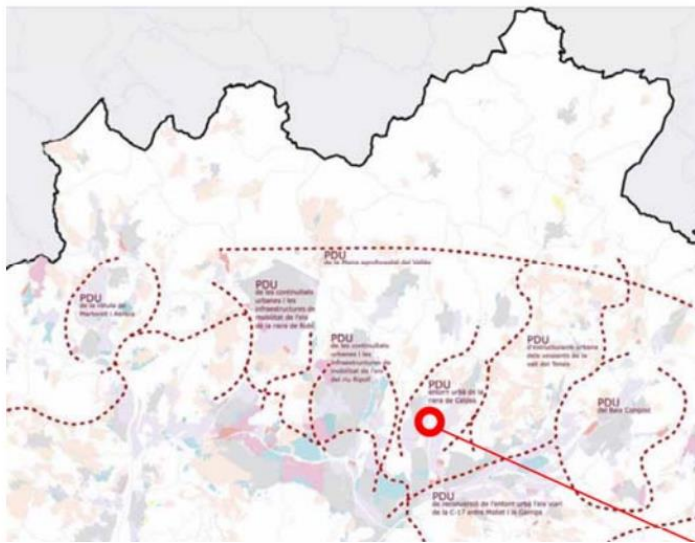




Resituating the Local in Cohesion and Territorial Development



Case Study Report
Eix de la Riera de Caldes
Association of Municipalities for a Coordinated Local
Development,
Spain

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Table of Contents

List of Figures.....	iv
Abbreviations	v
Executive Summary	1
1. Introduction	3
2. Methodological Reflection.....	5
3. The Locality	6
3.1. Territorial Context and Characteristics of the Locality	6
3.2. The Locality with regards to Dimension 1&2.....	8
4. The Action	11
4.1. Basic Characteristics of the Action.....	11
4.2. The Action with regards to Dimensions 3-5.....	12
5. Final Assessment: Capacities for Change	17
6. Conclusions	21
7. References.....	24
8. Annexes	26
8.1. List of Interviewed Experts	26
8.2. Stakeholder Interaction Table	26
8.3. Maps and photos.....	27

List of Figures

Figure 1. Municipalities of La Riera de Caldes. Source: Riera de Caldes, 2019	6
Figure 2. Structures of governance.	13
Figure 3. Riera de Caldes landscape. It is characterised as a continuum of industrial estates. Source: L'informatiu 2018 http://www.staperpetua.org/linformatiu/index.php/economia/8572-unes-3-500-empreses-operen-a-l-eix-de-la-riera-de-caldes	27

List of Tables

Table 1: Basic socio-economic characteristics of Eix de la Riera de Caldes. Source: Eix de la Riera de Caldes Observatory, 2018.....	7
Table 2: Basic socio-economic characteristics of Eix de la Riera de Caldes. Source: Eix de la Riera de Caldes Observatory, 2018.....	7

Abbreviations

AMERC	Associació de Municipis de l'Eix de la Riera de Caldes – Association of Municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldes
DIBA	<i>Diputació de Barcelona</i> – Barcelona Diputation
EC	European Commission
EFRD	European Fund for Regional Development
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
IDESCAT	<i>Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya</i> – Catalan Statistical Institute
LAU	Local Administrative Unit
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PTMB	<i>Pla Territorial Metropolità de Barcelona</i> – Metropolitan Territorial Plan of Barcelona
SOC	Social Occupation service of the Government of Catalonia

Executive Summary

Riera de Caldes is a set of municipalities in the Caldes river basin in the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. This area is characterised by a high concentration of economic and industrial activities. The six municipalities, administratively split between two different counties (Vallès Oriental & Vallès Occidental) are: Caldes de Montbui, La Llagosta, Palau-solità i Plegamans, Polinyà, Santa Perpètua de Mogoda and Sentmenat. These municipalities have different population size, from 8.000 to 25.000, and consequently, different dimensions of their city halls.

To collaborate and provide better services to local residents, companies and entrepreneurs alike, an Association of Municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldes (AMERC) was created. This association responds to the semi-formal union of these six municipalities, with the purpose of developing services and programmes supporting economic activity in the Caldes basin, aiming at contributing towards a more dynamic area in overall terms in the context of the Barcelona Metropolitan Region.

The initiative comes from the political will of the City Councils to work in a coordinated way in the need to be more efficient in the provision of services for the citizens. The action has motivated institutional changes, which ensure a fairer distribution of resources and opportunities among these municipalities. In this sense, the Association contributes to distributive justice as small municipalities can access to more resources and offer services that generally they could not have without this collaborations. For smaller municipalities, the Association allows accessing a much broader portfolio of services and resources. The institutional change in the way of working contributes also to improve the distributive justice as resources and opportunities are spread efficiently across Eix de la Riera de Caldes.

The municipalities, under the framework of the Association, are in position to offer better services to its companies and residents. Together they are stronger demographic and economic weight, compared to each of them individually. It can offer better services, but it can also target more specialised programmes with greater added value that indirectly increase the economic and labour opportunities for the citizenship of this area. The coordinated work of the Association facilitates that job offers extend throughout the entire Caldes basin (instead of being limited to a single municipality), citizens can access services offered by other municipalities, or the industrial polygons divided between different municipalities are managed and maintained better.

Working in the framework of the Association allows municipalities gaining competitiveness in accessing such opportunities. Many of such programmes have thresholds in terms of objective population sizes or economic criteria than can only be fulfilled when presenting tenders in the context of the full Association. Therefore, the Association allows increasing economic resources available for the Caldes basin, as the Association is stronger in attracting public subsidies than individual municipalities.

As Caldes basin, its municipalities have gained stronger relevance in the intermunicipal metropolitan governance networks. The Association has become a strong tool, which has increased the negotiation capacity with higher Administrative levels. It has recovered a local identity lost long time ago. The stakeholders believe in the project, despite different political colours in the city councils. Strong leadership and political will by members facilitates the engagement of the politicians, technicians or entrepreneurs working altogether in favour of the Caldes basin development.

Nevertheless, the association does not have a fixed structure. The presidency is itinerant, changing the technicians in charge of executing and resolving commands of the association and the programmes and initiatives in course. This hinders the stability of some of the initiatives that are carried out. The legal form of the Association states that it cannot receive funds by itself, neither having a formal technical structure. The association works through collaboration agreements. Therefore, each action that is carried out responds to an agreement between municipalities. This means a technical and financial complexity, especially for those municipalities that are smaller. This is seen as one of the main limitations of the action to reach and contribute to the procedural justice. In order to avoid these complexities related to the lack of formal structure, there has been initiated a reflexive process about the legal structure that the Association should have.

1. Introduction

Riera de Caldes is a set of municipalities in the Caldes river basin in the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. This area is characterised by a high concentration of economic and industrial activities. Many of the largest metropolitan industrial estates are located in the Caldes basin. Given their size, they are often split between different municipalities. At the same time, labour market services for job seekers, vocational training, and other economic support and local development competences are also split between the different municipalities. Administratively, Riera de Caldes is again split between two different counties (Vallès Oriental & Vallès Occidental).

To further collaborate and provide better services to local residents, companies and entrepreneurs alike, an Association of Municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldes (AMERC) was created. This association responds to the semi-formal union of six municipalities, with the purpose of developing services and programmes supporting economic activity in the Caldes basin, aiming at contributing towards a more dynamic area in overall terms in the context of the Barcelona Metropolitan Region.

Municipalities have different population size, from 8.000 to 25.000, and consequently, different dimensions of their city halls, and in particular, of their economic and job promotion departments. Capacities to provide services and to digest work load is different as well from one municipality to another, this later constituting a major challenge in terms of the Association management.

The six municipalities are: Caldes de Montbui, La Llagosta, Palau-solità i Plegamans, Polinyà, Santa Perpètua de Mogoda and Sentmenat.

The association is organised around four governance structures: the Presidency, the Executive Committee and the Technical Committee, the Assembly.

- The Presidency is itinerant, and every year it is hold by a different municipality, which assumes the role of legal authority of the association during this period of time.
- The Executive Committee is composed by political members of each municipality, and decides on the strategic lines of the Association, as well as actions to be promoted during the year.
- The Technical Committee is formed by technicians of each municipality, in the areas of economic promotion and employment, and is in responsible for materializing the activities, programmes and initiatives previously debated into the Executive Committee.
- The Assembly is only called exceptionally when emergency decisions need to be taken or at the tine a new Presidency is to be appointed

Ordinary work of the Association is assumed by the local technicians of the municipality holding the Presidency. Technicians in charge of executing and resolving commands change every year.

Users of services offered by the Association are mostly local entrepreneurs and companies, but also citizens working in the local labour market being offered different programs to improve their professional and training skills.

Programs and activities offered by the Association are often subsidized by the Employment Service of Catalonia (SOC) of the Catalan Government, and the Economic and Labour Services of the Barcelona Provincial Deputation (DIBA). Many of these occupational and company support programs are financed at the same by the European Social Fund (ESF). In fact, the SOC is the intermediary body of the ESF in Catalonia, responsible for managing and executing the resources of the ESF that are programmed, financed and executed within the framework of the Operational Program of Catalonia 2014-2020. In the same way, DIBA's programmes are often funded by the ESF, having a particular focus on the field of territorial development and local economic development.

When competing for funds delivered by SOC and DIBA, working in the framework of the Association allows municipalities gaining competitiveness in accessing such opportunities. Many of such programmes have thresholds in terms of objective population sizes or economic criteria than can only be fulfilled when presenting tenders in the context of the full Association, whereas individually are not met. Therefore, the Association allows increasing economic resources available for the Caldes basin, as the Association is stronger in attracting public subsidies than individual municipalities. For smaller municipalities, the Association allows accessing a much broader portfolio of services and resources.

Secondly, having all the municipalities together a stronger demographic and economic weight, compared to each of them individually, the Association is in position to offer better services to its companies and residents. The Association can also target more specialised services with greater added value (e.g. promotion of industry 4.0 practices, mobility electrification...) as the objective market for these services is larger in overall company numbers. Indirectly, this means the increase in the economic and labour opportunities for the citizenship of this area.

Local companies indicate that the coordinated work of the Association facilitates job offers spreading and disseminate broader along all the Caldes basin (instead of being limited to single municipalities), accessing services offered by another municipality other than theirs, or better managing and keeping up industrial estates divided among different municipalities.

Finally, some actors have pointed out that the Association has given texture to the previously blurred Caldes basin territorial collaboration area. It has recovered a local identity lost long time ago. As Caldes basin, its municipalities have gained stronger relevance in the intermunicipal metropolitan governance networks. The Association has proved to be a strong tool, increasing negotiation capacity with the higher Administrative levels.

In words of member representatives of the Association, *"establishing ourselves as an Association has opened up more doors and has allowed us to obtain more resources"*. Mayors in these municipalities insist that the Association *"has been a commitment of the city councils to revitalize the economy of our territory, joining forces and coordinating them, generating more economic activity, and inducing the establishment of larger numbers of companies, which again creates more job opportunities. At the end of the day, it increases the quality of life of all our residents"*.

2. Methodological Reflection

This case study was elaborated following the general principles of the RELOCAL case study guidelines.

The conducted interviews allowed for the possibility to know the opinions of different actors involved in the implementation of the action. We interviewed politicians, mayors and technicians from six different municipalities of the Caldes basin, as well as entrepreneurs and company managers located in this area.

Municipality technicians¹ interviewed did belong either to the employment and economic promotion departments, or to the finances department (*public intervention*). They were mainly coordinators of the services, who have a broader vision of the implementation process of the action beyond municipal limits.

The entrepreneurs interviewed have been involved in some of the projects brought up by the Association. The results of these interviews provide an external feedback on the Association activities and the increased bindings and relationship developed between the private sector and the local administration.

The interviews have been conducted following a questionnaire based on the questions of the case study guidelines. The questionnaire has been adapted according to the stakeholders' role, having a particular questionnaire for elected politicians, one for technicians and one for representatives of the private sectors (entrepreneurs and company managers).

The spatial scope of intervention responds to a semi-formal area of collaboration. The Association of municipalities in the Caldes basin does not have proper formal structure with legal entity. The spatial scope of the case study does not correspond to any formal county or regional administrative delimitations either. It remains a fuzzy geometry created bottom-up from the mutual interest of a set of municipalities sharing a relevant number of common challenges.

¹ Municipality technicians are public employees, which are in charge of the development of initiatives, programmes and actions within a municipality. The City Councils are composed by different departments, where there are one or more technicians. The number of them depends on the size of the municipality.

3. The Locality

3.1. Territorial Context and Characteristics of the Locality

Eix de la Riera de Caldes is composed by 6 municipalities: Caldes de Montbui, Llagosta, Palau-solità i Plegamans, Polinyà, Santa Perpètua de Mogoda and Sentmenat. Two of these municipalities belong to Vallès Oriental county (Caldes de Montbui and La Llagosta) and the others to Vallès Occidental (Palau-solità i Plegamans, Polinyà, Santa Perpètua de Mogoda and Sentmenat).

This area is located in the division between two counties, and over the years it has become a strategic axis of communications with the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona as well as with the rest of Catalan counties. Its geographical situation has led to the concentration of a high industrial activity and at the same time has favoured the demographic and occupational evolution of these municipalities. In this territory live more than 88.000 inhabitants, there are more than 42.000 jobs concentrated and nearly 3.000 companies and 32 industrial parks, with more than 1.000 companies.

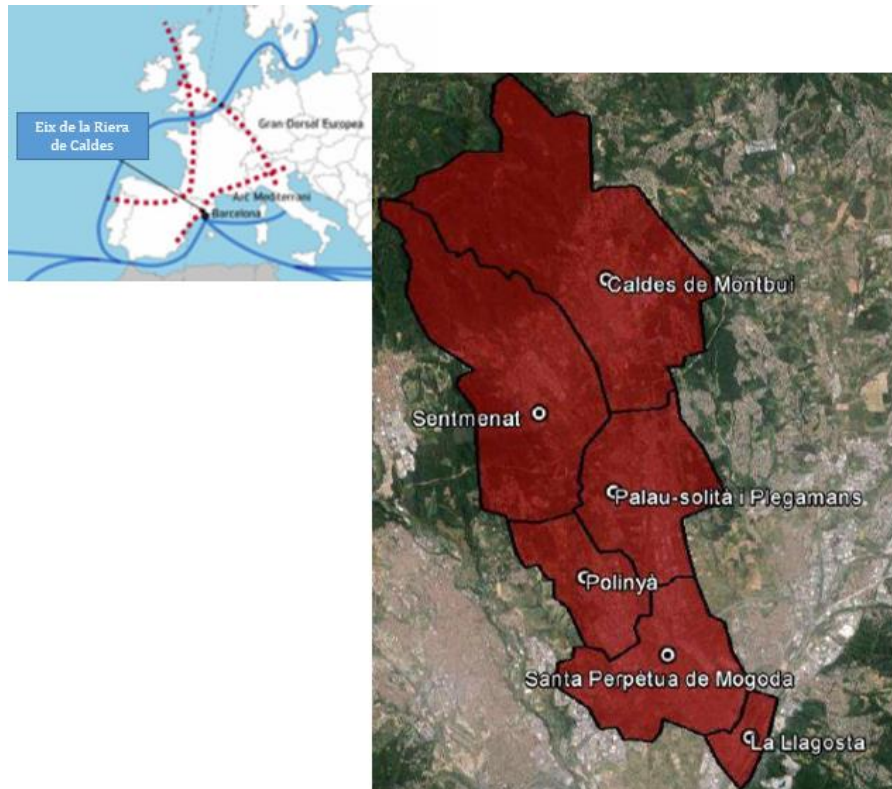


Figure 1. Municipalities of La Riera de Caldes. Source: Riera de Caldes, 2019

Name of Case Study Area	Eix de la Riera de Caldes
Size	108,8 km ²
Total population (2018)	88.503 inhabitants
Population density (2018)	813 hab./km ²
Level of development in relation to wider socio-economic context	Disadvantaged within a developed region, especially in relation to regional governance
Type of the region (NUTS3-Eurostat)	Urban
Name and Identification Code of the NUTS-3 area, in which the locality is situated (NUTS 3 Code(s) as of 2013)	ES511

Name and Identification Code of the NUTS-2 area, in which the locality is situated (NUTS 2 Code(s) as of 2013)	ES511
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Table 1: Basic socio-economic characteristics of Eix de la Riera de Caldes. Source: Eix de la Riera de Caldes Observatory, 2018

The six municipalities have similar demographic and economic features, which allows an aggregate analysis of this territorial area.

Municipality	Population (2018)	Km2	Density (hab./km2)
Caldes de Montbui	17.449	37,5	465,3
La Lagosta	13.367	3,01	4.440,8
Palau Solità i Plegamans	14.636	14,9	982,2
Polinyà	8.389	8,8	953,2
Santa Perpètua de Mogoda	25.705	15,8	1.626,8
Sentmenat	8.957	28,8	311,0
Eix Riera de Caldes	88.503 inhabitants	108,8 km2	813 hab/km2

Table 2: Basic socio-economic characteristics of Eix de la Riera de Caldes. Source: Eix de la Riera de Caldes Observatory, 2018

Riera de Caldes presents a pyramid of ages much younger regarding to Catalonia. Above all, there is more population in the range of 5-20 years, and between 40-49 years. In this territorial area there are approximately 62.000 people of working age (between 16 and 64 years old), which represents more than 65% of its resident population. At the same time, it has a higher population at childhood age than Catalan average (19% in Eix de la Riera de Caldes vs. 16% in Catalonia), and low population at retired age (15% vs. 18% in Catalonia).

This territory has a lower percentage of foreign population than in Catalonia or also than Barcelona province. The total number of people of foreign nationality does not reach 8%, while in Catalonia this percentage is close to 14%. The unemployment rate is around 11%, aligned with the rest of the province.

L'Eix de la Riera de Caldes represents 3,2% of the GDP of the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona, and 1,5% of Catalonia's GDP. The industrial sector is considered one of the main drivers for the development of this territory: 45,5% of the GVA corresponds to the industry, and 42% of the employment is also concentrated in industrial sector. About 80% of the employed population resides and works in the area.

On this area, there are more than 900 companies dedicated to industrial activities. This means that the industry represents almost 3 out of 10 existing companies in the field, 27% of the total. This is a much higher number than in Catalonia, where industry only accounts 10% of the total. But it is also higher than the value of the Vallès Occidental, where the industrial fabric is around 20%. By municipalities, Santa Perpètua de Mogoda has more industrial companies, with approximately 230. It has 13 industrial areas, followed by Polinyà. The municipalities of Riera de Caldes stand out clearly in the ranking of industrial municipalities of the Vallès (Occidental and Oriental).

The metal sector is the highlight of this industrial area in the total number of companies. But, like the jobs generated by the different industrial sectors, the chemical industry is the predominant one with approximately 4.500 workers, 19% of the total. After the chemical sector, the automotive and the metal industry stand out. It is noteworthy that there are approximately 240 industrial companies of high technological processes, according to the EUROSTAT classification. They represent 7,4% of the total number of companies in the

area. This is a much higher percentage than the rest of Vallès (3,9% in the Occidental and 4,4% in the Oriental), but also in the Barcelona province (2,1%).

However, over these years and after the economic crisis the number of companies located on this area has decreased. In any case, the drop in companies over the last decade (-18.9%) has been less than in the Vallès or in Catalonia, where the number of companies operating in the industry has decreased by 26,7%. In the last decade, jobs in the industry have also fallen.

The rate of university education is slightly lower in the Riera de Caldes than in the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. The percentage in this area is 21%, while in the Metropolitan regions it is 22.4%. On the other hand, in vocational training studies, the rates exceed the regional values.

The Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) is € 16.119 per inhabitant, a number lower than that of the province of Barcelona.

3.2. The Locality with regards to Dimension 1&2

Analytical Dimension 1: Perception of spatial (in-)justice within the locality

Despite being one of the most economically advantaged areas of the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona (RMB), the municipalities of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes believe that its territory still has some deficits. They believe that if they are able to overcome them, this area could be more competitive and attractive, and it could be generated more employment and new activities, and thus, it become *“one of the most productive region within RMB”*. These municipalities demanded an important economic role in the economic development of the Barcelona Metropolitan Region. The creation of the association responds to this idea, and since its constitution in 2014, the municipalities have been working to generate a more dynamic and attractive territory.

One of the main motivations for starting the informal collaborations among the municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldes, has been to deal with those problems that this territory considered it had, most of them of structural base, which require the interlocution with supramunicipal administrations such as Catalan Government or Spanish Government. The municipalities claim that *“traditionally it has been difficult to have fluent interlocutions with these regional and national bodies, especially if you persist individually”*. They consider that *“it is important to have good communication networks, roads and railways to increase our competitiveness...and for this reason, we should have direct contact with upper-level administrations, responsible for these infrastructures. You have to be very constant to achieve some improvements”*.

The coordinated work among these municipalities has been considered “very important” according to the members of association in order to acquire faster and better improvements about infrastructures, one of their main demands. The Mayors of this area believe that the insistence of a group of municipalities to the corresponding supramunicipal administrations has more strength than if these demands are made individually by one municipality. The Association points out that *“the diversion of the C59 through Palau-solità i Plegamans took 10 years to become a reality, but perhaps it would have taken longer or would not have been done if we hadn’t insisted persistently”*.

The municipalities of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes mention that there are still some needs and problems that the territory has, and have not been solved yet. According to them, they would be:

- The improvement of the infrastructures that allow the consolidation of the productive fabric of the area by the upper-level administrations with the correspondent competences.
- The improvement and promotion of the use of collective transport, especially to the industrial areas.
- The increase of Regulated Professional Training offer in this area, and the improvement of the opportunities to access into Occupational Vocational Training programmes.
- The creation and consolidation of a companies-territory cooperation space for the promotion of innovation and technological development.
- The rationalization of industrial and commercial available land in the territory for the implementation of new economic activities.
- The implementation of actions to support local business and entrepreneurship, and the establishment of mechanisms for the promotion the competitiveness of the area from coordinated work between public administrations, social and private actors.
- The improvement of the effectiveness of the active employment policies that are implemented in the territory.

These municipalities, with a strong industrial background, insist in the promotion of industrial sector by Catalan Government or Spanish Government. They point out that the efforts made by these bodies have not been enough to reactivate the industrial sector after economic crisis. The funds dedicated to improve the transport or communication infrastructure is neither enough. In addition, they think that the investment for improving the professional training about industrial specialities is also still insufficient. These municipalities indicate that *“the coordination between the professional training and educational institutions could help to consolidate the industrial sector in this area”*.

According to the members of the AMERC, *“La Riera de Caldes is an area with huge number of potentialities, and we are working for consolidating them. But we need the support, technical and economic, of upper-level administrations to contribute to generate a more equal Barcelona Metropolitan Region, independently where a municipality is located”*.

The municipalities from the AMERC belong to different regional councils. According to the members of the AMERC, *“these regions are very heterogeneous. Our municipalities share less features with large cities as Sabadell or Terrassa or with smaller municipalities such as Gualba or Montseny. We are far from these places. Our proximity helps to implement actions following the dynamics of the Riera de Caldes territory”*.

Analytical Dimension 2: Tools and policies for development and cohesion

The services of Economic Promotion of each municipality are responsible for designing and executing actions for the promotion of the municipal economy, for the support of entrepreneurship, for the promotion of employment and the professional improvement of its inhabitants. At local level, the municipalities work actively to develop initiatives and programs, which favour the improvement of the local economy, social cohesion and also the improvement of territorial cohesion, both at the regional level and in its metropolitan context.

Since the constitution of the AMERC, several initiatives have been launched, most of them based on economic issues. The association works to promote the increase and improvement of employment in this territory and to provide technical and financial support to companies located along the Eix de la Riera de Caldes.

The actions carried out by the Association of Municipalities are related to the European strategies for the sustainable development identified by the European Commission. Some of the priorities are included in the European Strategy 2020², in those aspects referred to the economic growth and full employment of European territories. In this way, the initiatives and actions that are carried out from the association try to answer some challenges of the EU. Among the priorities of Europe in terms of employment, growth, justice and democratic change, the Eix de la Riera de Caldes works "for boosting employment rates, growth and investment", and "for an economy with a solid industrial sector". Thus, the actions launched by the AMERC, are in line with the objectives of the EU. These actions are addressed to increase the employment rates of these municipalities, and to consolidate the industrial sector within this area. The EU also promotes a European economy based on a high level and high quality of workers' formative education. From the AMERC, there are several actions that seek to improve the training and professional level of the employees of industrial sector, with the increase of their capacity to use ICT.

The actions carried out in the Riera de Caldes are co-financed by Barcelona Deputation, Catalan Government, Ministry of Employment, European Social Funds and City Councils of this area (RieraVista, 2015).

A large number of these programs are developed with the support of the Employment Service of Catalonia (SOC) and Barcelona Deputation (DIBA), from the European Social Funds (ESF) that those institutions receive. Regional institutions like SOC are in charge for the redistribution of European funds to the municipalities. The SOC finances the development of instruments, itineraries and actions to support the generation of new activities and jobs, searching to improving their quality. The SOC also supports activities that have a strategic and long-term perspective in the territories, such as those that the AMERC develops. The constitution of the Association itself implies a strategic vision of the territory for the improvement of its economic structure, as well as activities such as industry 4.0, which means changes on the productive base of the territory.

The way to work coordinated at local level, developed by the Association of La Riera de Caldes, is a response to a process initiated by the Catalan Government to deploy a new organizational structure of the Public Employment Services. According to this strategy, territorial collaboration is prioritized for the allocation of funds to finance services and projects on economic development at regional level. Thus, the Catalan Government is working towards grouping municipalities or territories that share common needs, as is the case of Eix de la Riera de Caldes.

² European Strategy 2020, adopted at the European Council in 2010, provides the general framework for the coordination of economic and employment policies of the Member States of EU.

4. The Action

4.1. Basic Characteristics of the Action

The Association of Municipalities of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes (AMERC) is an association of six municipalities located in the area of the Riera de Caldes. The six municipalities are: Caldes de Montbui, La Llagosta, Palau-solità i Plegamans, Polinyà, Santa Perpètua de Mogoda and Sentmenat.

Given the geographic proximity between them and their socioeconomic similarities, in 2012 these six municipalities decided to establish collaborative strategies for the economic and employment promotion, creating the Association of Municipalities of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes (AMERC). Two years later, in 2014, they formalized these collaborations with the Declaration of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes, through which they committed to:

- a) support companies and entrepreneurs
- b) increase the offer of vocational training
- c) improve communications infrastructure between industrial areas

The AMERC points out that *"the announcement of the Department of Territory of Catalan Government, which considered the Riera de Caldes as one of 10 strategic areas of Catalonia for the economic recovery, influenced in the decision to formalize these relations and establish ourselves as association. This is a decision that we supported at that time, and in which we continue to believe fully"*.

According to the mayor of Santa Perpètua *"the agreement to join and to establish the AMERC was a very important step forward. From the experience of collaborative work, informal cooperation and the desire to develop more and best actions and programmes for the economic promotion of our region, we concluded that we needed an efficient and dynamic management tool to go further and to have more strength in front of other administrations. L'AMERC was that tool, which accomplished these goals"*. The association is composed by an Executive Committee, a Technical Committee, an Assembly and a Presidency, which is itinerant among the mayors of each municipality. In these Committees, all the municipalities are represented. The objectives of the Declaration are to promote and increase the offer of vocational training; to support the local business and entrepreneurship; and improve employment policies.

With the establishment of the AMERC and its following Declaration, the six municipalities share these objectives to promote common interests, actions and services that contribute to its economic development as well as to increase employment rates in the area.

Since its inception, the initiative is working to revive this area from an economic point of view and contribute to the territorial cohesion. At the same time, the union of these municipalities suppose the increase of the opportunities to have access to funds. The coordination of economic promotion and employment services of each municipality allows to increase the critical mass of the beneficiary population of each project, as well as to improve the opportunities for success of the entrepreneurial initiatives of the territory. Over the years, the initiative has worked to turn the Riera de Caldes into a relevant area within the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona.

4.2. The Action with regards to Dimensions 3-5

Analytical Dimension 3: Coordination and implementation of the action in the locality under consideration

The Department of Territory and Sustainability of the Catalan Government considers La Riera de Caldes as one of the main strategic areas of Catalonia, reflecting this in the Territorial Metropolitan Plan of Barcelona (PTMB). The PTMB determines that it is a potential area for territorial development as well as a new economic centrality given the relatively balanced number of municipalities, the industrial dynamics and especially the opportunities for a future economic growth. The proposal of a strategic area raised the formalization of agreements between the municipalities of La Riera de Caldes to make it possible and consolidate the plan's commitment.

Following the determinations of the PTMB, and other strategic plans at the municipal level that also identified La Riera de Caldes as a pole of economic and industrial activity with a potential growth, the municipalities of this area decided to establish new synergies of work for promoting actions, which fought against unemployment rates and decreasing industrial activity caused by the economic crisis. The mayors of these municipalities emphasize that *"we had been working individually, with some occasional collaborations among us. But given the social and economic context, we thought it was a good time to join and work together to be more effective as well as efficient"*.

In 2012, the first joint work initiatives between these municipalities began, and in 2013 they signed the Declaration of the Riera de Caldes, a formal commitment to cooperation between the municipalities. The objectives of this declaration were to increase the vocational training offer, to create new measures to support industrial sector and entrepreneurship, and to improve the effectiveness of active employment policies at the local level, and in the face of the higher level administrations, to demand the improvement of infrastructures and more technical and economic support.

Two years later, in 2014 the AMERC was formally constituted. From here, the municipalities would work together to add efforts to make the Riera de Caldes a *"relevant economic and industrial area within the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona"* such as it is pointed out by some technicians from these municipalities. Its creation and consolidation has been possible thanks to the political will of municipalities and the technical efforts to launch projects that have a bigger impact on a wider public. The different mayors and technicians of the AMERC highlight that *"they have joined forces beyond the political programme of the government of each city council, because what is really important is to work for the common interests of the territory for achieving the improving of the local economy and, ultimately, the quality of life of our citizens"*.

The process to create and consolidate the association has not been "easy", according to some Coordinators of Employment and Economic Promotion of these municipalities. They explain that *"It was difficult to find a formula that could group all municipalities as a legal entity. Finally, an association was the easiest way to work together. But the management sometimes is being complicated, and require of understanding between all the members before any project or programme execution"*. Even though these complexities, the implementation of the action is viewed by the members of the AMERC as a process of learning on which aspects should be improved and on which aspects should be made bigger efforts.

According to members of AMERC, joining forces has also allowed them to have a new role within the metropolitan context, which allows more options to request funds, and greater

opportunities to receive them from administrations such as the Generalitat and the Deputation of Barcelona. Thus, the technicians mention that *"when it comes to presenting projects, making demands or obtaining resources it is more efficient if we work as a group than if we do it separately"*.

The AMERC works based on Executive Committee, where there is a representative from each City Council. According to its Statutes that regulate the association, the presidency is rotating, sequentially accepted between the municipalities that are part of the association according to the number of inhabitants of each one. The mayor of the corresponding council holds the position to be the president of the association.

The management body corresponds to the Technical Commission and annually the assembly is constituted, with which the change of presidency is made and the continuity of the association is reaffirmed. Thus, through the meetings of the assembly, every year members of the AMERC renew their will to form part of the association and the objectives of working together and collaborating for the improvement of their territory, generating more jobs and new industrial activities within this area. The meetings of the assembly also set the annual calendar of meetings of the different bodies that are part of the body: Assembly, Executive Committee and Technical Committee.

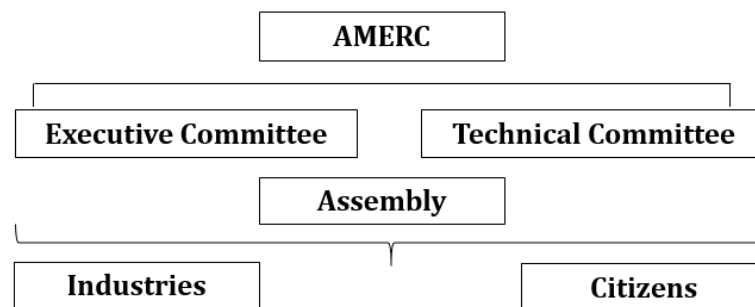


Figure 2. Structures of governance.

However, this association does not act in a legal way. It is meant that the municipality that holds the presidency acts on behalf of the members of AMERC. This municipality is the one who request a grant or executes a project. For example, the municipality that presides over the association requests a subsidy to the Deputation of Barcelona or Catalan Government on behalf of all municipalities, and then make the corresponding budgetary partitions according to a series of requirements that they have previously set (population, activity, number of industries...). In this way, the actions that are carried out are supra-municipal, whose implementation responds to an agreement, in which the rights and obligations of the six Town Councils are defined, as well as the responsibilities of each one related to the execution of the projects. With each action that is being implemented, a regulatory agreement is approved whereby the amount of budget each member must provide is defined.

This way of working, according to the technicians, *"has a great technical complexity in legal and economic terms, especially for those smaller municipalities"*. They point out that assuming certain projects implies for technicians, and especially, for the municipal auditors, some economic and technical difficulties. They must apply for subsidies or other aid programs that sometimes exceed their own budgets.

At the same time, however, the municipalities obtain more technical and economic capacity with their adhesion to the association. This is the case, for example, of Sentmenat,

a municipality with a population of around 9.000, which can assume the development of certain actions by accessing more economic and technical resources thanks to being part of the AMERC, despite of the technical and legal complexity. Technicians agree the initiative is “highly positive”, and especially they point out that the small municipalities are the main beneficiaries of the positive effects of this coordinated way of work at supramunicipal level. Despite the *“complexity of the operational system to manage and execute the programmes and the activities”*, the mayors of these municipalities affirm that *“this association is an initiative that should serve to share concerns and resources to generate new opportunities, both from the field of the administration as from the industrial field”*.

Analytical Dimension 4: Autonomy, participation and engagement

The Association of Municipalities of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes is organized from the Technical Committee, Executive Committee and Assembly with representation of each one of the municipalities that are part of it as it is explained in the Dimension 3. The representation of the municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldes in a common organisation, in which they can share challenges and set up common work proposals, has allowed to move towards the formal constitution of a collaborative work between these different municipalities to respond to the specific needs of their territory.

At local level, each municipality has the autonomy to execute the actions they deem appropriate for the improvement of the labour and industrial situation within the municipal limits. However, through the AMERC, the municipalities, prior agreement between them, launch programmes and projects that have a supra-municipal scale, and therefore, it means the increase of their possible impact: the number of benefited users is higher as well as the industries that can have access to the services offered by the AMERC. The AMERC, and the projects it develops, are responsive to the interests that each municipality has in relation to its economic, educational and employment situation.

With the development of each action, entrepreneurs and industries are the main beneficiaries. They consider that the results of the Association is highly positive, it works well and offers a lot of resources. From the association point of view, work as Association contribute to know better the reality of the industrial sector or demands of the employment services users, strengthening the links between the administrative level and economic and social fabric of this territory. They underline that *“through the AMERC, companies or entrepreneurs expand their opportunities, create networks, new synergies of work...”*. Some entrepreneurs remark that through the association they have received training and technical support that *“can enhance our opportunities to growth”*.

The Executive Committee has given special emphasis on aspects such as harmonizing occupational and vocational training with the employment needs that the private sector of this area required. This has generated links between public sector through the economic promotion and employment services and private sector in order to supply better services to the users of the services and to the local companies. The AMERC also works for the improvement and consolidation of business network of this area. For this reason, the association pretends to maintain involve companies and entrepreneurs into the development strategy of the region through the organisation of regular activities with them, in which they can expose their needs.

However, the process to maintain involved in the economic sector has some difficulties, as mentioned by the technical members of the Association. This is confirmed by the entrepreneurs. They know that the AMERC offers many services and organises a lot of activities, but *“the daily work does not let us to have the enough time to review all the*

informative and practical materials that the association publishes". The AMERC pretends to maintain them involved through newsletters, but if technicians consider some programmes or activities interesting for some companies, they call personally. This is viewed positively by the entrepreneurs. The key issue as it is indicated by some technicians is "to balance the participation of the enterprises in order to maintain them engage into the economic development strategy of our territory, but without pressing them".

Analytical Dimension 5: Expression and mobilisation of place-based knowledge and adaptability

The action has a bottom-up origin. Although there is a supramunicipal plan, defined by Catalan Government, which highlights the importance of the area as a pole of economic development in the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona, the AMERC was born of the will of the municipalities to collaborate. It is born, then, from the local level.

The mayor of Santa Perpètua underlines that *"the role of local governments is essential to push forward initiatives, promote future projects and manage action programs that involve the social and economic actors of our territory for achieving successful results for our citizens and industrial sector".* They emphasize that "are open" to collaborate with other administrations and local agents to promote local development.

According to the technicians, *"the coordinated work has given us a new vision of our territory, the opportunities we have, the problems that we need to solve..."* They recognise the value of results achieved since the constitution of the association, especially the transversal cooperation between the technicians of different municipal services as well as with the political representatives' relations that they have been consolidating. *"Step by step, a common culture of work has been built between us"* is remarked by the technicians of these different municipalities. They also point out that *"the action has helped to change the idea that developing, exclusively, programmes for our municipality was the best way to provide services for the citizens".* The technicians defend that the formula developed by AMERC generates greater opportunities for the population of the Eix.

Many initiatives or projects cannot be developed by a single City Council, for technical or economical reason, making them inefficient. Especially, this is one of the problems that small municipalities suffer. They do not have enough resources to execute some initiatives that could be interesting. Being part of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes helps the smaller municipalities have the same possibilities of accessing the funds and being able to start work programs to improve their territorial development.

The action takes place in the area of Riera de Caldes. The Riera de Caldes basin is considered a functional area within the Barcelona Metropolitan Region. It is an area with a consolidated business fabric conformed by different industrial spaces (industrial estates) with a continuity between them. These municipalities share same economic features and industrial framework, having the same conditions to follow a jointly regional planning strategy and economic and employment policy harmonized at regional level.

Faced with this reality, and given the political and technical willingness to set up collaborative initiatives between the municipalities of this area, they decided to create the AMERC based on the reality of its territory. The AMERC responds to a "geographical logic" as some of the mayors of this area say. They synthesize that these municipalities have more in common, even though they belong to different regions. They specify that many times the supramunicipal institutions only take account of political jurisdictions (for example, to allocate funds). In this case, the "hard borders" are overcome and

municipalities from different regions *“can work together searching the efficiency of the actions developed”*.

The decisions taken at AMERC are the result of consensus among its members. The municipalities agree on the actions to be developed based on the needs that the territory requires regarding the economic or social situation.

The actions that can be developed are based on the reality of the territory. Therefore, they can be changing. The programs that run are based on the needs that the users of the economic promotion services and the companies require.

5. Final Assessment: Capacities for Change

Synthesising Dimension A: Assessment of promoters and inhibitors

Promoters

- **Tradition of working in a coordinated manner between local entities and the economic agents of the Caldes basin.** The municipalities of the Caldes basin had already been collaborating in fields as the economic promotion, in spite of the differences in the size of the town hall, the political colour or the population. With the constitution of the association, they gave shape to the previous territorial collaborations. The Association was understood as a way to formalize these agreements under an institutional framework.
- **Strong leadership and political will by original members.** This facilitated engagement of more sceptical municipalities in the Caldes basin. Initially, the idea of Caldes Basin had emerged from a bottom-up process of socioeconomic forward-thinking in the frame of a Local Strategic Plan for Santa Perpètua de Mogoda. This municipality believed that this area could have enough potentialities to be an economic pole of development within the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. Since this moment, Santa Perpètua worked in the framework of Caldis basin.
- **Good political understanding among the municipalities,** despite different political colours in the city councils. The initiative comes from the political will of the city halls to work together, coordinate actions and collaborate on the development of programmes in order to be more efficient in the provision of the services offered.
- **The existence of a supramunicipal Plan.** There is a supra-municipal Plan, approved by the Generalitat de Catalunya, which defined Eix de la Riera de Caldes as a pole of economic development within the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. This Plan emphasized the suitability of implementing mechanisms for collaboration among the municipalities of this area. In addition, the alignment with this Plan has let them to have more strength to discuss with regional or national institutions.
- **Institutional recognition.** Institutions such as Catalan Government of Barcelona Provincial Deputation recognize the Association as a good practice since its origin. Both institutions emphasized the initiative positively, which encourage to the members of the Association to continue working on coordinating services. The institutional echo makes the municipalities feel proud to be part of the AMERC and continue betting politically and technically on it.
- **Positive response from the industrial network.** Industries and entrepreneurs responds positively to the action. They involved since the beginning and participate on the programmes developed by the Association.

Inhibitors

- **The association does not have a fixed structure.** The legal form of the Association establishes that it cannot receive funds by itself, neither having a formal technical structure. The association works through collaboration agreements. Therefore, each action that is carried out responds to an agreement between municipalities, both in the definition of the objectives and the financial resources that each municipality has to contribute.

- **The itinerant presidency.** The presidency of the association changes annually. The municipality that exercises the presidency is in charge of requesting a subsidy, receiving it and making the corresponding arrangements for the distribution of the funds among the participating municipalities. The application and allocation of a grant does not have to correspond to a calendar year. This means that the municipalities can leave the presidency but they must continue working in the distribution of the funds of a requested subsidy. This means a technical and financial complexity, especially for those smaller municipalities.
- **The technicians in charge of executing and resolving the commands change every year.** As the presidency of the Association is itinerant, the technical body in charge of the management of the Association also changes annually. This hinders the stability of some of the initiatives that are carried out.
- **Capacities to provide services and to digest workload** is different as well from one municipality to another, this later constituting a major challenge in terms of the Association management. Municipalities have different population size, from 8.000 to 25.000, and consequently, different dimensions of their city halls, and in particular, of their economic and job promotion departments.

Synthesising Dimension B: Competences and capacities of stakeholders

The initiative was born “in a complicated moment” according to the mayor of Santa Perpètua. She explains that initiative, which born in 2014, was under the “LRSAL Law³” approved by Spanish Government in a context of political and economic crisis in Spain. This Law has implied a significant reform of basic state local law on matters such as competences and services to be provided by municipalities.

According to some authors this law supposed a “reordering of the municipal competences, which was meant the reduction of municipal intervention in many fields where local governments act as the Economic Promotion and Employment Services”. They point out that this law “has led to a loss of local autonomy in Spain”, shrinking the local capacity to develop, approved and execute many plans, programmes and initiatives (Jimenez, 2017). The municipal auditor of one of the towns of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes describes that *“LRSAL had a negative impact for local governments, those government bodies closest to the citizenship, which could offer properly services to their citizens due to they know better problems or opportunities of their territory, especially in those topics like economic promotion, employment and support to entrepreneurs and industries”*.

This legislative reform also conditioned the management of public services by the municipalities. Reduced the municipal competences of local governments, the law also limited the management of local public services and the budget for the development and the implementation of new services. In this sense, and is confirmed by a municipal auditor there were restrictions related to the establishment of new consortiums, mercantile companies with public capital...

In this context, and as the mayor of Sentmenat explains *“it was very difficult the continuity of many services that we had traditionally been offering to our citizens”*. Due to the institutional background generated from the informal collaborations created, this municipalities thought that *“was a good option the establishment of formal organization that searched the efficiency of the local administration, offering services like economic*

³ Law 27/2013 of Rationalization and Sustainability of Local Administration.

programmes and employment support actions". Nevertheless, with this law it could not be possible the creation of new institutional body. An Association of Municipalities was the unique form of entity that this municipalities could constituted, whose main requirement was that it could not produce new expense. This body was understood as a platform to coordinate the technical and economic resources of these municipalities, and increasing the opportunities to access to funds.

Through the development of the action, a process of training and knowledge transfer is generated between large and small Town Councils. For smaller Town Councils, it is a challenge to be part of this association where they share tasks with larger municipalities. But at the same time this mixed composition, makes them work together to be more efficient, regardless of the size of the municipality. Six municipalities assume the presidency role once, independent of the size of the municipality. All have the same opportunities to develop programs and actions. This was one of the premises expressed since the beginning of the initiative, as it is mentioned by the politics. They remark that *"all of us are important"*.

The constitution of the Association of Municipalities reinforces the capacity to raise funds due to the increase of critical mass of the applicant entity. The smaller municipalities have access to more opportunities and offer more services, which by their size, could not propose to their industries. While the municipalities with most population access to more subsidies, offering more services and with higher quality due to the increasing of critical mass of population or companies benefited. Both become more attractive because more industries and economic activities can be installed, which generates more employment opportunities for their citizens.

Synthesising Dimension C: Connecting the action to procedural and distributive justice

The action has motivated institutional changes, which ensure a fairer distribution of resources and opportunities among these municipalities. In this sense, the constitution of the Association contributes to distributive justice as small municipalities can access to more resources and offer services that generally they could not have without this collaborations. The agreements of collaboration let them to access to more funds. With them can offer more and better programs to support the entrepreneurs and promote economic activities in this area. The institutional change in the way of working contributes also to improve the distributive justice as resources and opportunities are spread efficiently across Eix de la Riera de Caldes. To achieve that, but the local capacity has had to improve.

Generally, the technicians indicate that *"the individual work stop making sense because when we collaborate and coordinated efforts, at the end we are improving our capacity to work on more fields, which can have positive impacts on our industrial fabric. The sharing process of resources, efforts, technical and economic capacity is helpful for everybody"*. Other aspect that they insist is the increasing to the critical mass of population or economic activities. Due to that, many programmes and initiatives have been possible because they become efficient. They underline the importance of *"scale factor in the development of some kind of programmes that we impulse like Industry 4.0, which not have sense to be develop for only one municipality"*. From the point of view of citizenship, users of Employment and Economic Promotion Services have available a wider number of services and programmes, as they access equally to the opportunities that the six municipalities offer. The action contributes to increase the users' opportunities and the effectiveness of Employment and Economic Promotion Services.

Over the years, the AMERC has had impact on the local identity. The mayors and also the technicians affirm that the initiative has contributed to generate and increase the feeling of belonging to Eix de la Riera de Caldes. They explain that the association has had a great repercussion among supramunicipal institutional like Generalitat or Deputation of Barcelona. Both stand out the AMERC as a good reference to take into account: on how it can be understood the territory and work in favour of the economic development of an area. The members of AMERC recognise that *“this repercussion produce in some sense pride among us, and creates territory identity”*. In addition, *“the projects are developed under AMERC, which could be understood as a brand for the activities and programmes that we offer. This produces direct autorecognition of our Association”*.

The action has also had an impact on mutual trust between local administration and business sector of this area. The entrepreneurs interviewed appreciate the efforts made by the Association, which is seen as a *“good institutional framework that work for regenerating the economic activity of our area”*. The support from local administration is duplicated through this association such is said by one of the auditor of these municipalities. He points out as well the importance of the human capital of these administrations. *“The technicians have had an important role in the development of the action, supported in every moment by political sphere, which have believed in the Association and its possibilities”*.

The members of AMERC agree that the association has given institutional range to the projects and initiatives that have been executed in the Eix de la Riera de Caldes in last years, *“but as an instrument it has barely contributed”*. The legal form of the AMERC constituted as an association (due to the political and economic context in its origins) limits its capacity to manage resources by itself: it cannot receive funds and redistribute them. According to technicians and politicians, this is seen as one of the main limitations of the action to reach and contribute to the procedural justice. From the municipality that currently holds the presidency is working to consolidate the Association from a new legal form; as a *“mancomunidad”* (municipal association⁴). They affirm that if they do not evolve towards a new legal form of the association, the possibilities of developing new programs end up stagnating. It is remarked the *“interest to study a new formal organisation with a technical body that allows the positive evolution of the action”*.

⁴ “Mancomunidad”: is a free association or commonwealth of municipalities, with legal personality, to which those municipalities delegate some of their functions and powers. They are required to set a clear goal, create management bodies distinct from those of the individual municipalities, and provide the mancomunidad with its own budget (FEMP – Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias).

6. Conclusions

The Association of Municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldes (AMERC) is a success story in which a set of municipalities get themselves organised for further collaborating in the development of services and programmes supporting economic activity and employment in the Caldes basin.

The spatial scope of intervention responds to a semi-formal area of collaboration. The Association of municipalities in the Caldes basin does not have proper formal structure. The Association itself has no budget and no staff. It is rather a framework of collaboration where municipalities take the responsibility over one year to promote and manage programmes of common interest to all. Every year the presidency of the municipality changes.

The spatial scope of the case study does not correspond to any previous formal county or regional administrative delimitations. It remains a fuzzy geometry created from a bottom-up initiative, facilitated by the mutual interest of a set of municipalities sharing a relevant number of common challenges.

The Association does not have a formal fixed structure, which means that the municipality that holds the presidency acts on behalf of the members of AMERC. This municipality is the one who applies for a grant and that consequently receive the funds. Then, funds have to be redistributed among the other municipalities. To do so, ad-hoc agreements of collaboration and protocols have to build and be signed by all member participants for each action.

This implementation architecture is the result of i) restrictions drawn by the Spanish State Finances Ministry in the early 2010s that prevented municipalities from dedicating funds to new forms of governance overlapping with existing ones; ii) concerns by some municipalities on potential losses of municipal autonomy iii) concerns by some municipalities on potential concentration of power in a number of leading municipalities. iv) initial mistrust by some of the municipalities. All of these elements suggested the convenience for a relatively informal unbinding collaboration framework with low level of initial commitment by its members.

The resulting architecture was probably not as ambitious as promoting municipalities would have expected, but has shown over time to have room enough for materialising opportunities and better positioning the Caldes basin municipalities within the context of the Barcelona Metropolitan Region. With a full round of itinerating presidencies almost elapsed, there is a relatively high consensus on the need to further develop the Association for more formal forms of collaboration. This is expected to provide more stability and continuity of ongoing work flows, and to lower administrative formalities. This is facilitated by consolidated trust among partners.

Over time, it is observed that several impacts begin to be identifiable:

1. *The Association increases the capacity of municipalities to access funding opportunities for employment and economic promotion services.* Thresholds in the distribution criteria of European funds by higher administrative levels are easier to be met when presenting requests in the context of the full Association, whereas individually are not met by the municipalities alone. The Association allows increasing economic resources available for the Caldes basin. For smaller municipalities, the Association allows accessing a much

broader portfolio of services and resources that would naturally be reserved to much larger municipalities.

2. The Caldes basin provides for greater critical mass compared to individual municipalities, allowing to design more advanced and complex services for companies and employees. Having all the municipalities together a stronger demographic and economic weight, compared to each of them individually, the Association is in position to offer better services to its companies and residents. The Association can target more specialised services with greater added value (e.g. promotion of industry 4.0 practices, mobility electrification...). The Caldes basin altogether extends the size of the market for training and support services, which at the scale of the whole Caldes basin becomes a more varied and complex ecosystem of companies in a larger range of sectors. For larger municipalities this allows creating services for a wider market of companies and workers, and envisaging more sophisticated products that would naturally be reserved to even larger municipalities.

3. More integrated labour space. Local companies indicate that the coordinated work of the Association facilitates job offers spreading and disseminate broader along all the Caldes basin (instead of being limited to single municipalities), accessing services offered by another municipality other than theirs, or better managing and keeping up industrial estates divided among different municipalities. The Association can also offer a larger portfolio of vocational and professional training for local employees and citizens. Indirectly, this means an increase of economic and labour opportunities for citizens in the area.

4. Increased territorial relevance in the Metropolitan Region. Municipalities in the Caldes basin have gained stronger relevance in metropolitan and regional governance networks and schemes of power. The Association has access to fora of decision where individually its integrating members would not have access or would have an irrelevant position. In representation of almost 100.000 inhabitants and 10.000 companies, the Association has proved stronger in negotiating strategic issues with higher Administrative levels, like public transport services and infrastructure, training facilities, spatial and environmental planning issues.

5. Coherence with existing higher administrations. The Association embraced the Caldes basin collaboration framework, which had previously been defined in the late 2000s by the Metropolitan Region Territorial Master Plan as an area called for an Integrated Spatial Planning strategy. This has shown to be a positive decision, as it provides the Association with legitimacy and alignment with higher spaces of socioeconomic engagement being considered by other administrations. Conversations held with local actors allow the authors of this case study intuit that further development of the Association in relation to spatial and environmental management (eg. management of industrial estates, better organisation of local connectivity, improving the condition of the Caldes river in ecological and social terms) may be a logical next step, further consolidating the Caldes basin in the Metropolitan region, especially in relation to other competing territories.

6. Promotion of a local identity and increase of people's self-confidence. Some actors have pointed out that the Association has given shape to previously blurred Caldes basin territorial collaboration area. Starting from an economic point of view, merely a service providing Association, the Caldes basin brand is increasing being used by municipalities as an element of territorial identification, often used in public interventions. Some say that the Association and its subsequent branding process is in fact promoting and recovering a local identity that was lost long time ago.

7. Delivering fairer Spatial Justice. Overall, all previous points indicate that the territorial attractiveness of the Caldes basin is increasing. The Caldes basin is becoming a greater place for citizens to reside and is becoming a greater location for new companies to set up. The commitment of the City Councils is revitalizing the economy of the Caldes basin, generating more economic activity, and inducing the establishment of larger numbers of companies, which again creates more job opportunities. Increases of public revenues at local City Councils are reverted into social, urban and leisure services for better quality of life of residents, overcoming a certain pessimism and low self-confidence of the territory and its institutions that was traditionally perceived in the region, especially when compared with other areas of the Metropolitan Region.

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8. Annexes

8.1. List of Interviewed Experts

List of interviewed experts	Date of interview	Type of expert
S1	February 2019	Technician of Employment and Economic Promotion of Santa Perpètua de Mogoda
S2	March 2019	Mayor of Santa Perpètua de Mogoda
S3	March 2019	Director of the Local Development Area of Santa Perpètua de Mogoda City Council
S4	March 2019	Mayor of Sentmenat
S5	February 2019	Coordinator of Economic Promotion of Sentmenat City Council (2)
S6	February 2019	Technician of Employment and Economic Promotion of Sentmenat City Council
S7	February 2019	Coordinator of Economic Promotion of Santa Perpètua de Mogoda City Council
S8	March 2019	Coordinator of Economic Promotion of La Llagosta City Council
S9	March 2019	Coordinator of Economic Promotion of Polinyà City Council
S10	March 2019	Coordinator of Economic Promotion of Caldes de Montbui City Council
S11	March 2019	Finances Manager of Sentmenat City Council (<i>Interventor Municipal</i>)
S12	March 2019	Local entrepreneurs (5 companies)
S13	March 2019	Association representing private businesses

8.2. Stakeholder Interaction Table

Type of Stakeholders	Most relevant 'territorial' level they operate at	Stakeholders' ways of involvement in the project (What do we gain, what do they gain)
Local politicians	Santa Perpètua City Council Sentmenat City Council	Individual interview
Local administration	Sentmenat City Council La Llagosta City Council Polinyà City Council Caldes de Montbui City Council Santa Perpètua City Council	Individual interview
Associations representing private businesses	Association of Entrepreneurs – Polinyà Local entrepreneurs	Individual interview

8.3. Maps and photos



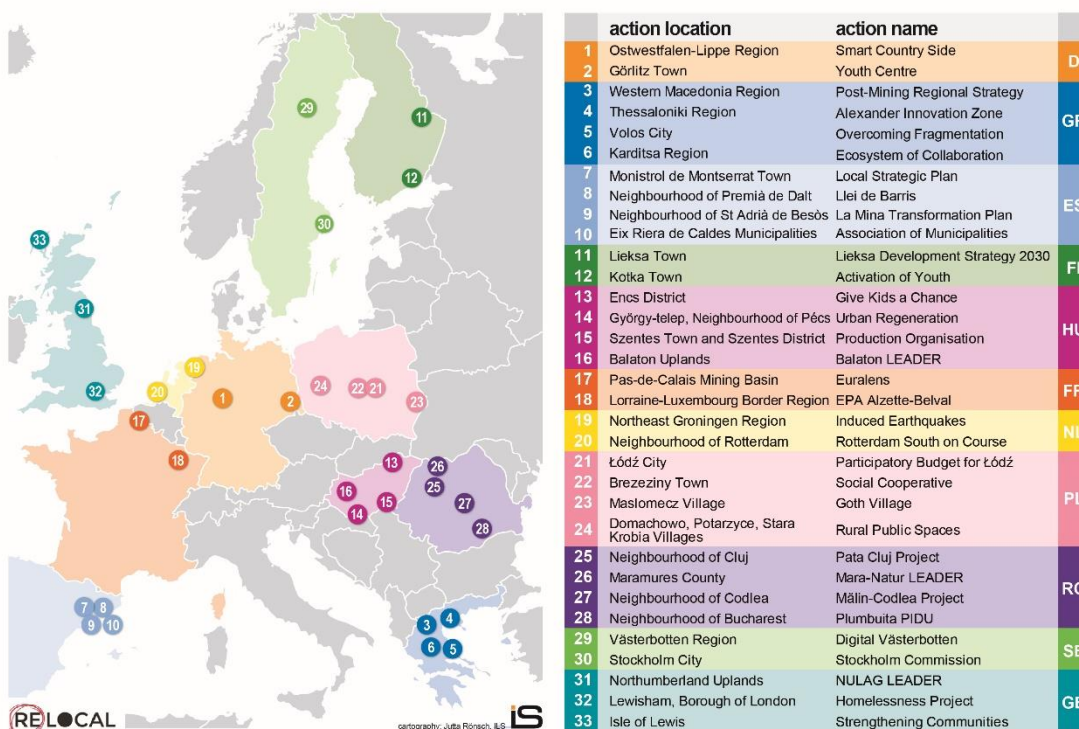
Figure 3. Riera de Caldes landscape. It is characterised as a continuum of industrial estates. Source: L'informatiu 2018 <http://www.staperpetua.org/linformatiu/index.php/economia/8572-unes-3-500-empreses-operen-a-l-eix-de-la-riera-de-caldes>

The RELOCAL Project

EU Horizon 2020 research project '**Resituating the local in cohesion and territorial development**' –**RELOCAL** aims to identify factors that condition local accessibility of European policies, local abilities to articulate needs and equality claims and local capacities for exploiting European opportunity structures.

In the past, especially since the economic and financial crisis, the European Social Model has proven to be challenged by the emergence of spatially unjust results. The RELOCAL hypothesis is that **processes of localisation and place-based public policy** can make a positive contribution to spatial justice and democratic empowerment.

The research is based on **33 case studies** in **13 different European** countries that exemplify development challenges in terms of spatial justice. The cases were chosen to allow for a balanced representation of different institutional contexts. Based on case study findings, project partners will draw out the factors that influence the impact of place-based approaches or actions from a comparative perspective. The results are intended to facilitate a greater local orientation of cohesion, territorial development and other EU policies.



The RELOCAL project runs from October 2016 until September 2020.

Read more at <https://relocal.eu>

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