



## Resituating the Local in Cohesion and Territorial Development



## D 6.2 National Report Spain

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## Abbreviations

AMERC	Association of Municipalities Eix de la Riera de Caldes
EC	European Commission
EFRD	European Fund for Regional Development
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LRSAL	Law of Rationalization and Sustainability of Local Administration
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
R&D	Research and Development
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
GDP	Gross Domestic Product

## Executive Summary

The cases that have been presented are all located within the Barcelona Metropolitan Region, and answer to two models to tackle *spatial injustice* in Spain. One of these models responds to participatory social and urban redevelopment of neighbourhood. It has the objective to improve and increase the social cohesion through urban transformation actions. The other model is based on local economic development initiatives with strong bottom-up components. This model follows the improvement of the position of the localities in their area of influence through the implementation of actions of economic development and smarter governance.

This report aims to bring together research findings from the four Spanish actions analysed.

1. *Monistrol 2020 Local Strategic Planning* fosters local economy and the development of endogenous potentials to overcome slow economic and social dynamism in small-periurban town.
2. *Neighbourhood Programme for the promotion of quality of life* in a segregated quarter in a metropolitan town. It has the objective to increase the opportunities of residents from Santa Anna-Ti  neighbourhood through the development of social programmes and improving the public space to overcome spatial and social segregation in Premi  de Dalt, a town with 10.000 inhabitants.
3. *La Mina Neighbourhood Transformation Plan*, combines urban regeneration and social programmes to fight social exclusion and deprivation in a stigmatized neighbourhood within the Barcelona.
4. The *Association of Municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldes (AMERC)*, was constituted to increase the regional territorial relevance of Riera de Caldes basin through smarter institutional governance in a large metropolitan region.

According to the analysis of policies at national and regional level, urban design and planning is perceived in Spain as one of the main tools that contributes to improvement of social cohesion; and reduces social inequalities and also territorial disparities within a municipality or region. These actions are mainly promoted by public institutions. The capacity for developing these actions and its properly management depends on the political stability and its leadership. The most effective initiatives are those where the public sector is especially involved and generates and achieves the consolidation forms of leadership.

Generally, the participatory tools created in these cases contribute to build bridges in terms of communication and reliability among neighbours and governments and generating bonds of trust between civic society and local administrations. Anyway, the collaborations and level of knowledge between private and public sector is relatively low. They also contribute to reinforce neighbourhood, municipality or region identity, which facilitate the development of the actions. The participatory activities still need to improve to have more effective on place-based making processes. Often, mismatches are seen in relation to participation scope and expectations.

The support from higher institutions has been important to increase the capacities of localities for developing the actions, and having access to technical resources and funds for financing the actions. The most successful actions are those where have been signed agreements of collaborations between different levels of administrations involved in its designing, implementation and management.

## 1. Introduction

The RELOCAL cases studies chosen, through different actions, are faced with different manifestations of spatial injustice, such as:

- Slow economic and social dynamism in small peri-urban town under structural change. Monistrol de Monserrat is a town located in the outer Barcelona metropolitan region, with about 3.000 inhabitants. Currently, it suffers from lower living conditions, an aging population, old fashioned retails, aging housing stock, rigorous local landscape and climate, low attractiveness for young people, and other things. However, Monistrol was traditionally a town with strong industrial activity in the textile sector, but it suffered from deep economic re-structuring. Today, local economy and employment is mostly based on the tertiary sector.

One of this municipality distinguished features is the presence of the Montserrat Mountain and monastery, which is perceived as an opportunity for social and economic development of the town through the development of tourism, but there had not been enough initiatives to take advantage of them. With this in mind, in 2008-2009, the Monistrol town council promoted a **Monistrol 2020 Local Strategic Plan**, which aims to foster local economies and develop endogenous potentials to overcome spatial injustice, while increasing local self-esteem and fostering positive dynamics. A decade after the implementation of the action, the analysis of this case study discovered that Monistrol appears to be physically more attractive, relatively more dynamic, and working towards being more regionally recognized.

- Overcoming neighbourhood spatial and social segregation in a 10.000 inhabitants town. Santa Maria/Santa Anna–Tió neighbourhood is a working class neighbourhood in the high-income residential municipality Premià de Dalt, with a wide variety of socio-economic problems, such as high unemployment, unequal public services, and small living quarters. Additionally, it is geographically isolated from town centre by a motorway and it is physically located in the neighbouring municipality. In order to reduce these disparities within the municipality, Premià de Dalt presented a proposal to participate in the Catalan Government Neighbourhood Law and joint **Neighbourhood Programme**, elaborating an **action plan for the promotion of quality of life** in Santa Maria/Santa Anna–Tió neighbourhood with the objective to increase the opportunities of its residents through the development of social programmes and improve the public space.

Although the initiative comes from Catalan Government, during the process of implementation it has engaged the residents and drawn on their own local expertise. Therefore, the action has been based on local knowledge to assure that the Plan answers to the realities of the neighbourhood. Even though there have been external factors that have affected expected outcomes and schedules, the general impact of the initiative on the neighbourhood, in terms of urban and social improvements, is considered to be positive.

- Urban regeneration to fight social exclusion and deprivation in a stigmatized neighbourhood. La Mina neighbourhood is one the most deprived neighbourhoods in the Barcelona metropolitan area. It was originally built in the 1970s to offer new housing for those populations who were mostly living in slums in Barcelona. Since its conception, the neighbourhood was characterised by physical, geographical, economic and so-

cial disparities. Moreover, in the eyes of the Barcelona's citizens, just the fact of being born in La Mina implies serious disadvantages for its residents. La Mina is a stigmatised neighbourhood.

In 2000, **La Mina Transformation Plan** was launched based on urban and social revitalisation through the implementation of two action plans, one based on urban planning and other on social revitalisation. Both of these plans were elaborated and disseminated widely to residents through participatory workshops and informative sessions so that they could be actively involved in decision-making procedures. One of the key elements of this Plan is La Mina Consortium, an institutional partnership between different levels of political administration: the municipality of Sant Adrià de Besòs and Barcelona, the Barcelona Provincial Council, and the Government of Catalonia. According to its residents, although the Plan has had a great impact in urban aspects, the social transformation is less evident according to both La Mina residents and promoters of this plan.

- Increasing regional territorial relevance through smarter institutional governance in a large metropolitan region. Riera de Caldes is a set of municipalities in the Caldes river basin in the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona that have been traditionally defined by a high concentration of economic and industrial activities. Despite the fact that it is one of the most productive areas, it has some structural deficits.

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 from the political will of the City Councils to work in a coordinated way in order to be more efficient, although the association does not have a fixed structure. The action has motivated institutional changes which ensure a fairer distribution of resources and opportunities among these municipalities and allow municipalities to gain competitiveness in accessing other opportunities and gain stronger relevance in the intermunicipal metropolitan governance networks. This case is a success story in which municipalities commit themselves for further collaborating in the territorial development of an area.



## 2. The Case Studies in a National Context

### 2.1 Unpacking Spatial Justice in a National Context

The concept of *Spatial Justice* is closely related to urban regeneration or transformation of public spaces. This term refers strongly to urban issues, and are especially focused at low level of action; the neighbourhood. The space is considered something which is not empty and neutral; it is subject to decisions, policies, ideologies and other human components, all of them having direct effects on urban places. In that sense, the decisions regarding to public spaces have impacts and can create or intensify vulnerabilities within the municipality or neighbourhood and even generate social exclusion processes. These processes are mainly the consequences of the unplanned urbanism resulted from rural-urban migrations initiated on the fifties. This population settled in peripheral neighbourhoods built without any planning, and many of them have been perpetuated as vulnerable areas over the years (Roca, Moix & Arellano, 2012).

Thus, the term "**urban vulnerability**" in the Spanish context is used to refer districts or neighbourhoods, where process of discomfort are produced by the combination of multiple dimensions of disadvantage and in which the hope for upward social mobility and the overcoming of the social condition of exclusion or nearness to it is seen as something very difficult to achieve.

The disadvantaged districts or neighbourhoods are the results of the urbanization process (1960-1975), in Spain, in general, and in Catalonia, in particular. This fastest urban growth period was characterised by "**economic and social precariousness**". From an urban point of view, this meant the creation of under-urbanized areas, poorly communicated and with a deficit of infrastructures, equipment and services. The new neighbourhoods were "**socio-spatially segregated**" to the city, generating processes of spatial injustice. Many of these neighbourhoods have adopted an *image*, external and internal, of abandonment, which creates a situation of marginalization, only partially overcome when the neighbours organised actively to struggle for the improvement of their conditions.

In that sense, the problems of social inequalities, exclusion or segregation in Spain would be related to the type of urbanism that has taken place in last decades. The structure of the city has traditionally responded to segregation dynamics, which have had a strong influence on those problems related to the physical space (the quality of dwellings, the access to public facilities, transport connexions), and conflicts that may arise from the social point of view (marginality, uprooting, exclusion, etc.).

Several authors consider that urbanism is a powerful conditioner of the quality of life and the kind of opportunities that citizens can reach (Alonso, 2016; Mongil, 2010; Somoza, 2013; Pareja & Simó, 2006). Not all the neighbourhoods, or regions have access to the same number of public facilities, or with the same quality... these differences of these factors regulated by urbanism produce "**urban inequalities**". These inequalities are concentrated and end up perpetuating structurally in specific areas of a city or in a region, in which poor social and economic conditions, and deprived stated of the public space can reduce the chances of social or economic growth of the local population.

"**Segregation**" and "**exclusion**" are concepts that are used to refer to urban vulnerability processes that create disadvantaged areas in a city, region or territory, and which have socio-economic and environmental characteristics that place them at a disadvantage situa-

tion in relation with its surroundings. But at the same time, exclusion has a strong territorial component, generating processes of spatial segregation, which is related to social exclusion and processes of territorial segregation (Subirats, 2006). In Spain, the population who suffers from exclusion normally lives in degraded neighbourhoods and their housing have poor conditions. It is pointed out that “**social segregation**” causes “**social vulnerability**”, another element related to urbanism. This is also related to the degree of “**cohesion**” at neighbourhood level or municipal level. Thus, a local community is considered more socially vulnerable in where there are not relationships among its residents, neither in where they do not share feelings of belonging. In some cases, the lack of identity translates into greater conflict and exclusion (Egea, et. al, 2008).

In this sense, the urban planning as an instrument of social transformation is generally accepted by many authors. It is considered that the planning of public space contributes to social cohesion in a neighborhood, small town or city. Urbanism acquires social components in the transformation, improvement and creation of public space (Plaza & Maldonado, 2010).

Spain has traditionally worked on deteriorated urban fabrics in which councils have put into practice instruments for spatial planning (protection, conservation, rehabilitation of heritage, design of public spaces, renovation of deteriorated districts, etc.). The experience had various improvements in the urban medium, as their objective must be emphasised together with the rehabilitation areas within the various national housing and rehabilitation plans that have financed and continue to finance actions for the functional recovery of historic areas, urban centres, degraded districts and rural municipalities. It is also interesting to refer to the programmes and actions carried out from the ministries responsible for social matters through which various activities have been carried out for the social promotion of “**disadvantaged groups**” (unemployed, inhabitants of vulnerable districts, drug addicts and other marginalised groups).

But the inequalities go beyond what is merely urban. The “**territorial disparities**” exist also between municipalities within a same region and between different regions, related to economic growth, employment opportunities, availability of housing, and access to higher education... (Villaverde, 2000). These disparities have represented huge challenges for territorial cohesion in Spain context, and they still are. From 1990 to reduce “**inequalities**” and, to some extent, the effects of “**spatial segregation**” the local administrations, pushed by the civic-society pressure, started to take part in the improvement of the provision of equipment and services in the most disadvantaged Spanish areas, especially in rural areas, in order to increase the opportunities for regional development. Nevertheless, it seems to be not enough, and these rural areas decrease in number of inhabitants year after year, generating a process called “*rural Spain empty*” (Atienza, 2019). Consequently, this triggers increase of territorial inequalities within Spanish regions.

## 2.2 Capturing Policies Promoting Spatial Justice in a National Context

Regional income inequality is one of the central issues on the agenda of policymakers at national level in Spain (Tirado et al., 2015). To overcome these inequalities, the Spanish policies have tried to develop programmes and initiatives, which have been focused mainly on urban issues at local scale.

Given that the concept of “spatial injustice” is linked to urbanism, the experts refer to urban housing and regeneration policies as one of the essential tools to promote and achieve

spatial justice. Thus, the struggle for a more integrated city according to Llop et al., 2008 should begin with a reconsideration of the housing policy since it is in the housing market where spatial and social segregation processes are mostly found. It is considered that the policy against segregation should mean the adoption of active policies on housing conditions. Thus, one of the main manifestations of social exclusion is the difficulty of access to housing. This is becoming one of the key factors in the increase of social inequality in Spain. There is no state housing law that develops the right to housing included in the Constitution and measures to make it truly recognized (Trilla, 2014).

Urban regeneration policies pursue the increase of social cohesion with the improvement of the state of housing, and also the improvement of public spaces, as a tool to combat the stigmatization and social exclusion at the neighbourhood or municipality level. In this sense, the housing policy acquires a spatial dimension considered as a "privileged mechanism on the city and on the territory" (Van-Halen, 2016). Housing occupies a very significant part of the city's surface, and its determinations contribute to the configuration of the urban space, which is why it is used as a privileged instrument to balance the spatial development model, functionally integrating urban land uses, building more liveable and integrated cities.

Some authors (Nel·lo, 2010; Checa & Arjona, 2005; Mira, 2001) point out that urban habitat is considered to be a determining factor in the processes of integration or exclusion of individuals and social groups, since it is key to pursue equal opportunities and also to guarantee economic progress, taking into account that the possibilities that the habitat offers to all its individuals also contributes to their well-being. According to the Spanish Urban Agenda (2018), cities are considered the engine of social progress, economic growth and development space insofar as they are capable of maintaining social balance, protecting cultural diversity, mixing income, gender, cultures, ages and professions and guaranteeing urban quality.

Nevertheless, urban policy as such is not a concept used in Spanish policy or administrative jargon. There is a gradual, yet slow trend towards integrated approaches in urban regeneration processes, which include social, economic, physical and sustainable perspectives in area based projects. Generally, the municipal government develops individual regeneration plans for different neighbourhoods, without a strategic approach to the city as a whole. There is little communication and interaction between different departments, which makes network governance more complicated. The municipal government has tried to address the lack of strategic integrated planning guidelines, but so far it has not implemented them, partly due to the economic crisis. The city government's stakeholders are the different departments involved in urban policy: planning, environment, public works, the Municipal Housing Corporation and economic development among others, and at the District level, social service department, police, culture and the Councillor's office (Nel·lo, 2008).

In the search for economic success with the consolidation of urban prosperity and quality of life of the inhabitants of a region, municipality or neighbourhood, there have been adopted instruments such as strategic plans. These are management instruments that the local or regional authorities use to guide the economic development of their territory. It is a transversal and integrated instrument normally agreed with civil society about future, through the definition of objectives, projects and actions to achieve the territorial development (Remesar, 2012).

The first urban and strategic plans implemented in Spanish cities tried to transform old, declining industrial cities and alleviate the insufficiencies of basic infrastructures as a way to stimulate their productive sectors and promote their economic recovery, while at the same time regenerating the city physically. However, these first plans of the 1990s were not clearly defined, nor were they based on any consensus, and they gave too much weight to individual physical transformation projects compared to other more immaterial objectives, which were focused mostly on investment in new infrastructures as a basis for economic development. The second generation plans, applied from 2000 onward, give greater importance to social cohesion, sports, culture, research and development, education and to the quality of life in cities; as such, they tried to make economic development compatible with integration and social cohesion. Over the years, the new plans have included more actors and interests to increase the coherence of the different strategic axes of intervention. Thus, while leadership and implementation fell almost exclusively on the city government in the 1990s, the role of urban actors, particularly business organizations and unions, gains importance in the second generation plans, as well as, on a second level, universities, neighbourhood associations, financial entities, NGOs, and consumer associations (Ruano, 2015).

In last years, there are going on different initiatives focused on urban revitalisation processes within the city by neighbourhood associations or NGOs at local level. One of the issues around which neighbourhood associations have been actively mobilising is housing (Walliser, 2013). The role of housing to achieve social cohesion has been approached by local stakeholders through the following projects. These are a representation of some of them ongoing in Spanish cities. “Sindicat de Llogaters” in Barcelona fights for fair rents in the city to ensure access to housing; “Santa Coloma – Renovem els barris” is a project to improve housing stock in a street in Santa Coloma, a city in the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona; “Habitatges en cessió d’ús” is a project that facilitates the access to land to be used for housing cooperatives under the use of cession promoted by the Barcelona City Council; “Fundació Hàbitat 3” is a private foundation that manages housing for favouring social inclusion in Barcelona (SCOT, 2017).

Generally, however, urban policies in Spain up to now have been public intervention programs very focused on creating infrastructures, cleaning up locations and the construction of housing, public areas or transport access. There is no tradition, which articulates these policies with social, education or environmental policies. Over the last years, some initiatives have emerged recognizing implicitly or explicitly the limitations of this way of approaching urban policies. At the same time, from the other mentioned policies, there is a spurring consciousness of its own subject limitations and that is why transversal plans are so popular lately. Blanco & Subirats highlighted the need to apply urban policies, going beyond the limitations of urban development and limitations of the competences of local governments to focus from closeness on how to make the most of the existing resources and improve the inhabitants’ opportunity structure (Blanco & Subirats, 2008).

In that sense, the **public national policies**, programmes and other initiatives that address issues of spatial (in)justice could be:

- **National Strategy for the Prevention and Fight against Poverty and Social Exclusion 2019-2023 (Estrategia Nacional de prevención y lucha contra la pobreza y la exclusión social 2019-2023)**. This strategy develops policies for the reduction of poverty and inequality and the promotion of social inclusion. The Strategy is structured around four strategic goals, 13 objectives and 85 lines of action to improve the opportunities of individuals

and families. The four strategic goals are: a) fight against poverty; b) social investment; c) social protection; d) effectiveness and efficiency of social policies (Ministerio de Sanidad, Consumo y Bienestar Social. Gobierno de España, 2019).

- **State Housing and Rehabilitation Plan 2018-2021 (Plan Estatal de Vivienda y Rehabilitación 2018-2021).** This plan has two main objectives: to contribute to the increase of the housing stock in terms of rent, and to promote urban and rural rehabilitation and regeneration. The actions usually take place through the signing of specific agreements with the municipalities' involved (Plan Estatal de Vivienda y Rehabilitación 2018-2021. Gobierno de España).
- **Law 87/2013, on Urban Regeneration, Rehabilitation and Renewal (Ley de Regeneración, Rehabilitación y Renovación Urbanas).** The purpose of this Law is to regulate the housing basic conditions to guarantee a sustainable, competitive and efficient development of the urban areas, by promoting and encouraging actions that lead to the rehabilitation of buildings and the regeneration and renovation of existing housing stock for ensuring quality of life for their citizens and their right to have an adequate housing (Merino, 2013).
- **Spain's Urban Agenda (2018).** It is not binding, but strategic. The Central Government is aware of the city planning authority of Spain's 17 Autonomous Communities and of the municipalities, although the Urban Agenda goes beyond city planning, to the extent that it seeks a triple impact on urban life: social, economic and environmental. This is especially important in Spain, where more than 80% of the population lives in urban areas. The national Urban Agenda seeks to be a useful instrument for consolidating in territorial and city planning, and generally in all policies with a territorial or city-planning component, the principle of sustainable territorial and urban development. The strategic framework proposes 10 priority goals as foster social cohesion and seek equity or ensure access to housing (Agenda Urbana Española).

On the other hand, the **regional public policies**, programmes and other initiatives that address issues of spatial (in)justice could be:

- **Llei de Barris – Catalan law on improving districts, towns and urban areas requiring special consideration<sup>1</sup>.** The objective of this Law is the rehabilitation of housing and urban renewal and development actions to improve social cohesion and local development in those Catalan neighbourhoods that suffer from economic and social problems. The way it works is very similar to the operation of the European Union's URBAN programme. Town councils interested in undertaking rehabilitation projects can present their initiatives to a commission composed by representatives from the Generalitat, local authorities and professional associations, who decide on which places is convenient the allocation of resources in relation to existing problems, the virtues of the proposal, and fairness in the distribution of funds around the territory. Accordingly, the Law and its main guidelines can design and implement programmes involving social, urban and economic improvements for these districts (Llei de Barris. Generalitat de Catalunya, 2004).
- **Law 18/2007 on the right to housing in Catalonia (Llei de dret a la vivenda de Catalunya).** This law addresses, from an integral perspective, the housing sector, beyond the tradi-

<sup>1</sup> Law 2/2004, of 4 June, on Improving Districts, Towns and Urban Areas requiring Special Consideration (Official Gazette of the Generalitat of Catalonia), 10 June 2004

tional measures to promote construction, aid for the acquisition and rehabilitation of housing. The Catalan law incorporates specific aspects about the overcrowding of housing, the situation of homeless or public housing state. It is a legislative instrument collecting elements to promote social cohesion from the residential point of view. It also addresses balanced distribution over the territory of access to housing and housing for official protection in particular (Ley 18/2007 del derecho a la vivienda).

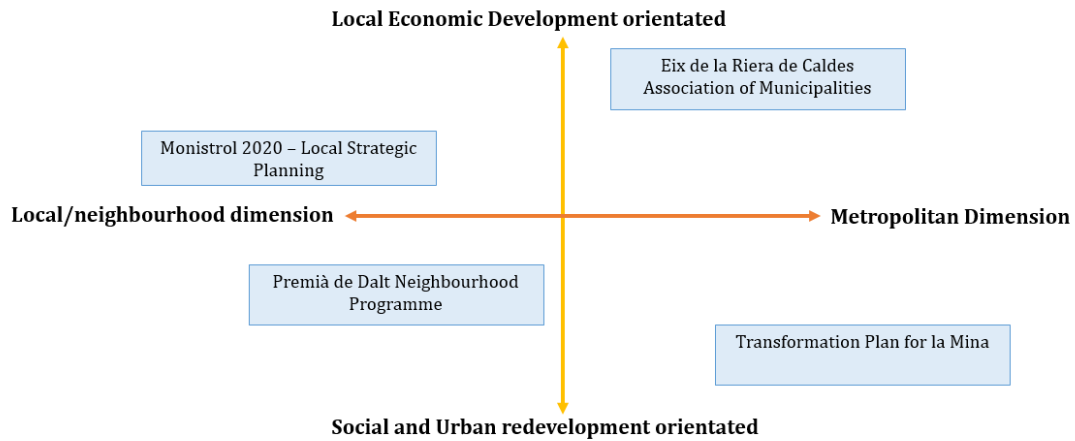
- **Social Inclusion Plans (Plans Locals d'Inclusió Social).** Local plans for social inclusion are the instruments that municipalities have to fight against poverty and promote social inclusion at the local level, designing and implementation actions agreed by the social agents of each territory based on previous sociological diagnosis and existing resources. With these plans, social policies are implemented at local level to minimize situations of exclusion and reinforce the social cohesion (Departament de Treball, Afers Socials i Families).
- **Territorial Plans (Plans Territorials).** They are tools from Catalan Government for developing the spatial planning policies at regional level. These plans are defined by Law 23/1983 of Territorial Policy (Departament de Territori i Sostenibilitat).

### 2.3 Framing the Cases

The cases that have been presented answer to two models of spatial development. One of the models responds to social base criteria and the others has a territorial and economic character. These cases are on a neighbourhood scale, on a municipal scale, and also on a supra-municipal scale.

Two of the case studies represent actions that pursue spatial justice on a local scale from the development of social initiatives whose goal is the improvement and the increase of the social cohesion of their neighbourhoods through citizen participation in the design and implementation of the respective Plans. These are the cases of La Mina and Premià de Dalt. In these two cases, the action pretend to improve social cohesion through urban renewal: in the first case with the construction of new infrastructures and equipment, and in the second case, especially with urban renewal and the improvement of public space. These two cases are closely linked to the main national and regional policies for approaching the spatial justice at local level through urban transformation initiatives.

The other two study cases effort to improve the positioning of the territory in their environment of influence through the implementation of actions based on economic improving. The case of the Association of the Axis of the Riera de Caldes works to better position the Riera de Caldes in the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona. The Local Strategic Plan of Montserrat also works to better take advantage of the opportunities that arise from its geographical position close to Montserrat, a tourist reference in Catalonia. Both territories perceive a disadvantage in their geographic positioning by not benefiting sufficiently from the opportunities of the area in which they are located. These two cases are related to spatial planning initiatives developed by Catalan Government through Territorial Plans, which are being applied in last years.



**Figure 1:** Schema of cases under analyse in relation with the type of action and its territorial scope.

Among these actions are some with a clear institutional character. Actions such as that of Premià de Dalt arise from the Generalitat de Catalunya, under the guidelines of a Law (Neighbourhood Law). This would be considered a **top-down** action although at the same time, it stimulates the development of bottom-up initiatives as local stakeholders are involved in the design and implantation the action through participatory process. It would be a way to make more profitable the transferability of funds to the localities as these funds are applied on those needs that the citizenship required.

On the other hand, the action that arose in Riera de Caldes does not respond to any previous institutional structure. The Association of Municipalities of the Eix de la Riera de Caldes was born from the will of the municipalities involved to form part of it and are organized through an association as the most viable way to carry out the relevant actions. It would respond clearly to a **bottom-up** initiative, in which a set of municipalities get themselves organised for further collaborations, without a formal fixed structure.

### 3. The Studied Cases in a Comparative Perspective

The following chapters present a comparative view on the four Spanish case studies. This analysis is based on the information provided in the four case study reports published (Ulied et al., 2019).

#### 3.1 Characterising the Cases

One of the differences between the actions is the scope of intervention. Two of the initiatives are based mainly on urban renewal, combined with social interventions, and the other two have a more territorial point of view. Although each action has been implemented in a different period of time, they share a considerable level of maturity. Currently, the actions are consolidated, despite of the economic crisis, which in all the cases have had a strong influence. In all these cases, there are already results. Most initiatives linked to the Strategic Plan in Monistrol and depending on Town Council have been developed; the urban renewal has improved the Premià de Dalt neighbourhood urban conditions; the Transformation Plan in La Mina has accomplished the urban transformation of the neighbourhood; and the Municipality Association in Riera de Caldes has contributed to consolidate the collaborations between municipalities.

In contexts under study, especially on those cases where local administration are very small (Monistrol or Premià de Dalt cases), strong governance structures intended for the Plan execution are not possible, given the lack of human and economic resources. Indeed, in these cases, the internal capacity is mostly related to the number of staff members available, be it local policy makers, but more significantly technicians which give them support. Generally, technicians are limited often only to just a few, many of them working part time, and are responsible for many short-term action needs, which leaves little time for mid and long-term challenge management.

Another commonality is that the actions analysed have contributed to the reinforcement of the identity and the sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, municipality or territory. The actions promoted and recovered the local identity. In less or huge degree, the actions have also generated a network of local stakeholders. In the case of Monistrol, the civic structures created and participatory processes have not continued after the finalization of the Plan, but in the case of Premià de Dalt the participatory process has consolidated over the years and promotes the involvement of collectives from neighborhood to participate on the local networks (e.g. women).

#### 3.2 Findings Analytical Dimensions 1-5

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

Disadvantaged or underdeveloped neighbourhoods, municipalities, regions, or the existence of territorial disparities are especially related to the **urban conditions of these places and socio-economic conditions of their citizens**.

Unemployment and low qualification-training could be considered the main causes of poverty and social exclusion. The economic crisis and the increase of unemployment rates have caused serious problems for a broad sector of Spanish population, with the increase in poverty and evictions actions. It is perceived that the risk of poverty tends to be higher



when there is poor professional qualification or an unemployment situation, when one is part of families with more than one child, when one is a woman or when one lives in autonomous communities with lower level of income per capita. Therefore, inequalities in this context are further deepened in women, youth and children, and it has a relation with territory where one is living.

In these cases, there is a large population that has a general pessimism vision of their situation, and their families. Although it cannot be generalized, for many residents the actions do not have a positive impact on the improvement of their economic conditions or long-term social prosperity. In these municipalities or neighbourhoods, especially in the case of La Mina, there is a deep pessimism among residents. Generally, the actions aroused the enthusiasm of the residents, especially linking them with participatory mechanisms to be involved into the development of their neighbourhood or municipality. Many neighbours, however, do not believe in this kind of actions promoted by the public administration. There are not strong links between citizenship and institutions, due to actions already developed which have not had results. There is a dysfunction between physical transformation and social transformation. Social aspects require a longer time to complete due to be more related to generational factor. In this type of localities there are certain social factors that require a persistent and continue process for its eradication as the lack of civic behaviour among inhabitants.

The perception of spatial injustice within the municipality was mostly related to the **perception of the lack of economic opportunities, scarce vitality of social agents, insufficient infrastructure and services, loss of visibility and collective identity**. The general perception was of a general slowdown of neighbourhood, municipality or region vitality, a progressive decrease of public incomes making it difficult for developing social programs to be brought forward economic decline and reactive institutions.

It is also perceived that neighbourhood urban conditions and its current urban landscape contribute to generate social differences within a municipality or a region. These neighbourhoods are characterised by the **low quality of housing, poor public facilities and services, scarce public spaces**...surrounded by physical barriers. In those spaces are also located vulnerable population groups that contribute to the lack of social cohesion. Generally the unemployment rates and poverty are higher than in surrounded areas, generating a stigma.

Related to this, urban infrastructure access is also seen as territorial injustice, generating the perception of inequalities in relation to other municipalities or regions. There is growing an income gap which increase the differences between regions and generate the perception that there are some territories that “do not matter enough”. In those cases, some of the current deficits or inequalities are seen and understood as historical. Despite of the investment and continuous efforts from local or regional administrations, problems remain and public infrastructure and municipal services are not good according to the citizens. It would be the case of Monistrol de Montserrat.

## **Analytical Dimension 2: Tools and policies for development**

The tools and policies for development and overcoming spatial (in)-justices are related to:

- **Urban Renewal Plans.** As it has been explained, urban transformation tools and policies have been a recurrent instrument used to overcome territorial differences and con-

tribute to social cohesion in Spain. The agents that impulse the regeneration urban programmes can be national, regional and local governments. These kind of projects are often decided and initiated with the participation and coordination of several governmental agencies and departments, and recently the citizenship it is being included.

However, many of the initiatives about urban renewal do not respond to a comprehensive criteria. In these cases, generally social aspects are excluded. The experts point out that there is also a temporary dysfunction between physical transformation and social transformation. Social aspects require a longer time to be completed due to be more related for example to generational factors (Capel, 2003; De la Cruz, 2010). La Mina Transformation Plan has tried to follow a comprehensive character in its implementation, with the objective to enforce the relationship between different stakeholders and impulse also the social transformation in the neighbourhood.

- **Local Strategic Plans.** Other tools used to promote the economic and social development are the strategic plans, which can be applied at local or regional level, although is not a common practice of public institutions yet. The strategic planning means a reflexive process involving social and economic actors, public and private institutions, and the citizenship in general. In this sense, this kind of tool allows different agents in a municipality or region getting to know each other better, and it can be the basis for further future collaboration (public-private). So, it is a key element for local policy-making from the bottom due to let generate a network of local stakeholders to collaborate.

The case of Monistrol de Montserrat is an example. It has been considered a relevant tool in the frame of local development policies. They have the aim to articulate a debate among the local society, including private, social and public stakeholder to identified key projects to create new chances of economic and social development in the long term. Plans of these characteristics are useful to summarise the basic objectives of local development. They are also instrument of citizen's participation. Strategic processes contribute to create local identities and generate territorial bottom-up projects.

- **Economic and Employment Promotion actions.** But from a local perspective there is still the predominance of promoting local development from initiatives of economic promotion over those of territorial development. For this reason, at local level the Services of Economic and Employment Promotion at municipal level are considered important to improve social cohesion at local scale, supporting occupation and training of citizens of a municipality or region. At local level, the municipalities work actively to develop initiatives and programmes, which favour the improvement of the local economy, social cohesion and also the improvement of territorial cohesion. They design and execute actions for the promotion of the municipal economy, supporting entrepreneurship, increasing employment rates and the professional and training qualities of its inhabitants.

Nevertheless, the Councils do not have the obligatory to develop this kind of initiatives. The Town Councils carry out actions such as the promotion of the economy, business development policies, grants to entrepreneurs or activities to promote innovation, although they are not responsible. The Law of Local Regime does not attribute them competences in these fields, which generates in some cases duplicities with the services provided by other higher public administrations. To avoid this, in a context of economic crisis in Spain, the "Law of Rationalization and Sustainability of the Local Admin-

istration (LRSAL)<sup>2</sup>” was approved by the Spanish government. This Law meant a significant reform of basic state local law on matters such as competences and services to be provided by municipalities.

Even so, the Town Councils continue developing them. Analysing the cases, 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 it is the economic promotion”. The local stakeholders 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. The local stakeholder’s 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”. For instance, the case of Association of Municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldes pretended to offer these kind of services, even though it was not its own competence. They considered these services crucial for the development of their region and better position in its territorial context, promoting the spatial justice.

On the other hand, the reflections and contributions for example of “Llei de Barris” in Premià de Dalt or Transformation Plan in Premià de Dalt are not only respond to local and national level tools. These plans are also a reflection of some European policies about renewal criteria, as it has the case of URBAN programme, with the purpose of stimulating social and economic regeneration of deprived urban areas.

### **Analytical Dimension 3: Coordination and implementation of the actions**

The coordination of the Actions fell on different structures defined previously for each case. In some cases, the structure has been defined by regional legislation as in the case of Llei de Barris Action Plan and in other cases, the coordination structure has been created exclusively for the development of the action.

In the case of Local Strategic Plan in Monistrol, the organisational structure was mainly local, although it received the **support from institutions at regional level**. Town council was the body who promoted the initiative, but it was the Barcelona Provincial Deputation who provided methodological framework and technical support for the implementation of the Plan. In this case, complementary to the Town Council, there was a Territorial Coordination Team, which was in charge to manage the participatory activities, gathering local knowledge, structuring a narrative embracing existing and new initiatives, and validating proposals.

In Premià de Dalt, the Llei de Barris Action Plan involved **multilevel-stakeholders interventions**: Government of Catalonia, Barcelona Provincial Deputation, Premià de Dalt municipality and local civil society such as social and economic actors at the neighbourhood level. This action was under the Catalan Government neighbourhood law, following in its coordination and implementation the guidelines pointed by this regional law.

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<sup>2</sup> Ley 27/2013, de 27 de diciembre, de racionalización y sostenibilidad de la Administración Local. Gobierno de España.

In the case of La Mina Transformation Plan, the action has been coordinated by a Consortium. It is not a very common instrument to coordinate urban renewal actions. The four administrations involved in the development of the Transformation Plan were constituted as a Consortium of La Mina neighbourhood, an institutional partnership, who has prompted and coordinated the Plan as a single task agency with total autonomy. The Consortium structure has let to establish a **comprehensive long-term agreement between different levels of government** that before it had not been possible.

Organizational structures as those created for the implementation of Llei de Barris action plan in Premià de Dalt or Transformation Plan for La Mina, which centralise the efforts from different institutions involved, make easier the transfer of knowledge and technical competences between stakeholders involved. The creation of the *Information Office of the Plan*, as a **meeting point between citizenship and institutions**, contributes also to facilitate the communication. The coordinator of the Plan was also local and known by the neighbourhood, contributing to engagement of the neighbours in the process. These offices are set up in the own neighbourhood, which is important for increasing the visibility and transparency of the institution, and for maintaining a more fluent relationship between the administration and neighbours.

On the other hand, the AMERC was created as a new organizational structure, which included the municipalities of Riera de Caldes area. It is not considered an easy way to coordinate a project which is over to municipal limits, but it was possible thanks to the **political will of municipalities and the technical efforts**. The association should be in charge of the development of the action, but there were legally obstacles (due to the LRSAL law regulations) to prevent the total implementation of the actions by the association. It does not act in a legal way. For this reason, this way of working has a great technical complexity in legal and economic terms, especially for those smaller municipalities.

The economic context in all the cases conditioned the degree of implementation of the actions, which had to be generally postponed over some years due to the lack of funds from Catalan Government or Town Councils.

#### **Analytical Dimension 4: Autonomy, participation and engagement**

In all cases, the participatory processes were developed trying to be as open, flexible and operational as possible, although the success of these processes has been closely related to the associative background of the locality. This means that it has been easy to develop participatory activities in those cases where the citizenship was previously associated. It is the case of Premià de Dalt. A **culture of local participation** is not simple to create, and it has not been a used tool in Spain since last decade. Proactive thinking about mid and long-term futures is not always an easy task, since participants tend to focus the discussion on current problems and short-term claims for the public sector. For example, in the case of Local Strategic Planning in Monistrol, the associative fabric was weak and aging fast, and it was difficult focus the debate on the long-term issues.

On the case of Neighbourhood Law programme in Premià de Dalt, the neighbourhood participation was very active since the initiation of the Plan, which has facilitated the success of the action. In that sense, **active neighbourhood entities and associations**, and the consolidated identity of belonging to the neighbourhood has allowed creating more easily the participation structures and the involvement of all the groups (youths, women...) from the neighbourhood. This allowed the promoters of the action to base the participatory

process on the “local knowledge” about the needs and opportunities of the neighbourhood. In addition, in that case neighbours are still participating in the development of the action and some local groups have become stronger than before, such as the women collective.

La Mina case has had a similar participation structure as the one explained in the case of Premià de Dalt. The participatory structure was created since the beginning and it was possible due to the consolidated associative fabric of the neighbourhood. At the beginning of the Plan, they participated actively although over the years their involvement decreased. In that case, Transformation Plan of la Mina has a long-term horizon and it was pointed out that this **long process made neighbours lose interest** in the implementation of the Plan. This could be partially explained by the economic crisis in Spain; but also somehow because of natural disengagement of people along time, be it because of the overall process spanning too long in time (for more than a decade), be it because of the little perception capacity of social change in the short-time, maybe because of traditional social problems in the neighbourhood...In that case, the residents have been critical about the development of the participation programme designed by the promoters of the Plan, and the main focus of the actions of the Plan.

In the case of Eix de la Riera de Caldes, entrepreneurs and industries are the main beneficiaries. They consider that the results of the Association are highly positive. Working as an association contributes to know better the reality of the industrial sector, strengthening the links between the administrative level and economic and social fabric of this territory.

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

The four cases pretend to contribute to knowledge from the bottom through a collective learning processes, in which administrations and local groups learn how to manage daily social and economic situations and challenges proactively. Generally, these processes involve city council departments, citizenship or other local stakeholders. They are a good way to avoid eventual duplication of tasks and efforts, focusing technical and economic resources properly on the same municipal direction, and **creating a culture for further collaborations** between areas.

Although, three of the cases are clearly focus on local scale, the actions present a multilevel stakeholder involvement, which is seen a key mechanism to achieve the objectives of the actions, to guarantee engagement and **empowerment of institutional partners and municipalities’ citizenship** in the implementation of them. In that sense, and as it is highlighted by local stakeholders, to overcome issues related to social or territorial disparities at local level is needed the supported by upper level governments, taking into account that Town Councils do not have the enough budgetary and technical resources to design, develop, implement and manage the actions under study, especially those related to urban renewals.

Actions as Monistrol 2020 Local Strategic Plan can promote the identity of the municipality or a region, and are useful in promoting strategic thinking among local actors, to discover some mistakes or shortcomings in current policies. Nevertheless, the **applicability and efficiency of the action is sensitive to the place, the moment, the institutions involved**, as well as the responsible persons who carry it out.

Involving citizenship in this kind of processes is a key challenge for the promoters of the actions. In all the cases, its participation is crucial to mobilize the local knowledge, to know the real needs of the neighbourhoods, municipalities or regions. But as it was already said this involvement is higher in those cases where there are consolidated self-organisation structures, which could be incorporated directly to the participation process following the criteria of place-based knowledge. The **strong identity** to belong to the place by the residents, as is the case of neighbours from Santa Maria/Santa Anna-Tió contributed to guarantee the implication of citizenship through whole process, which at the end have to let to build bridges in terms of communication and reliability among neighbours and different levels of governments, even after the unfulfillment of action schedule.

In all the cases, the expected results have been **conditioned by different rhythms of execution** of the administrations involved in the development of the actions. For example, Neighbourhood Law Action Plan in Premià de Dalt suffered some modifications regarding to actions developed and timeline of implementation, caused mainly by the economic crisis. During this period, there were difficulties for financing transfers between Catalan Government and municipalities. In La Mina Transformation Plan, for instance, it was created the Consortium to avoid this, centralizing the execution and management, economic and technical resources of the actors involved for the development of the action.

For these actions, especially those who combine social and urban aspects, it is required flexibility and adaptability to achieve properly results. The multifaceted nature of such projects needs a well-planned framework for allowing it constantly to adapt changes.

### 3.3 Findings Synthesizing Dimensions A-C

#### Synthesizing Dimension A: Assessment of promoters and inhibitors

Next, a number of key outcomes in relation to promoters and inhibitors of social and economic development, and community building which are shared by the four cases under study:

##### Promoters:

- **The role of the leadership for the positive implementation of the action.** The capacity for action and its management is strongly subject to political stability and leadership. The most effective initiatives are those where the public sector is especially involved and generates forms of leadership. Creating structures of leadership is important to favour correct implementation. Weak leaderships during the execution of the action threaten stakeholder participation, civil engagement, and cross-sector dialogue.
- **The creation of networks to facilitate the coordination of the action.** The actions have had the objective of establishing frameworks of collaboration among stakeholders, private, public and social. Generally, stakeholders' communication and cooperation is relatively low, especially between private agents and the public sector. The coordination between different departments areas within a Town Council can be also very low. The successful or not of the action is closely related to the common agreement between the institutional partners involved in its implementation, in terms of forms and times of execution.
- **The political and technical support from higher administration levels.** The support from regional level institutions is important to increase the capacities of City Councils for developing the action, and having access to funds. These institutions like Catalan Government or Barcelona Provincial Council provide economic and technical resources for the design, execution and management of the majority of the actions at local level.
- **A small-scale intervention area facilitates the management of the action.** If the scale where the action is applied is smaller, it facilitates to find the specific features of the locality, identifying and involving easily the different local actors. In this sense, a neighbourhood scale intervention is easier to manage compared to a metropolitan region for example, if it is considered the number of inhabitants, and several legal and budgetary frameworks.
- **A strong identity of the locality is key to strengthen the action and vice versa.** It is one of the main factor to turn on or not the actions. A strong neighbourhood, municipality or region identity have made possible the development of the actions.
- **The participatory activities generate place-making process from collective learning.** The participatory tools created in these cases contribute to build bridges in terms of communication and reliability among neighbours and governments. Recognizing a familiar face from the neighbourhood during the action process generates bonds of trust, which is a key to obtain better information, feedback and outcomes during the whole process.

- **The existence of local associative network enable the involvement of the citizenship.** A strong or weak network of associations in a neighbourhood, municipality or region play a fundamental role in the elaboration of the plan by encouraging debates, developing proposals...

#### Inhibitors:

- **The time horizon in the fulfilment of the actions.** The administrative timelines from the different government levels are not aligned. Some of the funding opportunities from Catalan Government are scheduled with timelines that do not necessarily fit into local governments timelines, taking into account the available technical staff that a Town Council have to manage the bureaucracy required for apply for funds, for instance.
- **The difference of the timing for achievement social and urban objectives.** Social transformation requires a longer time to be perceived. The majority of social changes related to traditions and cultural matters of the inhabitants may be possible after a generational change. So, there is a temporary dysfunction between physical and social transformation. Population expects to see results in short term, and these kind of Plans which include also social actions should be understood in the long term.
- **Maintain over the years the stakeholders' involvement.** One of the purposes of the actions is to generate a network of informal mechanisms of meetings, debates and agreements for the creation of cross-alliances between local and regional agents, and between them and inhabitants over the years. However, the extension of participatory during a long period of time would reduce the active citizen's participation. The long participatory processes imply the risk of losing the interest of the neighbours on the action, showing in some degree discontent about the initiative.
- **Pessimism rooted among population.** Although in general, at first the actions arouse the enthusiasm of the residents generating high expectations, when they do not see quickly results they leave to believe in the success of the action, and their participation in the development of the action decreases. Citizenship waits always the results in a short temporal horizon. The outcomes, especially those related to overcome social issues are visible in a long period of time.
- **The economic crisis.** Funding obstacles have been increasingly important in all cases. Municipal incomes dropped heavily during 2008-2014 crisis. Then legislative changes in 2013, when it was approved the Law of Rationalization and Sustainability of local administrations, conditioned more the procedure to access to funds.

### **Synthesizing Dimension B: Competences and capacities of stakeholders**

Nowadays, generally, the urban renewal projects prioritise the involvement of citizenship through participatory activities for its empowerment on how to decide the future of the place where they live. But the process of **residents' participation requires the willingness of governments** to act with transparency and to create and maintain the debate and dialogue mechanisms from the beginning of the process until the end. This is more successful on those cases where there is a **consolidated organisational civic structure**. Therefore, the presence of a strong associational life and a representative local community is important for the better neighbourhood involvement.



This participatory structure set up a new way of working in urban planning processes at neighbourhood level, following a bottom-up strategy, with the involvement of the neighbours in the process. This methodology is understood as the best way to fit the proposals into the neighbourhood, municipality or region reality, and to address the problems that affected to it. In addition, the place-based knowledge strategies generated through the **participatory processes motivate the mobilisation and organization of local community** to claim for the accomplishment of the proposals on time, and strengthen their capacities to interact with the administration.

Nevertheless, the development of these kind of actions, in especial the urban renewal projects, require the political and technical support from upper-level governments because small towns have limited fiscal capacity. They are increasingly dependent on funding resources and rules by regional government. The investment capacity is low, especially in small municipalities like Monistrol, and also **local administrations do not have enough capacities, methods and technical tools to design and implement initiatives** to solve structural deficits at urban level.

For this reason, cases such as the **Association of Municipalities** of Eix de la Riera de Caldes, **increase the capacities of local administrations** and reinforce the capacity to raise funds, increasing the critical mass of the applicant entity. Moreover in that case, there is generated a process of training and knowledge transfer between large and small Town Councils. For smaller Town Councils, it is a challenge due to the fact they have to share tasks and responsibilities 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.

The capacities of local administrations changed after the Spanish Government launched the Law 27/2013 for the Rationalisation and Sustainability of Local Authorities. Due to the economic crisis, it was started a restructuration of the local public sector. It was approved a new local organisational framework for rationalisation and reduction the public spending. According to local stakeholders interviewed, this was a huge challenge. The deployment of this Law wanted to strength the role of the provincial councils and autonomic governments for avoiding any duplicity of the actions between Spanish, autonomic, provincial and local level institutions. This **legislative reform conditioned the management of local public services, reducing their municipal competences, and the budget for the development and implementing new ones**. But a good local financing is a fundamental element to guarantee the quality of the services that local administrations can offer and to contribute to the well-being of their communities. For this reason, Town Councils call for a better local financing for the improvement of local governance.

### **Synthesizing Dimension C: Connecting the action to procedural and distributive justice**

In those cases where decision-making depends on a higher administration level, actions as strategic planning can help these municipalities anticipate the analysis of specific solutions before formal implementation plans are initiated but such higher administrative levels. It increases then their capacity to influence final designs and decisions. This represents reinforcement of procedural justice, e.g. allows for **more place-based solutions and prevents territorially-blind policies**.

Generally, the elaboration of plans or development strategies at local level or at neighbourhood scale have contributed to the **reinforcement of the identity and the sense of belonging** to the neighbourhood through the participatory activities organised. These have contribute to build bridges in terms of communication and **reliability among neighbours and local government**. It has been especially relevant that the coordinator of the project, plan or strategy was from the municipality or neighbourhood and was known by residents, and that the project or plan office were also located in the municipality or neighbourhood. It would be the case of Neighbourhood Law Action Plan in Premià de Dalt. In that case, the action has facilitated the application of typical urban planning solutions of deprived neighbourhoods in large cities, to neighbourhoods in small cities and even towns and villages. The Neighbourhood Law defines the main guidelines to apply these solutions, not the kind of solutions, which are designed by each municipality regarding to their particular social and economic conditions. This means the transformation of the neighbourhoods from bottom-up initiatives.

To achieve better mechanisms for procedural justice, the “Transformation Plan for La Mina Neighbourhood” has been developed through a Consortium, for improving the coordination of different actions, although they were promoted by administrations at different level. At the same time, it facilitates the access to financing as it is considered a single administrative body. In addition, an institutional organism as a Consortium **breaks the usual sectorial approach** in municipal or neighbourhood interventions.

On the other hand, the Association of Municipalities of Eix de la Riera de Caldese born as a bottom-up initiative by local administrations contributes to distributive justice as small municipalities can **access to more resources** and offer services that generally they could not have offered without this collaborations. From the point of view of citizenship, the users of Employment and Economic Promotion Services have a wider number of services and programs available, since they **have equal access to the opportunities** offered by the six municipalities offer.

The action contributes to increase the users’ opportunities and the effectiveness of Employment and Economic Promotion Services as well.

## 4. Conclusions

**1. Urbanism as a recurrent tool in Spain for driving social change in disadvantaged areas.** Public space has often been considered in Spain an intrinsic part of the “capital” stock of citizens, especially in neighbourhoods where housing stock is in poor condition. Given that traditionally citizens have made intensive use of public space for social interaction with friends, relatives and neighbours -almost like an extension of their own dwellings- improving condition of public space has often been perceived as a tool to catalyse social transformation in deteriorated neighbourhoods or even in towns just having low levels of social vitality. Urban design and planning are often in Spain central tools for programmes aiming at promoting *spatial justice*; improving urban landscape helps improve social cohesion and interaction, and indirectly uplift social conditions of disadvantaged areas and contribute at breaking with social stigmatisation.

**2. Public institutions as main actors behind actions in Spain.** To address *spatial justice*, large programmes and tools are most of the time promoted by the public sphere in Spain (national, regional or local administrations). Higher administrations usually provide for catalogues of “products” to which local administrations can apply for to receive funding and technical advice to implement local social programmes. Implement of such programs is usually a task promoted by the public sector, relying on inputs and participation from social tissue (associations, NGOs...) and general citizenship. But only occasionally leadership of public programmes is formally transferred to the social sector itself.

**3. Citizen participation and involvement is a central tool of Spanish programmes, but participatory mechanisms still need refinement to overcome existing mismatches.** The involvement of citizens in Social Programmes or in Planning processes has become in recent years a generalised activity, a central tool that local governments use to bring ideas, opinions and suggestions to be introduced in such processes. Overall, participation is intended for smarter and more place based political decisions. Positive experiences in citizen or stakeholder participation have improved social relations within neighbourhoods and towns, and improved efficiency and focus of local development policies. However, difficulties still persist in order to properly manage participatory processes over time. We’ve seen loss of confidence by citizens growing over the process as citizens perceive low weight of their contributions on the final plans, programmes or policies, political instrumentalization of participatory processes, or low transparency in scope and use of participatory activities. Eventually this has led or threatened to block initiatives. We’ve seen other experiences where highly mobilised minorities have changed direction of policies and public interventions.

**4. Identity is perceived as a transformation vector promoting assets and stakeholder collaboration.**

Strengthening elements of local identity has proved to be a promoter of the positive development of the action. Giving value to the neighbourhood and to its culture and roots of its citizens has shown to increase cohesion and work for the common good. In general, the actions analysed have contributed to the reinforcement of such local identities, and to the sense of belonging to a neighbourhood, a municipality or even a region. The identity was reinforced by elements like the sense of having a common challenge to address during the involvement of interest groups and stakeholders (public or private). In fact, in many occasions, participatory processes have been a chance to create complicities that didn’t formerly exist, between stakeholders, social movements, and in many cases, between the

private and the public sectors (eg. between enterprises and city offices, between citizens and public servants...).

**5. Centralisation and top-down forces provide for praxis harmonisation and coordination of the actions; decentralisation and bottom up forces favour better penetration of initiatives wide-spread across territories.** The decentralization approach facilitates the activation of more small-scale initiatives driven by local administrations, with proposals closer to citizenship and to local needs; it allows addressing issues and problems that would never be identified or would seem of little relevance from higher levels of the administration. On the other hand, it has the risk of resulting in many uncoordinated local administrations with little financial and technical capacity, not having enough powers and resources to develop envisaged actions. Centralization drivers tend to harmonise technical procedures and funding mechanisms, but limits the capacity to address spatial justice as top-down policy making focusses on largest issues and challenges. To overcome this duality, Spain has developed mechanisms that allow higher administrative levels to provide for methods, finance and technical advice to local authorities, which then become responsible for implementation of social programmes (eg. Neighbourhoods Law and Programme, pools of services programmes by regional administrations aimed to local entities). There is currently a political debate in Spain has focussed upon recentralisation of local competences.

**6. Still very low levels of inter-locality collaboration.** Our case studies have confirmed that collaboration between localities in Spain is still low. Traditionally, there are some factors that have hindered such collaborations, like heterogeneity of the municipalities, differences of political colours between municipalities, little culture of collaboration. Many ongoing collaboration initiatives relate to sharing costs for some services like waste collection or public transport, but there are seldom initiatives where collaboration is done in terms of common planning or policy making. However, the case of Riera de Caldes has revealed that initiatives for intermunicipal collaboration can succeed in increasing opportunities and access to funding, when properly managed. Considering that most Spanish municipalities are less than 5.000 inhabitants big, economies of scale generated by cooperation mechanisms have potential to allow for benefits.

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## 6. Annexes

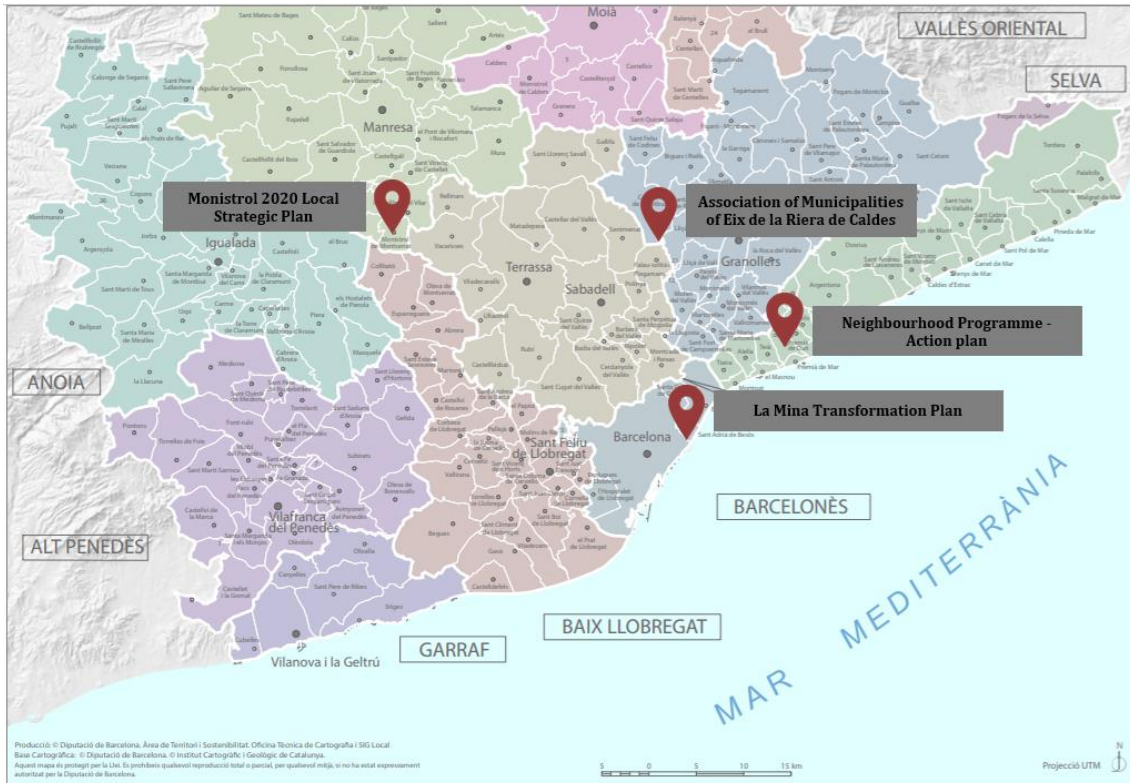
### 6.1 List of Indicators

#### Indicators that should be provided in the national case study reports<sup>3</sup>

<b>Indicator 1_1</b>		Monistrol de Montserrat	Premià de Dalt	La Mina neighbourhood	Eix Riera de Caldes
<b>Name</b>	Income of households (2018)	17.740€	23.330€	3.600€	16.119€
<b>Indicator 4</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Economic activity rates (census 2001)	77,02%	70,55%	42%	73,66%
<b>Indicator 5</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Employment rates (census 2001)	72,34%	64,21%	29,00%	66,91%
<b>Indicator 6</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Unemployment rates (January 2019) * (2017)	12,64%	9,59%	17,20%*	11,00%
<b>Indicator 7</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Youth unemployment rates (census 2001)	7,26%	14,01%	-	14,97%
<b>Indicator 8</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Long term unemployment rates (census 2001)	10,00%	9,68%	-	10,88%
<b>Indicator 10_1</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Life expectancy (2016)	83,6	83,6	83,6	-
<b>Indicator 14</b>					
<b>Name</b>	NEET (Info NUT2. Reference year 2000)	10,70%	10,70%	-	10,70%
<b>Indicator 24_1</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Total population (2018)	2.955	10.429	10.228	88.503
<b>Indicator 28</b>					
<b>Name</b>	People at risk of poverty or social exclusion	10,53%	10,53%	10,53%	10,53%

<sup>3</sup> The precise definitions of all indicators can be found in RELOCAL D 2.1. (including year)

## 6.2 Additional information

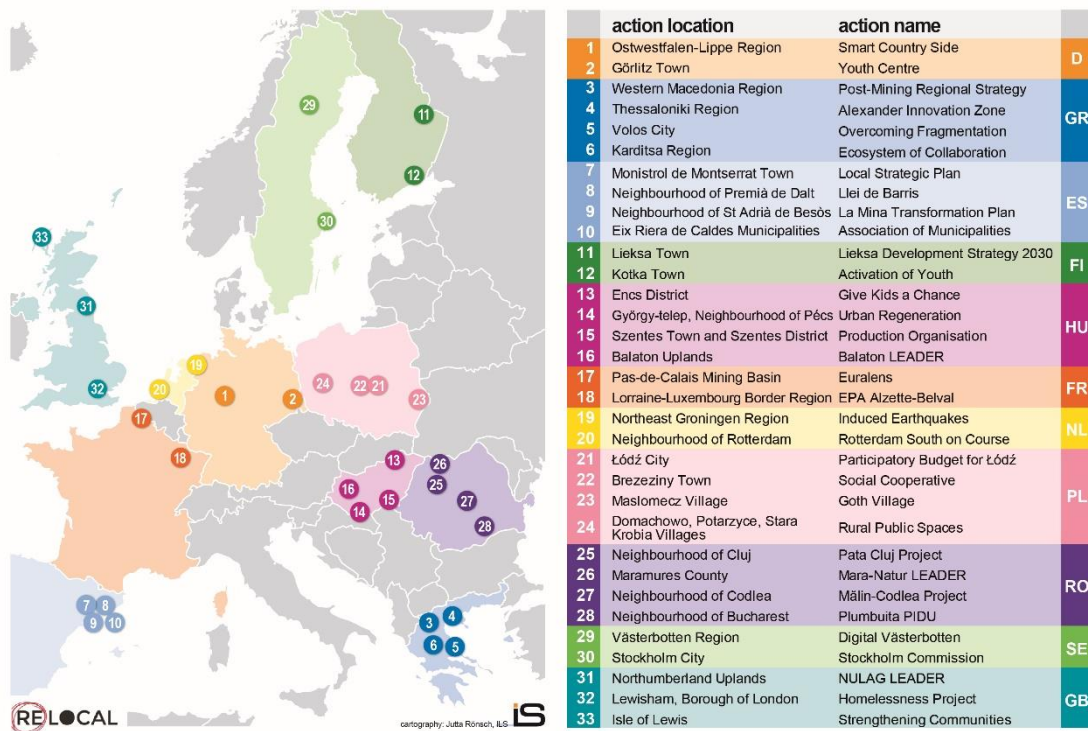


**Figure 2:** Localisation of case studies.

## 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>

Project Coordinator:



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