore, when carrying out this new Project we believe that parallel and complementary involvement from three different elements is essential:

1. Public and private services that are universally and locally available: health, caregiving, education, culture, transport, resident services, and electronic administration.
2. Co-responsibility in the private sector, through actions focused on resident awareness and especially on children, adolescents, and young adults.
3. Co-responsibility in the working environment, with awareness and support from labour-related organizations in adopting the conciliation measures, always from a perspective of equality. In other words, without the plan becoming a formula to perpetuate the traditional role of women.

We also believe it is important to emphasize the role of local administrations and their initiatives in serving as examples in terms of conciliation. As organizations of workers, the municipal governments must "lead by example", putting into effect and maintaining conciliation measures for their own personnel, but without allowing this to cause a reduction in the quality and level of services provided for the residents. On the contrary, these should be seen to improve.

However, in order to general real changes in culture (understood to mean the habitual practices and attitudes of the people) by means of acquisition of new values and new models for organizing time and work, it is important to take into account the need for an exchange of experiences among the municipal governments that are developing conciliation plans.

Another of this project's fundamental objectives is therefore to promote the exchange of experiences among the participating municipal governments. This will be especially interesting when taking into account the project's transnational nature, which will undoubtedly allow analysis of the "exportability" of certain solutions put into operation in very different geographic and social environments, such as Spain and Norway.

Along these lines, another important initiative to develop will be creation of a network of Spanish locations for development and implementation of conciliation plans. This will take place by organizing a conference allowing first-hand knowledge to be shared regarding the solutions developed and adapted to each particular case, as well as results that may be achieved under each plan. This network will also serve as a forum for exchange. It will allow sharing of problems and difficulties as well as the solutions and initiatives that contribute to the most effective and efficient application of this principle in the future experiences of the municipal governments, as well as those of the societal agents, in the locations where the development of conciliation plans is taking place.

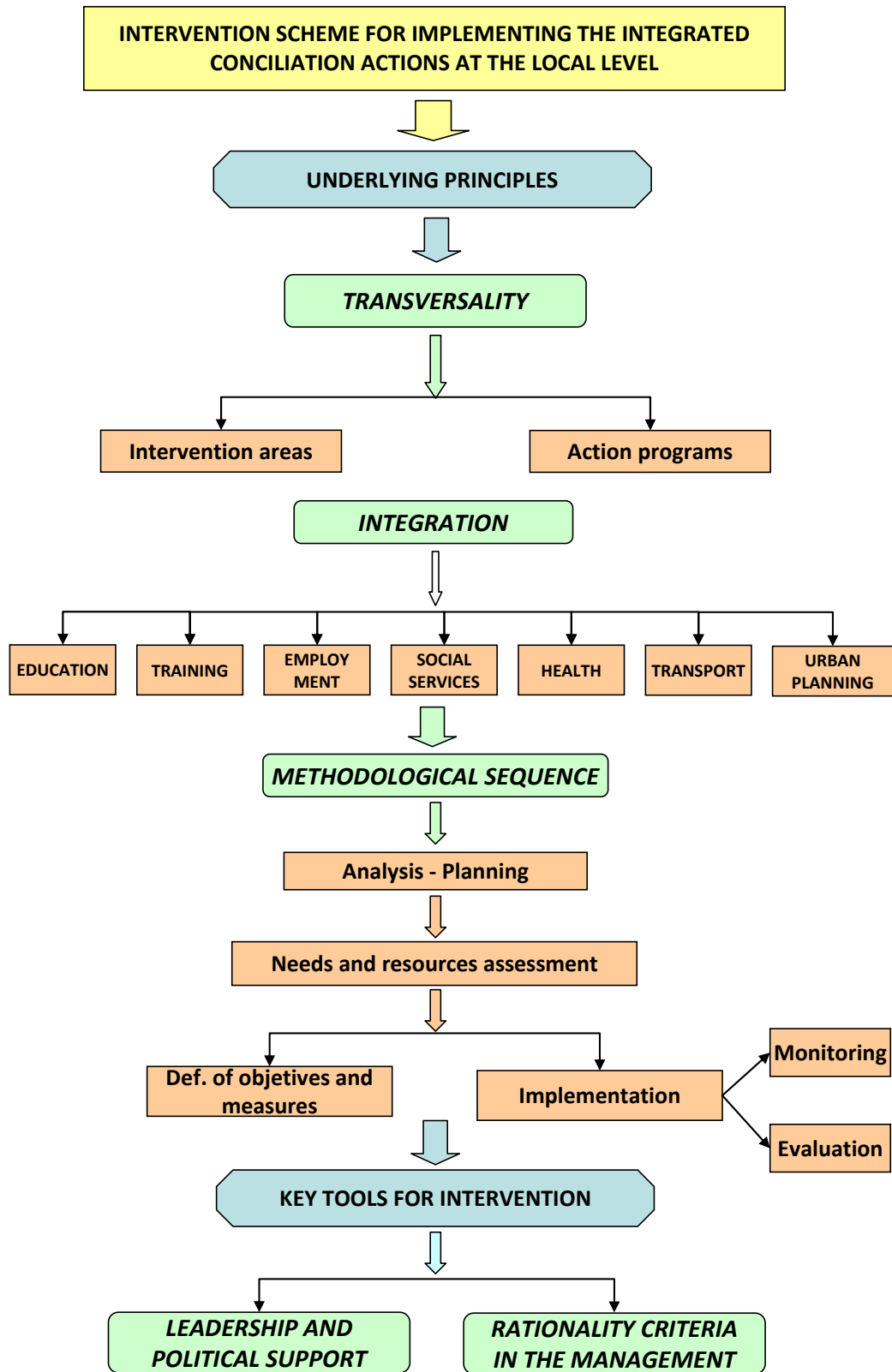
In addition to the objectives already mentioned, the project also wants to go a bit further in this stage, since it will provide special incentives and technical (and even economic) support for putting measures and activities into practice when they are shown to make a real contribution to personal, family, and professional life balance. Such initiatives may include, for example, promotion of childcare centres at industrial parks, agreements to regulate and harmonize



work schedules in the municipal setting, creation of time banks, or activities focused on education and awareness on the subjects of conciliation and co-responsibility.

Also along these lines, special consideration will be given to initiatives considered especially novel or interesting, or that are thought to have especially strong applicability in other settings ("exportability"). Of course, these initiatives must be developed within the adapted framework based on prior diagnostic studies, which will determine the special needs, conditions, and resources (services) that a given city may possess.

The following diagram shows the fundamental elements and areas that make up the intervention scheme for implementing the integrated conciliation actions, which are discussed further in the following section:



## **WORK PLAN**

In order to achieve the objectives described in the previous section, the project will be structured into a preliminary phase and then seven subsequent phases:

- **PRELIMINARY PHASE**

When developing this project, it is considered essential to take into account results of the experiences that took place between 2008 and 2011. Therefore, participation of municipal governments that took part in those experiences will be required, with the cities involved submitting an internal evaluation report that reflects the main achievements and insufficiencies detected within the framework of the project.

These reports will be analysed and three or four cases where the measures put into practice are thought to have special value will be selected. The assistance necessary to produce a detailed evaluation of these results will be provided, in accordance with the specific methodology that may be of interest for execution of the project.

The results of this evaluation will be incorporated as "ingredients" when designing and implementing the new project.

- **FIRST PHASE**

The project itself will begin with selection of 12 Spanish and 2 Norwegian municipal governments that will take part in the experience.

The Spanish municipal governments will be selected from among those that fulfil a series of requirements based on the following criteria, which in all cases will be agreed-upon and confirmed with the FEMP:

- a) Population. Three population categories will be established to represent three types of cities (small, medium, and large), taking into account that the population of the cities selected should not be too small (lacking the necessary infrastructure) or too large (unreasonable for the objectives of this project).
- b) Employment. The unemployment rate in the participating municipalities should be within the second and third quartiles (0.25-0.75) in terms of the national rate.
- c) Territorial. A maximum degree of territorial distribution will be covered, with this aspect including the Autonomous Communities to which the three or four municipal governments participating in the preliminary phase belong.

The municipal governments that take part in the project will be selected from among those that submit applications and that comply with the requirements above, also taking into account their capacity to manage the project and their verified interest in the subject of equal opportunity. This will require a project report that provides evidence of the means they have available and the activities related to equality the municipal government has carried out in recent years.

Once the municipal governments have been selected, the final group of agents participating will be identified for each case. A diagnostic report on the initial situation will be produced for each city, which will compile the information necessary in terms of the legislation in effect concerning conciliation and the existing measures for conciliation. Specifically, this information will include data on personnel from the various businesses that will be included in the plans, as well as information on the city's entities and institutions and their actions in relation to conciliation. This information will allow the measures incorporated in

the conciliation plans that will then be produced next, to be adjusted to the city's actual needs and resources.

In order to enhance synergies and analyse the viability of implementing a variety of initiatives in the various contexts, appropriate technical consulting will be obtained. A network will also be created for exchanging information among all of the project's municipal governments and participating agents, both for performance of the diagnostic study and for production of the plans.

Once plans have been designed, they will be implemented with the active participation of all agents involved.

Each of the municipal governments can receive economic assistance up to a maximum amount of 30,000 Euros, which will be used to put actions that are considered especially relevant and of special interest into operation, such as the exercise of best practices exportable to other settings.

In addition, if considered necessary, the municipal governments that participated in the 2008-2011 projects and that participated in the preliminary phase of this project can receive economic assistance. This will be used for putting into operation any measures of special interest that may have remained incomplete at the end of the previous project, or that could not be adequately developed after the end of the project due to insufficient economic or human resources. The maximum amount for this assistance will also be 30,000 Euros.

In a complementary manner, all municipal governments participating in the project, including those that participated in the preliminary phase, will be offered the possibility of having an awareness campaign designed by the Red Cross installed in their city, on the subject work and family life balance:

<http://tecorrespondenoscorresponde.org/>

- SECOND PHASE

In this phase, the selection of the two Norwegian municipal governments that will take part in the experience will begin.

As with the Spanish municipal governments that will participate in this new stage of the project, the Norwegian participants will be selected based on population, employment, and territorial criteria, in this case as established by KS. The capacity of a city to manage the project and a verifiable interest in subjects related to equal opportunities will also be considered.

As with the Spanish municipal governments, once the Norwegian municipal governments have been selected, the final agents participating will be identified in each case. A diagnostic study of the initial situation will take place for each city, which will compile the information necessary in terms of legislation in effect concerning conciliation and the existing measures for conciliation in the city. Specifically, this information will include data on the personnel of the various businesses that will be included in the plans, as well as information on the entities and institutions in the city and their actions in relation to conciliation. This information will allow the measures incorporated in the conciliation plans that will then be produced next to be adjusted to the city's actual needs and resources.

Suitable technical consulting will be obtained both for performance of the diagnostic study and for production of the plans.

Once the plans have been designed, they will be implemented with active participation of all agents involved.

- THIRD PHASE

The Institute of Woman, as the promoter of public policies in the area of gender equality, and more specifically on matters of personal, family, and professional life balance, will organize an inaugural conference once the selection process has taken place for the municipal governments that will participate in the project through the design, development, and implementation of external conciliation plans in their cities. In addition to being institutional in nature in terms of its official introduction of the project with the presence of government officials, this conference has been conceived as a scenario for exchanging experiences and innovative ideas as well as an open space for discussion by means of a round table session. Attendees will include city government representatives from Spain as well as other countries, who will present pioneering experiences in the area of personal, family, and professional life balance, as well as representatives from business associations and unions. There will also be poster presentations on the various aspects of conciliation produced by university researchers and professors with experience related to the study and evaluation of conciliation measures, obstacles that tend to be encountered when these are applied, and the advantages that they can confer, as well as the status of these issues in various environments and locations. There will also be a presentation on the project's initiation, where the planned activities and expected results from the project's execution will be explained. There will also be a forum for exchange of experiences and debate.

- **FOURTH PHASE**

A full-day workshop will be held where the Institute for Women, with the support of the FEMP, will invite all of the Spanish municipal governments selected to participate in the project by designing, developing, and implementing conciliation plans in their localities. The municipal governments

that participated in the project in 2008-2011 will also be invited so that they can share their experiences.

At this meeting, the basic conditions for beginning work on the plans will be established and scheduling will take place for the periods and objectives. Initiatives and the problems that could be encountered by each of the participants when putting the plans into effect in each of their localities will also be discussed. This meeting is also conceived as a space for exchanging experiences and best practices related to personal, family, and professional life balance, where all parties participating in the design, development, and implementation of the conciliation plans produced, including those carried out between 2008 and 2011, will have an opportunity to express their concerns, share common problems and possible solutions, and discuss obstacles they have faced and lessons they have learned by overcoming them. This will also be the appropriate venue for discussing innovative proposals included in the conciliation plans or generated from them.

This workshop will help to establish a network of municipalities for putting the conciliation plans into operation. The need to create this network arose from the study of the results of the earlier project, since all of the municipalities that participated were in agreement that a communication network needed to be created among the municipal governments. This would make it possible to share common difficulties they had encountered, compare positive and negative experiences when putting the measures included in the plans into practice, finding joint solutions, and fundamentally, establishing a flow of communication that will be very useful when putting the conciliation measures into operation in the various locations participating in this project.

- FIFTH PHASE



This phase will consist of two study visits. One of these will consist of a study visit to Norway by a Spanish committee made up of representatives from the partner organizations (Institute of Women and the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces -- FEMP) and local entities. This visit will take place in order to allow up-close knowledge of a selection of initiatives and experiences being promoted on the subject of conciliation in the scope of local Norwegian settings (specifically, in the two locations selected to put conciliation plans into operation), as well as to observe possible differences with the Spanish locations when applying the designed conciliation plans and putting them into effect.

A Norwegian committee made up of representatives from the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) will make a visit to Spain. In a similar way, this visit will allow study and more detailed understanding of the initiatives and experiences taking place in the Spanish locations in terms of the development of the external conciliation plans within the context of this project.

These study visits will allow an exchange of experiences and will allow the degree of development of the plans by the Spanish and Norwegian municipal governments to be compared. This will act as a mechanism to assist with tracking and evaluation of the difficulties and the results obtained at the time these activities occur.

- SIXTH PHASE

A final conference with an international nature will be held, where the conclusions and results obtained from development of the project will be presented along with the accomplishments and challenges for the future in the area of conciliation.

An assessment summarizing the events and the lessons learned will be produced to allow the results obtained during the project's execution to be transferred to other settings where they may be applicable.

In this context, the conference's subject of analysis will be the experiences that have been accumulated throughout the entire project, covering the challenge of conciliation from both the sociological and economic points of view. This will provide awareness of the various initiatives that the local entities in the participating countries have developed in relation to the subject, and will open up a discussion of the operations, their results, and the possibilities for transferring these practices to other geographic contexts. The process, the methodology employed, and the results of the project will be explained by means of the conciliation plans developed for the Spanish and Norwegian municipal governments.

This meeting will also endeavour to provide deeper insight into the differences between the Spanish and Norwegian perspectives on the subject of harmonization of their residents' personal, family, and professional spheres, as well as the different strategies used to confront this challenge in the local settings. This will allow the conclusions of this project to be used to develop new goals for incorporating a richer diversity of ideas and viewpoints in both countries.

This final conference will also allow an exchange of experiences, and just as in the inaugural conference, the attendees will include representatives of government authorities, the Institute for Women, the collaborating entities, the municipal governments, and the societal agents that have participated in development of the project. The participation of representatives from various countries with experience in the subject of conciliation will also be invited, along

with university researchers and personnel with established knowledge of the subject.

This meeting will conclude with the presentation of conclusions about the evaluation of the project, and the lessons learned will be discussed. This will help make up the framework for applying optimal solutions in the future that have been obtained from the project's development, not only during implementation of future conciliation plans, but also for inclusion in policies oriented towards promotion of conciliation at the local level.

- SEVENTH PHASE

The project will have a final phase for publication and distribution of results, which will also take place during various phases of its development.

The activities focused on publishing and distributing information will receive major support from the project's website, which will be developed from the very beginning and which will be interactive in nature. It will include all activities carried out during the project and provide information about the entities involved in the project's development. It will contain a bibliography and links of interest on the subject of personal, family, and professional life balance. Another section of the website will allow press releases related to the project's activities to be publicized.

Articles will also be published in the FEMP newsletter to provide further information about the project and its activities. Press releases will be published in various media outlets to provide information on specific actions, and e-mail will be used at various points throughout the project to allow information to be exchanged and distributed. These e-mails will be sent to all municipal governments that may be interested in this information, with this task being carried out collaboratively by the FEMP and the Institute of Women.

Finally, a final report will be produced in order to provide public access to the results and to distribute the knowledge generated from the experiences of carrying out the conciliation plans in the various locations. This report will be able to include contents related to the methodology, which will prove to be useful for allowing the conciliation measures put into effect in this project to be expanded into other locations.

## **EXPECTED RESULTS**

- Expected results from the preliminary phase:

As discussed above, the preliminary phase is oriented towards obtaining maximum information from the municipal governments that took part in the project carried out from 2008-2011, then incorporating this information as

"ingredients" in the development of the conciliation plans developed as part of the present project.

The results expected from this phase are therefore related to obtaining as much information as possible from the evaluation reports submitted by the municipal governments that have indicated their interest in advancing in this area after participating in the previous experience. Information will also be obtained from the evaluation and impact reports for the three or four cities given required support under the scope of this new project because of their special relevance or interest.

The final product from this preliminary phase will be a report that contains the main conclusions of these evaluations, emphasizing above all those elements that should be taken into consideration when carrying out final design of the plans that will be used in the new project.

- Expected results from the first and second phases:

The purpose of these phases is to:

- Identify the participating municipal governments (12 Spanish and 2 Norwegian).
- Identify the parties that will participate in the design and implementation of each of the plans.
- Obtain specific diagnostic studies of the situations for each of these.
- Design plans that are appropriate for the needs, situations, and resources as detected in the diagnostic studies, incorporating the experience of the earlier municipal governments (as described in the previous section).

The most highly emphasized products in these phases are therefore the diagnostic reports for the 14 participating municipal governments (as well as any other plans produced "ad hoc"), in accordance with the needs and conditions detected for each of these and with the participation of all parties involved.

Once the contents of each of the plans are negotiated among the various parties, the entry into operation of the specific conciliation measures will be considered, with at least the most interesting ones being eligible for support.

Finally, during these phases, an effort will be made to promote greater awareness among the residents on the subject of conciliation, with the awareness campaign designed by the Red Cross installed in each of the 12 participating Spanish municipalities and in the three or four participants in the project developed between 2008 and 2011 that have shown an interest. This campaign's main action is the display of images and cartoons in public locations that are designed to promote awareness of the consequences that a lack of co-responsibility can have for society as a whole, but especially for women in the job market.

- Expected results from the third phase:

There will be a round table discussion held during the inaugural conference where pioneering measures and actions related to conciliation will be discussed, whether these have been carried out in Spain or in other countries. Afterwards, a report will be produced to compile the best practices expressed as well as conclusions of the discussion that will have been generated by the exhibitions and presentations.

- Expected results from the fourth phase:

The main result expected from this phase is the exchange of information, not only among the parties involved in the project but also including information provided by the municipal governments that participated in the previous experience and any other knowledge that may be contributed by persons with expertise in this area.

The exchange of common experiences will allow innovative ideas to be generated in order to overcome new obstacles.

It will also establish the foundations for creating a network among the participating Spanish municipalities.

- Expected results from the fifth phase:

This phase's main objective is to verify that the various plans have been put into operation. Problems that may have arisen can be solved through sharing solutions discovered.

After the visit of the Spanish representatives to Norway and the Norwegian representatives to Spain, reports will be produced that will reflect the degree of development of the conciliation plans and results being obtained in each phase.

- Expected results from the sixth phase:

The objective to be fulfilled by the end of this project is to achieve an increase in co-responsibility in the municipalities participating in the experience, through the entry into operation of various actions directed towards the promotion of conciliation in the work, personal, and family spheres.

At the end of the project, a large concluding conference will be held with an international attendance. Although it may still be too early to speak of the positive impacts achieved by the project, it will be an appropriate venue for a common discussion of the challenges that have been laid out, objectives accomplished, and solutions adopted for solving problems that may have arisen, and for presenting the first results obtained along with the main conclusions and recommendations for the future.

In particular, the implementation and results of the actions considered most novel or important within the scope of the project (and which as such have received support for their entry into operation) will be evaluated.

All of this will be detailed in a final report.

- Expected results from the seventh phase:

Throughout the entire development of the project, the Equilibrio-Balance website will give visibility to the actions that are being carried out and will provide information about the participants and their results.

Press releases will also be issued to the media and be published in the FEMP newsletter.

All of this will give visibility to the measures put into operation under this project and support a more general awareness (and improved awareness for local institutions in particular) of the need for personal, family, and professional life balance.



## **CONCLUSION**

The Equilibrio-Balance project has been conceived as an effective instrument for public intervention in the local setting, with a clear objective that goes beyond the traditional dual focus of conciliation (fulfilment of family and professional obligations). It promotes the implementation of an authentic policy for well-being and organization of our time, without the need to overlook any of our needs for recreation or for personal and/or family caregiving, while avoiding interference with our professional obligations as well.