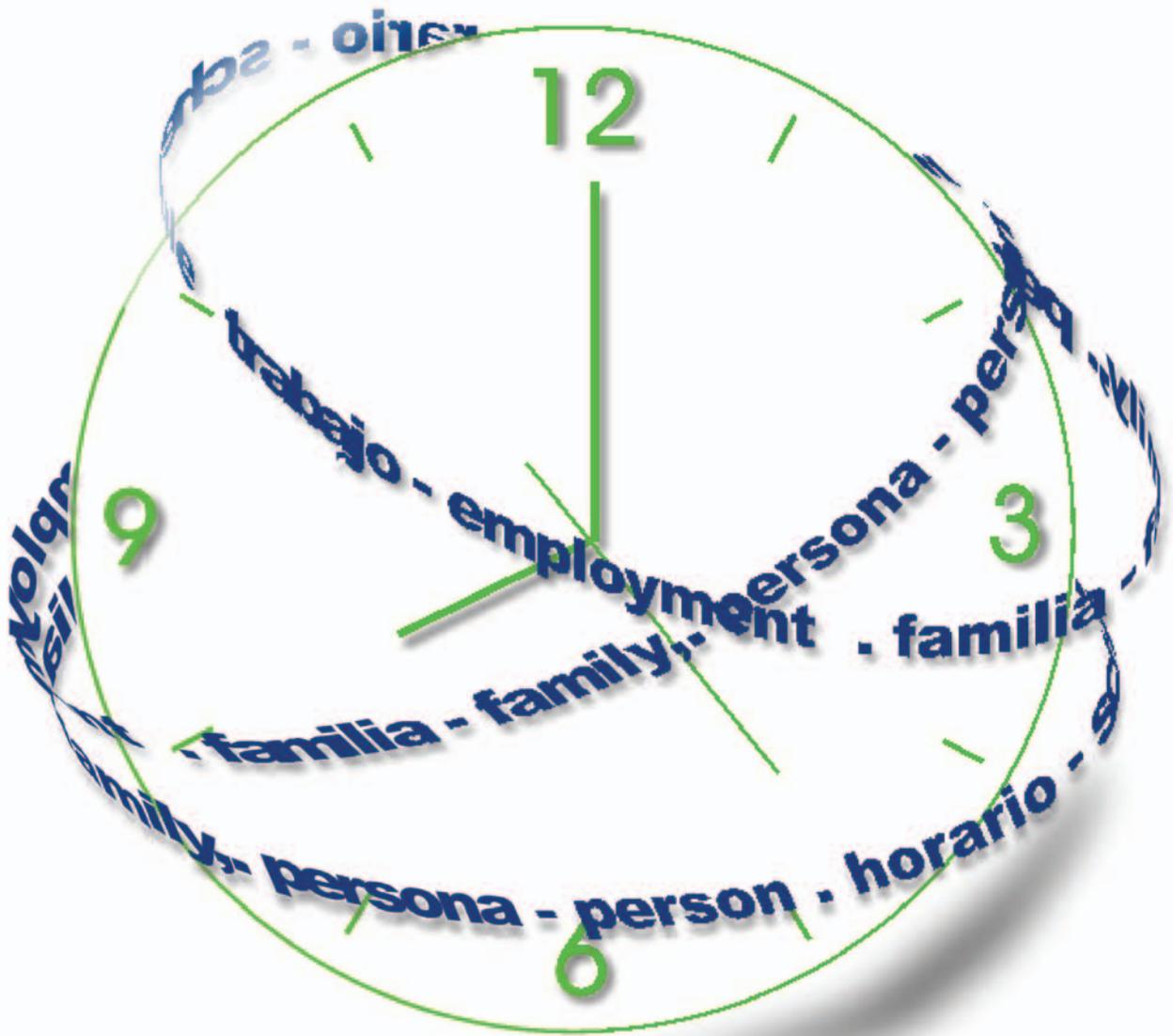


GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES
FOR PROMOTING
WORK-LIFE BALANCE
THROUGH LOCAL BODIES
IN SPAIN AND NORWAY



Guide to Best Practices FOR PROMOTING WORK-LIFE BALANCE THROUGH LOCAL BODIES in SPAIN and NORWAY



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Guide to best practices for promoting work-life balance through local bodies in Spain and Norway

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PROJECT

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

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Project Led by the Spanish Women's Institute, in cooperation with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS).

index

1. INTRODUCTION	9
1.1. WHAT CAN I FIND IN THE GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES WITH REGARD TO WORK-LIFE BALANCE AT LOCAL LEVEL?.....	9
1.2. IN WHICH CONTEXT HAS THIS GUIDE COME INTO BEING?	11
1.3. HOW DID THE GUIDE COME INTO BEING? METHODOLOGY	11
1.4. WHAT CAN BE CONSIDERED AS A BEST PRACTICE?.....	13
1.5. WHAT DOES WORK-LIFE BALANCE STAND FOR?	14
1.6. WHAT BENEFITS DOES WORK-LIFE BALANCE PROVIDE?	16
1.7. WHY SHOULD PUBLIC LOCAL AUTHORITIES SEEK TO IMPROVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG CITIZENS?	17
1.8. HOW CAN WORK-LIFE BALANCE BE SUPPORTED THROUGH PUBLIC POLICIES? .	18
1.9. NORWAY AND SPAIN, TWO DIFFERENT REALITIES FACING THE SAME CHALLENGE.....	25
2. ANALYSIS OF BEST PRACTICES REGARDING WORK-LIFE BALANCE	31
2.1. AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PROMOTE WORK-LIFE BALANCE.....	32
2.2. ONE GOAL: MANAGING AND SAVING TIME	38
2.2.1. FLEXIBILITY IN WORKING HOURS AND PLACE OF WORK	38
2.2.2. "A CITY FOR CITIZENS": TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY POLICIES	49
2.3. COUNCILS AS SERVICE PROVIDERS AND ORGANISERS.....	53
2.3.1. WHO CAN LOOK AFTER MY CHILDREN WHEN I AM UNABLE TO?	54

2.3.2. WORK-LIFE BALANCE SERVICES FOR DEPENDENT PERSONS: CARING FOR THE ELDERLY AND THE DISABLED	62
2.3.3. ENCOURAGING LEISURE AND FREE-TIME	68
2.3.4. OTHER BEST PRACTICES	72
2.4. CHANGING MENTALITIES: A QUESTION OF IDEAS AND AWARENESS.....	75
3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	87
3.1. CONCLUSIONS	87
3.2. RECOMMENDATIONS	91
4. APPENDIX. DESCRIPTION OF BEST PRACTICES.....	97
4.1. AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO ENCOURAGE WORKLIFE BALANCE	102
4.2. ONE GOAL: MANAGING AND SAVING TIME	113
4.2.1. FLEXIBILITY IN WORKING HOURS AND PLACE OF WORK	113
4.2.2. A CITY FOR CITIZENS: FRIENDLY SPACES AND HOURS	122
4.3. COUNCILS AS SERVICE PROVIDERS AND ORGANISERS.....	126
4.3.1. WHO CAN LOOK AFTER MY CHILDREN WHEN I AM UNABLE TO?	126
4.3.2. CARING FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED PEOPLE	142
4.3.3. ENCOURAGING LEISURE AND FREE-TIME	148
4.3.4. OTHER BEST PRACTICES	153
4.4. CHANGING MENTALITIES: A QUESTION OF IDEAS AND AWARENESS.....	158



GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES FOR PROMOTING
WORK-LIFE BALANCE THROUGH
Local Bodies in Spain and Norway



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. WHAT CAN I FIND IN THE GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES WITH REGARD TO WORK-LIFE BALANCE AT LOCAL LEVEL?

WHAT DOES THE GUIDE INCLUDE?

This “Guide to Best Practices for Promoting Work-Life Balance through Local Bodies in Spain and Norway” offers **methods, measures and guidelines for planning and implementing programmes, projects and initiatives which favour balance, harmonisation and better time-management for those whom this guide is addressed to.**

OBJECTIVES

The ultimate goal of this publication is to ensure that work-life balance becomes part of the fundamental objectives for Local Bodies, whilst also aiming at:

1. Demonstrate that it is feasible to successfully implement local policies which promote and favour work-life balance. In a word, the Guide aims to show that Local Bodies can support citizens in finding a new and more efficient manner of using and managing their time.
2. The Guide also aims to serve as a guiding instrument for Local Bodies when implementing initiatives which strive for similar objectives or when attempting to deal with problems related to work-life balance.

In this respect, this Guide aspires to go beyond the merely descriptive approach and to offer an in-depth analysis.

WHO IS THE GUIDE ADDRESSED TO?

This Guide is addressed to Local Bodies but, also, to anyone interested in this subject and/ or in how to implement initiatives aimed at responding to demands and needs linked to the work-life balance sphere.

HOW IS INFORMATION PRESENTED IN THIS GUIDE?

The information included in this Guide has been analysed and systematised so that is now easily accessible. The contents are divided into four different sections.

- i. The Guide begins with an introduction, in which volume, objectives and beneficiaries are presented. The why and wherefore of the volume and contents' structure are also discussed in this section.
- ii. In the second section, a joint analysis of best practices is conducted. This section examines in detail those initiatives which have been validated as best practices with regard to work-life balance, pointing out the elements which are common to different initiatives, as well as the most innovative and successful aspects. Best practices are classified under four thematic headings.
 - ii.1. The first one includes those initiatives which employ a methodology of intervention and promote work-life balance from an integral approach; that is, taking action at different levels of the issue under discussion.
 - ii.2. The next one presents best practices' measures which have been designed to balance time's distribution through a more efficient time management, both in private corporations and in the realm of public administration.
 - ii.3. The third heading introduces those initiatives intended to enable citizens to access services and infrastructures which make work-life balance possible; most specifically: services which set out to lessen family responsibilities and household duties or other types of resources, alternatives or spaces planned to entirely develop the personal sphere, also in the realm of leisure or free-time activities.
 - ii.4. The last heading contemplates those initiatives aimed at raising social awareness and educating citizens with regard to the question of work-life balance and also to the absence of a shared-responsibilities model, not only within family structures, but also among different socioeconomic actors.
- iii. The third section contains a set of recommendations and proposals obtained from previous analysis and which Local Bodies should take into consideration when implementing actions towards improving work-life balance in their areas.

An appendix – in the form of summary-cards – has also been included. In this part, a description of the previously analysed best practices is shown; this includes information about the institution behind

the best practice and the initiative itself: objectives, target groups (people and/or institutions), time-span, description, key actors and obstacles.

1.2. In which context has this Guide come into being?

This Guide came into being in the context of the trans-national Project “**Work-Life Balance in Spain and Norway**” (Balance Project). The Spanish Women’s Institute (Instituto de la Mujer) is responsible for this project, which has been developed by the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS). It has been co-financed by the Spanish Women’s Institute and the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area.

The Balance Project’s general objective is to spread out **a strategy based on different initiatives designed to improve local public policies in order to obtain more and better conditions for achieving work-life balance**. With that aim, the Project is structured in two well-differentiated phases:

1. The first phase was intended to bring both geographical groups together and to exchange initiatives gained in the Spanish as well as the Norwegian local spheres, which could be transferred to similar environments. A further aim was to debate and reflect upon such initiatives, and, as well as other strategies, to have them published. The “**Guide to Best Practices for Promoting Work-Life Balance through Local Bodies in Spain and Norway**” constitutes the final product of this first stage.
2. The second phase is focused on planning and testing initiatives to promote work-life balance in ten Spanish Local Bodies, which are committed to taking action in order to favour balance among the three spheres of life: personal, familial and professional.

1.3. How did the Guide come into being? METHODOLOGY

The contents of the Guide are the outcome of a learning **process and knowledge transfer, as well as of analysis, reflection and debate**, which result from the following:

- The study, evaluation and analysis of a set of questionnaires received between June and December 2009, aimed to examine the initiatives promoted and/or developed by Norwegian and Spanish Local Bodies.
- Representatives of the Spanish Women’s Institute, FEMP, KS and Norwegian and Spanish Local Bodies, made two study tours to both Norwegian and Spanish Local Bodies – in June 2009 and

November 2009 respectively.

- In addition, representatives of the Spanish Women's Institute, FEMP, KS and Norwegian and Spanish Local Bodies took part in a technical seminar about Best Practices, which took place in November 2009.

The **methodology** employed to identify and validate best practices was developed in two main stages:

- 1. Collection of data, which was further analysed and evaluated, in order to undertake a preliminary identification of potential best practices.** With this purpose in mind, an intense in-house study was conducted, during which work-life balance initiatives were gauged and a preliminary assessment completed based on the following criteria: innovation, efficiency and transferability.

In order to compile information, an *ad hoc* questionnaire was prepared and distributed in cooperation with FEMP and its Norwegian equivalent body, KS. The questionnaires sent to Local Bodies in Norway and Spain were used as a source of information, together with other initiatives analysed, which supplied further data that had not been collected through these questionnaires.

- 2. Analysis and validation of the best practices, taking into account the following criteria: innovation, efficiency and transferability.**

Potential best practices were also assessed during this second phase with regard to the aforementioned criteria. Best practices were validated both through desk-job as well as over the course of a technical seminar.

All in all, several sources of information were used. On the one hand, these consisted of the questionnaires sent to Norwegian and Spanish Local Bodies, and also several surveys, which were conducted on the telephone or via e-mail. On the other hand, the information gathered during the study tours to Norway and Spain, in June and November 2009, respectively.

Taking the methodology previously described as a starting point, it is necessary to state that the initiatives assembled in this Guide do not correspond to an exhaustive account of all work-life balance initiatives which were implemented upon the request of the Local Bodies. We have attempted to offer a

representative overview of the reality of Local Bodies. However, due to the limited resources and restricted time and scope of this publication, which is conceived as just one part of the Balance Project, many other best practices have not been analysed and will, thus, not appear in the following pages. This fact does not make them less valid though.

1.4. WHAT CAN BE CONSIDERED AS A BEST PRACTICE?

With a view to this Guide composition, it became necessary to adopt a definition of best practice in the local sphere, which would be suitable for the established objectives. In this respect, a **best work-life balance practice** has been defined as:

Any innovative initiative, measure, behaviour, methodology or tool which, after being promoted and implemented by the local bodies (Town Councils, Provincial and Insular Governments and Associations of Municipalities) or by a private institution or company in the local environment, has demonstrated its effectiveness in achieving the goal of favouring work-life balance for citizens and is also suitable to be transferred to other contexts.

The criteria employed to identify an initiative as best practice can be inferred from the previous definition. They are, specifically, the following:

- **Innovation** will be examined in a broad sense, taking into account the wide-ranging spectrum of possibilities and aspects in which one can detect innovative elements. Among other reasons, the initiative can be considered as innovative in relation to the target group; with regard to the particular problem that is tackled; to the specific characteristics of the procedure, through which it is implemented, be it the model of organisation, management mechanisms, services being offered or methods/instruments employed in the accomplishment of the different actions; or also because it offers pioneering solutions to a given problem.
- **Efficiency:** the initiative should be able to accomplish, with a proven record and consistency over time, the objectives, which were established at a specific and global level.
- **Transferability:** the initiative should be suitably transferred to other different contexts, either in a geographical sense or with regard to the groups involved – namely beneficiaries or involved agents – to confront similar problems related to work-life balance.

1.5. WHAT DOES WORK-LIFE BALANCE STAND FOR?

The notion of “work-life balance” has been analysed by several disciplines within Social Sciences and assigned numerous meanings. From a **sociological perspective**, the concept of work-life balance represents *a process of change in an originally rigid social structure, founded on traditional values and on fixed gender roles. This process of change, despite the conflict with resistance mechanisms opposing change, leads to individual emancipation (and, particularly, to female emancipation), specially with regard to decision-making capacity in relation to time and effort invested in different aspects of personal and professional spheres.*

On the other hand, within **the realm of Economics**, the process of work-life balance *is understood as the externalisation of costs associated with household tasks, in order to find out a model of joint responsibility among the different economic agents (families, market, State) that corresponds to the potential benefits and which – from “familial” care – are assigned to each of those agents. Therefore, it is necessary to correctly assess the “invisible costs” of house work, in order to equitably distribute household and work functions among family members.*

From a **more functional perspective**, closer to each individual context, *work-life balance corresponds to the individual liberties’ sphere because it represents the right to decide over the use of one’s own time, within the limits imposed by work and family obligations.* The desire to approach people’s reality should not be mistaken with a merely individualistic or individual understanding of work-life balance. On the contrary, *the commitment and joint responsibility of all social actors involved, as well as all family members and the private and public sectors, are essential to achieving an adequate balance between the different spheres of private and professional life.*

Beyond these interpretations, within the context of the **Balance Project** and, most particularly, of this Guide, work-life balance will not be understood as a mechanism merely intended to favour the accomplishment of professional and familial duties (dual approach), but rather is conceived as what should become a **clear objective in the realm of welfare policies. Once this objective is achieved, all individuals will benefit from the time they have now available, without neglecting any of their necessities – whether in relation to leisure, or individual and/or family care – or professional obligations.**

Our aim is to avoid the one-dimensional vision of the family sphere as a niche of burdens and obligations, which one is forced to make compatible with the professional realm, and also to allow that the balance between these two aspects expands, so that other domains beyond the strictly familial one are also taken into consideration (leisure, education, social participation, etc.).

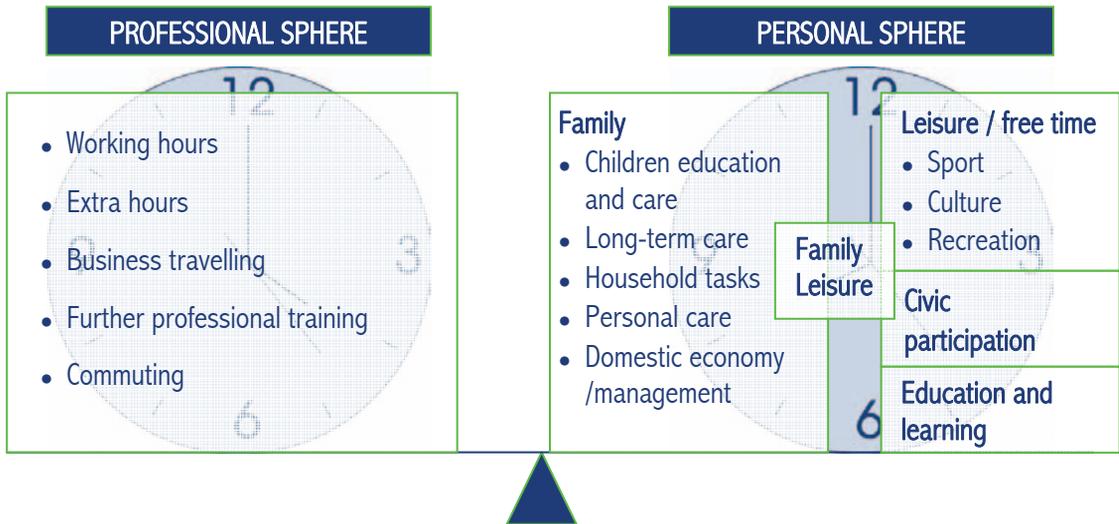
In this respect, the current climate makes it not possible to refer to work-life balance without mentioning the notion of **joint responsibility**, since they are closely related. Joint responsibility stands for *the equitable acceptance – both by men and women – of responsibilities, rights, duties and opportunities which are related to the domestic sphere, family and its care. In conclusion, it implies that all social and institutional agents (State, companies, trade unions, associations...) need to assume their responsibilities with regard to personal, familial and professional realities arrangements.*

In order to achieve balance and harmonisation among the three life-spheres – personal, familial and professional – it is necessary to make joint responsibility, in all its different dimensions, our philosophy and principle for life¹:

- *Individual joint responsibility among women and men, to break down traditional gender roles and sexualised uses of time.*
- *Social joint responsibility among the different social and institutional agents, (State, institutions, companies, trade unions, NGOs, etc.), in order to enhance the degree of freedom, so that men and women can choose different ways of combining their personal, professional and familial life and reach a state of balance.*
- *An intergenerational agreement among all family members should make joint responsibility possible and support the household financially and emotionally.*

¹ Casado Aparicio, E. and Gomez Esteban, C. (coord.), (2006). *Los desafíos de la conciliación de la vida familiar y profesional en el siglo XXI*. Biblioteca Nueva. Madrid.

Balance between the different spheres of life...



1.6. WHAT BENEFITS DOES WORK-LIFE BALANCE PROVIDE?

There are numerous advantages in the harmonisation of the different spheres of life. In general terms and from a global perspective, work-life balance is a strategy which ensures balance, both in the work market and in the family domain, and allows individuals to make use of their own time, thereby providing the following benefits.

- a) **It improves quality of life and personal well-being:**
 - Firstly because it introduces a different philosophy with regard to time-management: work stops being the central axis around which our lives revolve and a space is reserved for personal development and social and political participation, both for men and women.
 - Secondly, it encourages the creation of a new model for domestic life in which family responsibilities are equitably assigned.
 - And, lastly, it reduces stress and work-related illnesses, allowing professional promotion within the same company.
- b) **It creates an environment of equal opportunities for women and men** because it contributes to breaking down the barriers, which have prevented women and men from being able to combine and develop their familial and professional lives on equal terms.
- c) **It encourages social participation for both women and men.** Even though work-life balance is by no means a matter exclusively related to women or even to the realm of the couple, but

rather a social problem, it, nevertheless, facilitates the incorporation of women into the job market and the involvement of men in the domestic and familial domain.

- d) **It strengthens the democratic system** by enabling both women and men to exercise their rights entirely.
- e) **It improves the productive system** by allowing all human resources to be developed in every respect, due to the women and men incorporation and permanence in the job market, the retention of talent and the improvement of the work climate. Moreover, it enhances the external image of companies, which will subsequently attract new clientele.
- f) **It increases efficiency and productivity in companies**, which, therefore, become more competitive and flexible. Competition and flexibility are undeniable requirements in order to be sustainable in an environment defined by constant changes, globalisation and internationalisation.
- g) **It improves the welfare social-system protection**, which will then be able to count on the contributions of all, women and men.

1.7. WHY SHOULD PUBLIC LOCAL AUTHORITIES SEEK TO IMPROVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG CITIZENS?

All the benefits related to work-life balance, which were specified under the previous heading, validate themselves the public sector involvement in supporting its citizens when dealing with this challenge. In this respect, we should start off with the premise that **achieving an equitable distribution of time, balancing out or harmonising the different spheres of life directly improves the individual well-being**. Given that any local body should have the improvement of the quality and conditions of life as its main objective, it should also make all possible efforts to turn its municipality, province or association of municipalities into a **“good place to live”**, with everything that this set phrase entails:

- “Good” refers to the quality of things. In the local area, this “goodness” is reflected in many different aspects: infrastructure, public and private equipment, services, business... but, also, security, life in the community, etc.
- “A place where” hints at a definite location. Town councils should compete fairly to offer their citizens the best possible life. Each province or municipality is placed in a particular environment which radically affects their reality and which is also included in its very own configuration of spaces. Such spaces can nevertheless be adapted to the different necessities of a particular time.
- “Live”. For each individual, “to live” has different connotations: work, leisure, business, culture, education, hygiene, personal care, child or dependent persons care, nursing for those in need,

diet, sport, life at home, transport, health care... They are all activities which make up our daily life, which fill our timetables one day after the other, even if there are numerous ways – particularly, depending on age – of living any normal day. And precisely this combination is the one that should be good for all, women and men.

However, our society is still defined by attitudes and forms of work organisation in cities – services, schedules and working hours – or forms of family organisation which do not favor a work-life balance for women and men. In order to break down the existing barriers, both society and companies should update the idea of “working hours” or “shared family responsibilities”. Furthermore, cities and town councils should also create a space and environment which favors a change of mindset and that can be used and lived in so that everybody succeeds in harmonising time in their lives.

Local governments should promote conditions which turn their cities, towns or areas into “good places to live in”. Such conditions have a positive impact and by promoting them, local bodies are contributing to retaining and attracting population, maintaining a good level of socioeconomic development, supporting investment and improving life in the community. In a word, **when the right to a work-life balance becomes a reality, it has immediate effects on the well-being and quality of life of the citizens.**

1.8. How can WORK-LIFE BALANCE BE SUPPORTED THROUGH PUBLIC POLICIES?

Work-life balance proves to be a multidimensional phenomenon, which is defined by:

- The broad number of agents involved (families, employees, employers, public sector, service suppliers, etc.);
- The diversity of areas converging in the balance for different spheres of life (work, leisure, family life, dependent persons care, etc.) and, lastly;
- The scenario of work-life balance appears to be a complex system of relationships and interests dictated by a whole range of public initiatives, which are implemented at different territorial levels of decision making.

In this respect, the public sphere must intervene and play a central role through specific actions in order to achieve work-life balance for the citizenship.

When dealing with this context, one might very well raise the following question: What are the main reasons for individuals not being able to achieve work-life balance? The answer contains key arguments for public involvement and will serve as an axis in order to systematise all the elements in play:

What are the main reasons for individuals not being able to achieve work-life balance?

- Non-existent and/or inefficient time management, both at a personal a contextual level.
- Work-life balance requires all sorts of financial, human and infrastructural resources, which are often limited and inaccessible.
- Lack of social awareness when it comes to understanding work-life balance as people's right to be able to harmonise different aspects in their life, such as: work, leisure, family, social involvement, culture, etc.

The public involvement areas regarding work-life balance (strategies, programmes and initiatives) revolve around the factors which hinder the achievement of a balance between the basic three spheres of life. This is explained in the following charts, which, on the one hand, give a detailed account of what the areas of public intervention should be, that is, in which direction public authorities should intervene; and, on the other hand, which propose steps that could be taken to achieve the desired objectives or, in other words, how public authorities should intervene.

1.- SCARCITY AND/OR INEFFICIENCY REGARDING TIME MANAGEMENT

AREAS OF PUBLIC INTERVENTION

AREAS	DEFINITION
1. Measures to introduce flexible working times (flexitime)	These are measures aimed to make working time or hours more flexible and, therefore, enable employees to distribute their time in a more efficient manner to be able to reconcile other aspects of their personal and familial life.
2. Work-life balance at workplace	Availability of services and infrastructures, which allow working people to fulfill tasks or needs related to personal sphere at the workplace, in order to avoid unnecessary traveling.
3. Transport and travel policies	Initiatives to reduce travel times by developing infrastructures, efficient public transport networks and travel planning.

TYPOLOGY OF POSSIBLE MEASURES THAT HELP OPTIMISE TIME MANAGEMENT AT WORKPLACE

CONTEXT OF INTERVENTION		POTENTIAL ACTIONS
Within public bodies: management of human resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support measures promoting work-life balance within collective bargaining. ■ Improve current legislation concerning the public sphere. ■ Monitor and supervise how the current legislation on work-life balance is implemented. ■ Conduct studies about the influence of work conditions on employees' family life. ■ Ensure availability of services and infrastructures, which allow employees to fulfill tasks or needs related to the personal sphere at workplace.
Beyond public bodies	Intervention in local companies – incentives for private initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide financial and/or technical support for the private sector to define and implement work-life balance plans. ■ Offer excellence awards for companies favouring work-life balance. ■ Issue work-life balance certificates, validated by public administrations, for companies favouring work-life balance. ■ Support the establishment of cooperation networks among companies favouring work-life balance. ■ Provide social marketing and publicity for those companies favouring work-life balance.
	Measures with direct impact upon the citizenship: intervention in time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop transport infrastructures. ■ Prioritise management and optimisation of public transport networks and travel planning within the field of public policies designed to improve work-life balance.

2.- Need for financial, human and infrastructure resources

AREAS OF PUBLIC INTERVENTION

AREAS	DEFINITION
1. Improving access to services and infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide services to support work-life balance: lessen domestic responsibilities and household tasks (kindergartens, schools services to improve work-life balance, leisure and free-time services for children, homes for the elderly, etc.). ■ Offer other services: encouragement of leisure and free-time (sports facilities, cultural activities)
2. Developing system of social protection	Improve financial benefits granted to individuals or families (maternity and paternity benefits, high-risk pregnancies, tax benefits for birth, etc.)
3. Regarding its own administrative tasks and procedures	<p>Develop unified, more accessible and transparent work-life balance policies.</p> <p>Simplify time consuming administrative tasks and procedures so that citizens have more time at their disposal.</p>
4. Arranging and coordinating private services	Private services are very often responsible for supplying – through concessions and subcontracts – services originally offered by the public administration. In this regard, it is very important to establish quality criteria throughout the contract procedure. These criteria should be part of the required qualifications assessed by the public administration.

TYPOLGY OF POSSIBLE ACTIONS TO PROVIDE MEANS AND RESOURCES, AS WELL AS INFRASTRUCTURES TO IMPROVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

CONTEXT OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL ACTIONS
Beyond public bodies: Provision of community services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase or improve institutions which provide child, elderly or disabled care. ■ Offer financial support to enable access to institutions or social benefit for children protection or for those committed to taking care of elder or disabled relatives. ■ Determine quality criteria for family services allocation and qualified personnel training. ■ Establish other initiatives: advising of these services among the personnel working within the realm of public bodies; assessment of how public services match the needs arising from work-life balance. ■ Conduct studies about the needs and works in the area of health and social care services.

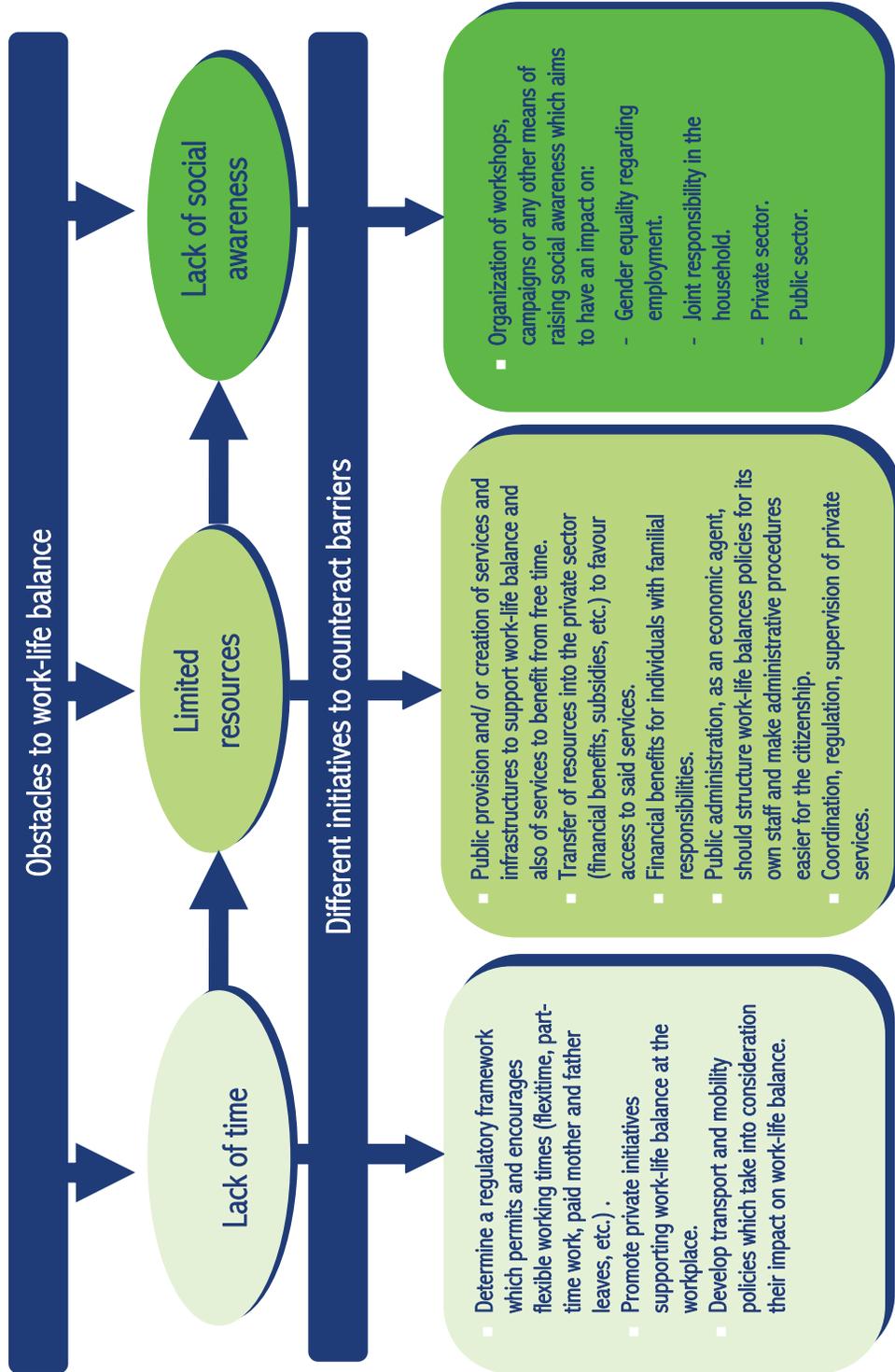
3.- Raising social awareness: encouraging JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

AREAS OF PUBLIC INTERVENTION

AREAS	DEFINITION
1. Providing equal opportunities for women and men in employment	Raise social awareness for the need of equal conditions for women and men to have access to employment, suppression of discriminatory barriers and reduction of salary gaps or occupational segregation between women and men.
2. Promoting joint responsibility within the household	Promote equitable distribution of household tasks and roles among family members, and most specifically among men and women. This should be part of a process of normalization actively supported by the public authorities, among other organisations.
3. Raising awareness within companies	Encourage companies to accept their quote of responsibility regarding their staff and within the realm of social responsibilities as part of a joint responsibility model. Besides having a positive effect on the well-being of its most immediate beneficiaries, work-life balance contributes to increasing the growth and the revenue of the company and, consequently, permits the development of a more sustainable economic model.
4. Raising awareness in other administrations belonging to different territorial and functional spheres	Raise awareness that local bodies have the power to, in turn, exert a potential impact in raising awareness in other administrations whose field of action concentrates on different territorial and functional spheres: given their privileged close position to citizens and the limited scope within definite territories regarding specific necessities, local administrations prove to be a source for best practices and innovation for other institutions.

TPOLOGY OF POSSIBLE ACTIONS TO RAISE AWARENESS IN THE SOCIETY

CONTEXT OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL INITIATIVES
<p>Beyond public organisation: information and social awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise awareness regarding working hours and schedules, in order to make work, family and school compatible. ▪ Organise direct public campaigns to encourage equal responsibility at home. These can be aimed at society in general or just specific groups (parents, employees, etc.). ▪ Launch direct campaigns, with the support of institutions and associations, to take action regarding social awareness and education. ▪ Encourage initiatives within the private sector to promote social awareness and best practices' transfer. ▪ Introduce initiatives in co-operation with the media. ▪ Implement campaigns to promote awareness in the realm of regular education and occupational training. ▪ Conduct studies about social values and work-life balance conflicts.



1.9. Norway and Spain, two different realities facing the same challenge

As it has been previously mentioned, both Norway and Spain co-operate in the Balance Project expecting to learn from each other context and aiming to exchange best practices. It is certainly true that they are **two countries with two very different realities** regarding their geographical, demographic, socioeconomic and work-related situations. However, it is also true that **they both face an identical challenge**: to achieve work-life balance for their citizens.

This section will briefly introduce the different contexts of both countries, so that it will be possible to know the socioeconomic framework in which the best practices examined in this Guide were developed.

From a geographic and demographic perspective...

Norway² has a land mass of 323,802 km², including its lakes, and is scarcely populated (4,799,252 inhabitants in 2008). The majority of the population is concentrated in 430 municipalities, only five of which have over 100,000 inhabitants. With an area of 505,990 km², Spain³ is divided into more than 8,000 municipalities and has a population which is almost ten times larger than that of Norway (46,745,807 inhabitants in January 2009). The population is predominantly clustered in large urban hubs.

The Norwegian population is slightly younger than the Spanish one. The birth rate in Norway is higher (there are 11.0 births per 1,000 inhabitants in Spain, whereas in Norway numbers rise up to 12.6 births). On the other hand, the population over 65 is higher in Spain, where the ratio of elderly people in need of care – which relates the population over 65 to the population between 15 and 65 – amounts to 24%: two more percentage points than the same ratio in Norway⁴.

From an economic perspective⁵...

Worldwide, Norway is the third largest oil exporter. With regard to *per capita* income, the country is top of the list (64,700 euro per inhabitant), second only to Luxemburg. It also exceeds by far the European average rate (EU-27=100), so that the *per capita* income index, in terms of purchasing

² Data on Norway have been obtained from Statistics Norway. The Norwegian Foreign Office has also published a volume (2009); *Minifacts on Norway* | 2009.

³ Information regarding Spain was obtained from the INE (National Institute for Statistics) database (2010). INEbase. Municipal census.

⁴ This information is taken from Eurostat (2009).

⁵ The source for such data is also Eurostat (2009) and they refer to the last available and verifiable data.

power parity, was established on 174.8 for 2008.

Figures for *per capita* income in Spain amount to 24,000 euro per inhabitant, which establishes its income level above the average in the EU-27 countries (104.3 of the gross domestic product, measured in purchasing power parity).

Public expenditure, with regard to gross domestic product, is similar in both countries (40% GDP in 2008). However, the distribution in territorial terms is different. In Spain, an in-between level with significant competences exists, the Comunidades Autonomas (regional autonomous governments), which managed a budget of 16% GDP in 2008: the same percentage that the Spanish national administration had at its disposal. On the other hand, in Norway the resources for local administrations (13% GDP) were as twice as much that of Spain (6% GDP).

WORK-RELATED ASPECTS⁶

The structure and characteristics of the labour market both in Norway and Spain are very different and they correspond to two completely distinct models.

Among the traits that define the job market in Norway, one should highlight the following: high economic activity rates (76% for men, from 15 to 64, and 70% for women) and very low unemployment rates (3.6% for women and 2.9% for men).

The Spanish job market presents a radically different scenario: lower activity rates (in the case of women it amounts to only 51%, whereas for men it comes up to 68%), higher unemployment rates, which in the second quarter of 2009 had risen up to 17.9%, with a more significant effect on women (18.3%) than on men (17.6%).

On the other hand, figures for part-time employees are higher in Norway (29.1%) than in Spain (12.9%). However, in both countries, women dominate the part-time work sphere: the percentage of Spanish women with part-time contracts constitutes 23.5%, while the number of women working part-time in Norway amounts to 44.3%, as opposed to 4.7% and 15.8% of, Spanish and Norwegian men, respectively.

With regard to the complete number of hours dedicated to paid employment, the average weekly hours in Spain amounted to 41.9 in 2008. In Norway, employees did not exceed 40 hours per week when it comes to full-time jobs. Still, in both countries women work fewer hours than men. In this respect, though, differences between genders seem to be less noticeable in Norway.

⁶ Data refer to the second quarter of 2009, since it is the most stable quarter regarding employment rates. Data have been obtained from Eurostat (2009).

Social Aspects: Long-term Care and the Use of Time⁷

In order to understand the way in which individuals try to achieve work-life balance in Norway and in Spain, different aspects should be examined. For example, how people take care of their children.

In 2007 in Norway, 61% of children under 3 years old were exclusively being cared for by their father and/or mother, as opposed to 44% in Spain. Regarding the latter, the gap existing between children under 3, who do not receive formal care (61%), and those who are exclusively cared by their father and/or mother (44%), were covered by “informal care”, that is, by other relatives or people who work in the household. With regard to children from 3 to the schooling age, the percentage of those who do not receive any sort of formal care is higher in Norway, where it amounts to 20%, than in Spain (6%). However this situation is now changing in Norway as all children 1-6 years old, have a legal right to day care at a maximum price from 1.1.2009.

It is also interesting to examine time management and its use, as well as how time is assigned to the most habitual tasks⁸. In this respect, Norwegians spend on average one hour more on leisure than Spaniards, who dedicate more time to household tasks.

Likewise, there are substantial differences between men and women, particularly in Spain: Spanish women spend four hours and 55 minutes on domestic chores as opposed to one hour and 37 minutes which men dedicate to household tasks. In Norway, women dedicate three hours and 47 minutes to household tasks, whereas men spend two hours and 21 minutes doing domestic chores.

The general trend suggests that Spanish women choose to give up leisure time in order to be able to fulfil housework, while Norwegian women prefer to reduce their working time to be able to comply with their domestic responsibilities.

⁷ The source for such data is also Eurostat (2009) and they refer to the last available and verifiable data.

⁸ Eurostat (2009) and European Time Use Survey (2006).

GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES FOR PROMOTING
WORK-LIFE BALANCE THROUGH
Local Bodies in Spain and Norway

2

2. Analysis of Best Practices Regarding Work- Life Balance

The following pages bring together the analysis of the initiatives submitted by Spanish and Norwegian local bodies and which meet the criteria required to be considered best practices. The criteria were previously defined in the methodological section of the Balance Project. Other initiatives will also be included, in order to complete the analysis.

Best practices will be examined with a view to the following categories:

1. **An Integrated Approach to Promote Work-Life Balance.** Those initiatives which adopt an integrated methodology in order to promote work-life balance locally will be examined under this heading. Integrated methodology is based on the idea that work-life balance affects the entire society: women and men, the active population and care-dependent individuals, companies and employees, public authorities and also the different areas and sectors within the local government (social services, employment, education, health, culture, etc.).
2. **One Goal: Managing and Saving Time.** The initiatives examined in this chapter have been promoted by local bodies with the objective of ensuring better time management, either through measures which intend to implement flexitime and make work places more flexible, both within the private sector and in the realm of local bodies, or through direct intervention,

that is, by adapting times, services and spaces to comply with citizen demands.

3. **Councils as Service Providers and Organisers.** The initiatives under this heading have been analysed with regard to their capacity as generators, coordinators, mediators and safeguards of the service and infrastructure which ensure work-life balance.
4. **Changing mentalities: a Question of Ideas and Awareness.** This section examines those initiatives implemented by local bodies -acting as a catalyst for mindset changing through awareness-raising and communication campaigns - with the objective of modifying the social, economic and business structures in their area to meet citizen demands and needs.

2.1. An INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PROMOTE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work-life balance proves to be a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, which not only has an effect on people's life but in which, to a greater or lesser extent, co-responsible social agents are directly involved. This circumstance makes public intervention necessary on the closest level to citizens, namely Local Bodies.

In this respect, the complex nature of work-life balance – as a way of harmonising spaces in each individual's life and ensuring participation in the personal, familial, work and domestic spheres – requires a global approach to tackle the problem from different angles of intervention.

In 2006 **Aviles Town Council** implemented a municipal plan for work-life balance named "**Aviles Finds Work-Life Balance**". The plan was divided into two differentiated areas or fields of action:

- **Area of internal intervention.** This section refers to the role of the Town Council as employer and responsible for the work conditions of its employees. The internal intervention is expressed in specific measures for work-life balance, gathered in the "Agreement for Work Conditions of Civil Servants at Aviles Town Council (2008-2011)".
- **Area of external intervention.** This area comprises measures and initiatives designed to support work life balance among citizens. In this respect, the Town Council has prioritised the **development of services promoting work-life balance** in three essential fields of action: education (schools providing after-school care and dining services for pupils, municipal kindergartens for children under 3 and activities for children during school holidays), educational training and employment (a municipal play centre for children under 3, whose parents, women mostly, attend any educational training, career guidance activity, etc., offered or financed by the Town Council) and social services (home assistance services).

In the past years **Castelldefels Town Council** has experienced quite an evolution: in 2003 a motion was passed in plenary assembly to “improve and promote work-life balance among citizens with the objective of creating a new model of daily life and of the uses of time”. Since then all agents involved have shown commitment, awareness and political support and have always partaken in public events, meetings and debates on the issue. Their efforts, continuous communication during the expansion of the plan and preparation, crowned with the implementation of the programme in 2005, as part of the Equal Opportunities Plan.

The Town Council **understands work-life balance as a basic right of its citizens** which should be supported by mainstreaming social policies and by urban infrastructures and services intended to improve balance in citizens’ life, both in the domestic sphere and beyond. Public intervention is also directed towards policies, which aim to transform “masculine ways of approaching and being part of the world”, and to “increase the value of care-giving tasks”. From this perspective, it is essential to involve men in the familial and domestic realm, ensuring that they commit to joint responsibility.

A roadmap with initiatives regarding the use of time was designed with these objectives in mind. Those initiatives focussed particularly in the areas of awareness-raising, services, adjustment of times, information technology and communication and travelling. Initiatives were designed both at an internal level, within the local body, and also at an external one, addressed to citizens.

According to the **Institute for Gender Equality in Navarre** (Instituto Navarro para la Igualdad, INAI), public policies should support women and men in their quest for work-life balance by promoting more and better measures and services with regard to long-term care, new forms of labour organisation, human resources management and working conditions in local bodies and companies.

The Institute implemented the **Local Agreement Programme for Work-life Balance**, which has been promoted in different towns in the Autonomous Region of Navarre. The programme provides **technical aid** for putting the Agreement into practice, as well as a wide range of **educational training** programmes for the agents involved and **material to raise social awareness**. It also provides **financial support** for some of the agreed initiatives. A general methodology has been designed to put the following steps into action: achieving an Agreement within the Town Council, organising and creating the necessary committees, defining the Agreement’s contents, organising work sessions, delimiting the areas of intervention, setting the mechanisms for monitoring and assessment and, lastly, signing the Agreement.

In 2006 **Estella-Lizarra Town Council** started to implement the local Agreement “**Diffusion Spreads Work-Life Balance: Knowledge and Awareness Enable Understanding and Involvement**”. The agreement is now encouraging a **change of mentality which intends to balance out the allocation of domestic duties and tasks and to achieve a more equitable use of time**. This strategy of intervention revolves around **awareness-raising**, by promoting campaigns about co-responsible parenting in co-operation with schools and, also, the active involvement of the media. **Education** also plays a relevant role: it is not only addressed to men, with the objective of making them aware of their responsibility regarding domestic tasks and child and long-term care, but also to determinate agents, whose role is central to ensure a change of mentality in Estella-Lizarra (school teachers, social workers at women’s shelters, personnel at hospitals, midwives...).

Work-life balance services represent a central field of action in Estella. They are understood as a **right for citizens, but they should never be conceived as mere strategies to finding balance in women’s life**. The Local Agreement objectives include supporting pioneering and necessary services, such as the *jubiloteka* (a space, where moderate care-dependent elderly people can take part in activities, games, workshops, etc.) or the *ludobebeteka* (child-care service during Summer, Easter and Christmas). The objective is that over the time these services become normalised and part of the municipal offer, so that work-life balance does not hinder the necessary joint responsibility between men and women regarding domestic tasks and child or long-term care.

In a different context, yet still related to social agreements favouring work-life balance, **Granada Town Council** set in motion a **Work-life Balance Consultation Board** in the realm of a project supported by the EU-Community Initiative EQUAL. The Board is constituted by local social agents (Local Bodies, trade unions, business and social organisations, etc.) and is intended to efficiently give an answer to questions related to work-life balance.

The Board was the origin of the current **Local Agreement for Work-life Balance in the city of Granada**, which is meant to offer social, political and economic agents, room for decision making processes with regard to a global understanding of work-life balance.

The integral policies implemented by the Department of New Social Uses of Time (NUST) in **Barcelona City Council** are based on a thesis that goes beyond work-life balance and joint responsibility to concentrate on the **uses of time**. The Department argues that work-life balance is a term usually associated with women and that disregards, how time and space are organised, i.e. timetables or the organisation of equipment in companies. From this point of view, the Department of New Social Uses of Time strives to **promote changes in the way that individuals use and manage their time**, by taking steps to modify social attitudes, so that men and women are capable of harmonising their uses of time, thus contributing to making a more equitable society by improving social welfare and the system of equal opportunities. With that objective in mind, mainstreaming measures were introduced to ensure a better use and management of time – an essential element for a good quality of life – in Barcelona. Specifically, the local policies regarding the use of time, which have been implemented in the framework of the **New Social Uses of Time Programme**, consider two fundamental elements: on the one hand, neighbourhood or proximity policies have been set in motion to provide a solution to daily problems, as it is the case with the programme “Neighbourhood time, educational shared time”; on the other hand, local policies encourage the use and implementation of information and communication technologies (ICT), which should assist individuals in their use of time and increase the competitiveness of companies. In the same vein, several campaigns have been developed to increase the use of the website “*bcn.es time*” (*bcn.es tiempo*), as a means of fulfilling administrative tasks and procedures online, or also of the “Network of Businesses for New Social Uses of Time”, designed to promote changes in the organisation of time and space in companies.

The Department takes the responsibility to reflect upon, cause a debate and raise awareness among the population and the rest of the social agents with regard to the scope and applications of the uses of time, in order to spread the idea that citizens have the right to decide how to use their time. In this sense, some initiatives are as follows: “Time Lab” – an instrument to make policies regarding uses of time more visible – the development of a “Plan of Studies” or of the so-called “Time Dossiers”.

Additionally, the Department encourages online communication as a means of exchanging initiatives and knowledge and discussing different policies with regard to the use of time. Barcelona is a member of the “Network of European Cities” and, together with the Provincial Government of Barcelona, supports the “Network of Towns and Cities for New Uses of Time”.

Given that in Norway the support and promotion of work-life balance is closely linked to establishing equal opportunities between men and women, **Vest Agder County Council**, located at the southern end of Norway, set in motion the **Regional Gender Equality Council**.

This Council aims to improve the individuals' quality of life living in this area, which is characterised by its unfavourable situation with regard to equal opportunities in relation to the rest of Norway. The objectives of this body, which consists of different regional social agents (regional government, businesses associations and trade unions, university, the regional delegation of the National Agency for Social Welfare and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Bodies), are to introduce **gender equality as a mainstreaming principle both in regional policies and development strategies**.

With the objective of pursuing debate, the County supports research on gender equality and participation at regional and national conferences on that issue. The experimental project **"Free Choice"**, put into action by the Regional Council for Gender Equality in Vest Agder, is particularly relevant in this respect. This initiative is designed to support students (particularly those aged 13 to 14), in making a free choice regarding their education and career, preventing their decision-making process from being influenced by any gender stereotypes emanating from different sources (family, society, etc.). Among the measures implemented, one should highlight the appointment of male caregivers in kindergartens, so that children see, for example, how a man prepares a baby's bottle and are then able to break down traditional gender roles very early in life.

CONCLUSIONS ON HOW TO IMPLEMENT INTEGRATED INITIATIVES REGARDING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The fundamental elements and features, which have been considered key to the success of the integrated initiatives encouraging work-life balance, are listed below:

1. **Integration:** in order to conceive and implement the different measures it is necessary to co-ordinate input from a great variety of fields of actions, such as education, professional training and employment, social services, women's services, health, transport, urban planning, etc.
2. **Mainstreaming** among the different fields of action and the programmes being implemented. Initiatives are considered interdepartmental because a) they are co-ordinated by a Department (i.e. Women Services, Social Welfare, New Uses of Time) in cooperation with the rest of departments working on work-life balance programmes, or b) because they involve collaboration between each department and its local services.
3. **Leadership and political support** are particularly relevant as key elements to enhance this type of initiatives, which involve and demand not only the participation and efforts of technical personnel, but also of all regional social agents.
4. The application of **rationality criteria** also contributes to the success of initiatives. In this respect it is important to maximise existing resources through co-ordinated management and also to avoid the doubling and overlapping of programmes and initiatives.
5. All initiatives examined respond to the following methodological process: **analysis-planning–assessment**. The first step is the diagnosis of needs and resources. Objectives and measures are then determined, and the suitability of actions is also evaluated. Finally, the monitoring and assessment mechanisms are defined. With this regard, social awareness and education of the individuals responsible for developing the initiative, have proved essential to obtain the desired results.

2.2. One Goal: Managing and Saving Time

Time is a sparse, but also a very versatile resource. Its use, prioritisation and distribution have an effect on our quality of life. In this regard, a further obstacle to work-life balance is **inefficient time-management.**, which prevents society from achieving the balance in life it strives for. If we are unable to maximise the time we have at our disposal, our attempt to adjust and harmonise time in our lives – personal time, family time, work time, leisure time, time for the community, etc. – can become an almost impossible task.

It should be specified that an imbalance among different aspects in life is not only caused by the excessive importance given to just one of these aspects, but also by inefficient time – or, indeed, space–management, when trying to satisfy them. The inadequate distribution of the working day, the rigidity of working and opening times, time-consuming commuting or the lack of both transport and urban planning adapted to citizens needs and time, are usually obstacles to work-life balance.

2.2.1. FLEXIBILITY IN WORKING HOURS AND PLACE OF WORK

Traditionally, the question of work-life balance has been approached from the perspective of **the pairing of “work” and “time”, or “work-time”.** Behind this interrelation, lies a **gendered work division**, that is, productive work being associated with men as “bread-winners”, with employment and a working day, as well as with rights and obligations as citizens. Productive work was opposed to reproductive work, which was confined to the domestic sphere, socially and economically invisible and, also, associated with domestic chores as well as with child and long-term care.

In this respect, one should emphasise the central role of **working times** as a decisive factor to understanding the process of industrialisation and the structure that organises production processes, but which also **defines ways of thinking and living in industrial societies.** The relevance of the term “work-time” goes beyond academic or intellectual debate: work-life balance has generally been a significant component of employment and social policies in Europe since the Extraordinary European Council Meeting on Employment, which took place in Luxemburg in 1997.

Ever since then, work-life balance has been an item on the social, legislative and political agenda. In 2006, Spain created a sub-commission within the Employment and Social Welfare Commission to compile a report which intended to analyse the organisation, suitability and flexibility of working times, as well as the possibilities of adapting working times to favour work-life balance.

The truth is that, despite the improvement of work conditions regarding work-life balance, **remunerated working time still constitutes one of the main focuses in our lives and cities.** Very often remunerated working time monopolises our days, so that other activities and times are disregarded

and pushed into the background, becoming invisible. Patricia Hewitt⁹, considering traditional gender roles, has carried these ideas to an extreme and asserted that “the time that men invest in remunerated work determines the time they have for their families; whereas the time women invest in their families, determines the amount of time they have at their disposal for remunerated work”.

Nonetheless, as mentioned before, we are currently experiencing a change in this model: **more flexible organisation of time and space or the new adjustment of career paths according to the different life stages are** some of the main social demands.

These demands are partly sustained by society, but also encouraged by the private sector, albeit with different objectives in mind. The following are some of the **socio-demographic factors which induce change**¹⁰:

- Incorporation of women into the labour market.
- Conflicts related to the difficulties arising from reconciling time allocation (work, school, leisure, services).
- Scarce time which parents have at their disposal for educating their children.
- Increase in ageing population and needs in the realm of long-term care.
- 20th century diseases (among others stress, anxiety, depression or addiction to work).
- Increase in traveling distances between home and workplace reduces free time which people have at their disposal after work.

However, for various reasons, the private sector also favours more flexible working times and human resource management. Firstly, the current economic environment is defined by strong competition and an economy founded on a service sector that creates added value. **Human resources have a strong position within the economic scenario, with talent and human capital playing an essential role.**

Nevertheless, demographic and sociological trends, which are influenced by such aspects as changes in the perception of balance (personal and professional), population ageing, female incorporation into the labour market, disappearance of certain professions, etc., result in greater difficulties attracting and retaining human capital.

Bearing in mind that work-life balance is essential for individual development, **work-life balance policies can become a means of obtaining a sustainable competitive advantage**, of preserving and encouraging one of the most important assets which companies have: the human capital. Thus,

⁹ Prieto, C. y Ramos, R. (1999). “El tiempo de trabajo: entre la competitividad y los tiempos sociales”, in F. Miguelez y J. Prieto (dir.). *Las relaciones de empleo en España. Siglo XXI*, Madrid, p. 484.

¹⁰ Chinchilla, N. y Leon, C. (2005). *Guía de las buenas prácticas de la empresa flexible*. Consejería de Empleo y Mujer de la Comunidad de Madrid y Centro Internacional de Trabajo y Familia del IESE. Madrid.

insofar as these policies **ensure the optimisation of working time and space management**, they constitute an authentic opportunity to improve the functioning of any organisation, through **efficient human resources management**.

2.2.1.1. Involvement in Local Businesses – Incentives for Private Initiatives

When approaching this context, the following question arises: **what role should Local Bodies play in the development and implementation of policies designed to achieve work-life balance?**

As shown by the best practices included in this Guide, public intervention does not consist of imposing particular work-life balance formulae. First of all, that possibility goes beyond their competence, and furthermore there is not just one way of acting but rather, behaviors are defined by the activity, position or company's size. In this respect, **Local Bodies are responsible for supplying information, raising social awareness and motivating companies through incentives to re-think working time and space and, by doing so, improve work-life balance.**

Interventions are different in each Town or City Council, but they all share a common element with regard to motivating companies and raising their awareness regarding work-life balance: the potential **increase in productivity**. This key strategy entails the following benefits in relation to human resources management:

1. **Work climate improves** and results in more effective communication between the management and the employees, which boosts the latter's motivation regarding their work. In turn, this **motivation** results in more efficiency, which improves work performance and productivity, as well as the quality of the service being rendered.
2. **Improvement of both women and men incorporation into the labour market**, since human capital is maximised and retained.
3. **Work absenteeism is reduced** while the staff's health is strengthened (due to less stress).
4. **Employees' loyalty to their company is reinforced** since staff are satisfied with the human resources management. The investment in personnel is thus optimised.

The Department of New Social Uses of Time at **Barcelona City Council** set in motion the **Network of Businesses for New Social Uses of Time**, with the idea that **companies**, as focal points for social structuring, have a central responsibility in re-defining the pairing "productivity-time".

The objective of this Network is that companies **share and exchange experiences**, knowledge, initiatives and wisdom. Such companies have individually taken steps to support gender equality and to facilitate the personal and work time harmonisation, by improving commuting

times and access to information and communication technologies. With that objective, a number of initiatives, including educational meetings, debates and talks, have been organised. In addition, a “Handbook with good examples for saving time” has been published and a free counseling service has also been put into operation.

The Network of Businesses for New Social Uses of Time represents a **public recognition for the companies that integrate it and reflects their constant striving for innovation**. An informative DVD with several practical examples of the newly implemented initiatives has been released in order to spread their achievements. Among their numerous initiatives, the following are also mentioned:

- Enable team-works and the lowest working categories to manage their own timetables, in order to make individuals responsible for their time-management.
- Professional training within working hours.
- Intensify working times, that is, concentrate working time in the morning, afternoon or evening and establish free Friday afternoons or Monday mornings during Summer time.
- When possible, support autonomous remote-use of ICTs, emphasising results rather than presence at the work place, in other words: encourage working towards objectives.
- Offer mothers and fathers the possibility of returning to work before the end or maternity or paternity leaves, through autonomous remote-use of ICTs.
- Create virtual spaces which support knowledge management by employing on-line resources that allow employees to save time and encourage internal communication.
- Maximise the possibilities offered by ICT to make working time and space more flexible and to save costs.

Such a Network represents an **added value for other companies which can employ these initiatives as examples and inspire new initiatives**, whilst it also promotes changes within the entrepreneurial culture.

In a context which grants special value to the **Social Responsibility of Companies (RSE)**, recognition and public visibility represent an opportunity for **Local Bodies to encourage companies to implement initiatives supporting work-life balance**, so that companies commit to their environment and adopt social and environmental objectives, beyond their economic objectives.

Along these lines, the **Alcorcon Town Council** has created the **Award for Work-Life Balance - Business Category**, while the **Valdemoro Town Council** confers an **Award for Businesses, Associations, the Media, Trade Unions and other Public or Private Bodies supporting the Incorporation of Best Practices in Work-Life Balance** to businesses in its area.

Both awards constitute a **mechanism to raise social awareness and inform companies and other entities about the benefits of work-life balance**. They also show society that the development of best practices regarding work-life balance has an impact on the quality of life, improving it and, therefore, also being of an advantage for companies adopting such best practices. The commitment of their employees to those practices also improves the productivity of the company.

Every year a public call both in Alcorcon and in Valdemoro invites companies to take part in this awarding of distinctions. In Valdemoro's approach, other entities are also invited to participate, most specifically the media – in their capacity as platforms to advocate the issue, create debate and change mentalities – but also associations, because they can contribute with strategies to supporting change according to their objectives and field of action.

As part of the awards' requirements, participants are asked to supply the necessary information about the work-life balance measures which they have implemented. These same requirements also establish the judging criteria. The **prizes are awarded during a public event which is widely publicised**, in order to increase the recognition of the companies taking part and to improve their public image.

Within the framework of these awards, both Town Councils have composed a **Guide to Best Practices Addressed to the Business Sector** which functions as a support and counseling tool to encourage the implementation of measures designed to improve the work and personal life of individuals working in the area.

In addition to the aforementioned awards, Valdemoro Town Council has also implemented a support mechanism, which is aimed at different bodies and **designed to introduce initiatives favouring work-life balance**. The mechanism works as follows:

- All companies in Valdemoro are informed via email of the existence of this service.
- Practical material is designed in the form of cards, containing the methodology needed to implement work-life balance measures.
- Companies are offered the possibility of individualised tutorials (in-house, online or on the telephone), in which they are shown how to create their own plans to promote work-life balance.
- Those plans are then examined by a team of experts, who advise the Town Council to award public recognition to those companies which have correctly completed the plan.

Similarly, **Fuenlabrada Town Council** has also developed a “**Guide to Best Practices in Business in Fuenlabrada**”, with the objective of advertising the best practices implemented in local businesses and also the organisations in charge. The Fuenlabrada Guide includes a summary of the guidelines which regulate this realm, as well as a set of strategies or mechanisms developed by companies to favour work-life balance. The analysis of the initiatives implemented by ten companies is also incorporated in the Guide.

The **employment of work-life balance strategies** in companies, far from representing an extra cost, **reduces work absenteeism and increases work stability, motivation among staff members and, consequently, the company’s productivity.** This was the outcome of the initiatives implemented by Councils in Barcelona and Valdemoro, and it attests that the most flexible companies are the ones that have adapted most easily to a situation of economic crisis.

On the other hand, several studies conducted to examine how equality and work-life balance can be promoted, have concluded that the manifest will of the different bodies, the representatives of the private sector and the social agents and/or employees to engage in constructive dialogue is a fundamental condition for success.

Based on this same principle, the Councils in **Barcelona, Vilafranca del Penedes, l’Hospitalet, de la Seu d’Urgell, Molins de Rei and Mollerusa** implemented an initiative named **Best Possible Model for Work-Life Balance in Businesses**, in collaboration with other entities (universities, businesses schools, trade unions and business associations).

This initiative advocates a **business organisation model which adapts to the companies’ particular needs**, with the objective of abolishing all inequalities between women and men regarding uses of time. The support of key agents within companies – human resources department and trade union representatives – is required to implement this model.

The initiative compiled a survey to analyse the real situation and real demands of working people, in order to obtain accurate data and implement an appropriate model. On-line training courses were also designed and completed with the aim of raising social awareness regarding work-life balance, taking into consideration the workers needs and the efficiency and profitability of business environments. A best practices model was also designed, with the purpose of defining efficient formulae of organizing work. These formulae should be transferrable and individually employable, in keeping with the different needs and nature of businesses.

CONCLUSIONS ON HOW TO IMPLEMENT INITIATIVES TO INVOLVE LOCAL BUSINESSES

The following conclusions can be inferred from the analysis presented by Local Bodies:

1. Among others, the role of Local Bodies is focused on **encouraging companies** to incorporate measures to help harmonise the use of time. In many cases, companies perceive work-life balance as a conflict with negative consequences for them. For this reason, Local Bodies should approach **work-life balance not so much as a “right for workers”**, since such approach leads to a no-win situation, but rather as a **condition to increasing productivity and a requirement in an environment defined by globalised and technological competition**.
2. To a great extent, the success of the intervention depends on the level of **commitment and involvement of all parties** (Local Bodies, trade unions, business associations, managers, employees, etc.). In this respect, **education and social awareness prove to be key elements** when trying to achieve a proactive attitude, since the ultimate objective is to develop a new organisational culture, in which the company's needs are compatible with those of the staff members and in which agreements are reached on a collective basis and not only on the individual one.

2.2.1.2. Councils as an employer

The **role of Councils as employers cannot be overlooked** when examining the concerns and problems which distress their personnel, including, harmonising the time they invest in their professional, personal and familial life. Local Bodies should benefit from this **opportunity to become an engine that boosts a global change in the rest of society, by serving as a mirror and a benchmark.**

Measures supporting work-life balance belong to a process of **updating and improving the quality of public services.** Just as in the private sector, work-life balance has an impact on the quality of the service offered to citizens. In fact, the Spanish “Find Work-Life Balance (“Plan Concilia”), an integral plan for work-life balance in the Public Administration which came into force in 2006, has introduced a set of measures to make work times more flexible, increase the amount of leave available and implement other advantages to assist its employees in achieving work-life balance.

A large number of **initiatives can be implemented with the objective of best harmonising times for personnel in Public Administration. These include the following:**

- **Measures to strengthen and improve general regulation:**
 - In relation to paid leave: extension of maternity, paternity and lactation leave, concentration of lactation time, extension of paid leave in case of hospitalisation or death of relatives, leave for doctor’s appointments or children’s class tutor, etc.
 - With regard to leave: extension of child-care or long-term care leave, etc.
 - With regard to reduction of working hours: extension of age limit for applying for a reduction of working hours, temporary reductions in a number of cases , etc.
 - Other unpaid leave: possibility of unpaid vacation.

- **Measures to make the distribution of working time and space more flexible:**
 - Distribution of number of hours: flexible timetables (starting time, finishing time, breaks), distribution of weekly hours (compact work-week), compact work-day, work times being adapted to transport and school schedules...
 - With regard to the number of working hours: part time work, reduced working hours...
 - With regard to work space: working from home, remote work...

- **Measures to bring child-care and long-term care closer to the citizens:**
 - Inform citizens of the existence of centres specialised in long-term care.
 - Book places in nurseries close to work-place.
 - Offer financial support to cover nursery costs, etc.

Norway excels in this respect: **flexible working time and space** are the norm not only in **Kristiansand Council**, but also in the Public Administration elsewhere, as well as in the majority of the private sector. Working time is compact – either from 8:00 to 15:00 or from 8:00 to 16:00 in Summer and Winter respectively – and in case of split shifts, starting and finishing times are flexible with a 30-minute lunch break. Working from home is also a common practice, as long as the required tasks lend themselves to that option. Since this system was implemented in Norway, **satisfaction and motivation levels among workers have increased considerably, which has had an impact on productivity rates**. Nonetheless, it should not be forgotten that this form of work organization is based on mutual trust, between workers and their superiors, as well as on the **decentralisation of the decision making** process and on values such as self-organisation and self-regulation of working time and space.

However, the progress made in Norway in terms of flexible working hours and the increase in **part time work has led to an accentuated segmentation of the work market with regard to the types of contract, with women playing a central role in this scenario**. Ultimately, women have very often been forced into moonlighting, compelled to receive lower salaries or retirement benefits and to suffer worse work conditions. This situation reaches a point of no return when women are denied, on many occasions, the possibility of opting for full-time work. **Kristiansand Council** has confronted this problem by implementing a pilot initiative, which, under the title **“Right to Work Full Time for Part-Time Employees”**, offers full-time employment to workers in the socio-health field. In order to achieve its objectives, the municipality has set in motion several measures such as reorganising working plans where feasible or covering full-time vacancies with part-time employers wishing to expand their working time.

In the realm of the Spanish local administration, two initiatives show the possibility of finding solutions regarding work-life balance –once the **situation has been determined through an in-depth diagnosis** – and the relevance of **ICT as an essential means of making administrative organisation more flexible**.

Cordoba County Council encouraged the **“Study to Encourage Work-Life Balance Among the Employees of Cordoba County Council”** as a forum for discussion and **the development a new work-life balance culture**. To this end, the study fulfilled the following purposes:

- The Study precisely defined the **situation of staff with regard to how they make use of the rights and benefits which support work-life balance**. These rights and benefits have been made part of the internal regulation through the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the plans for equality within the institution. The results of the Study put emphasis on the deficiencies with regard to joint responsibility, underlining that men hardly took advantage of their rights to balance their professional and personal spheres.

- Taking the conclusions of this study as a basis, an attempt was made to **homogenise the rights for all employees – both as tenured civil servants or personnel on a contract – and to encourage the use of such rights**. Having access to information eases a transparent bargaining process between all parties.

Castelldefels Town Council

On the other hand, **Castelldefels Town Council** has employed ICT as a tool to make working times more flexible by setting in motion **Experiences of Teleworking in Castelldefels**. A pilot programme was implemented and the area-test methodology was applied (group of people working from home and groups of analysis) for a period of five months. The chosen methodology together and teleworking being tested in different positions and workplaces were two central elements for the success of the initiative. The programme resulted in a final report, in which all findings were considered, and that also led to a SWOT-analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). In light of the positive results, the possibility of working from home will be incorporated into the city's Plan for Equality.

CONCLUSIONS ON HOW LOCAL BODIES AS EMPLOYERS CAN IMPLEMENT INITIATIVES IN THEIR REALM

The following conclusions were drawn from the analysis of initiatives regarding the role of Local Bodies as employers:

1. Local Bodies cannot remain strangers to the lack of work-life balance among their employees. They should also attempt to **be seen as an example** by presenting themselves as driving forces for change.
2. A wide range of possibilities exists to improve work-life balance among staff members, from **expanding and improving general regulations** (paid leave, voluntary leave or reduction in working hours) to introducing **measures to make time and space more flexible** (compact daily or weekly hours, part-time work, working from home, etc.) or **bringing child and long-term care services closer to citizens**.
3. The results of the initiatives reveal the following basic facts:
 - A new work philosophy based on self-management and mutual trust is required to make working times and spaces more flexible.
 - Workers should have the **right and freedom to choose among different options**: full or part time work, working in-house or working from home, without them being discriminated against or treated differently.
 - **New technologies** are fundamental tools to improve flexibility.
 - Besides implementing **measures** for favouring work-life balance, Local Bodies should **advise staff members on the existence of such measures, so that they can benefit from their options**. This is not always the case and it is therefore necessary to make the corresponding diagnosis.

2.2.2. “A CITY FOR CITIZENS”: TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY POLICIES

The citizens spare time has become one of the backbones of the new social model and, in this respect, it is essential that cities – the local environment which is closest to citizens – are adapted to their inhabitants needs in order to achieve work-life balance.

In a number of cases, the way in which a city or town is organised makes it difficult for its inhabitants to achieve work-life balance; the following examples will help illustrate this idea:

- **The incompatibility of work times and the opening hours of (public or private) services.**
- **The fact that industrial, commercial or leisure areas are situated** in isolated areas, far from the city centre generates problems with regard to transport, reduces the existence of proximity services close to the workplace, increases the distance between care-dependent people and their families as well as the distance workers have to travel to reach their workplace.
- The disregard of gender issues in **urban planning.**

The town or city is both an individual and a collective space in which all life activities are developed. Taking this idea as a starting point, **local public policies face the challenge of ensuring work-life balance, improving the coordination of times and services supporting citizens and avoiding long and complicated travelling.**

In this respect, Councils should define a new structure for local environments which takes time-management into consideration: diversification of times and the uses of spaces and services, mobility, urban planning and design.

Nonetheless, in order to start working towards this objective, it is essential **to spot the specific needs of the citizens with regard to the use and existence of local services and spaces.**

Lugo Town Council compiled a “**Report on Uses of Time in the City**”, with the objective of understanding how time is structured in Lugo and gathering information with the purpose of preparing a time management plan.

The report was based on a sociodemographic description derived from quantitative data and qualitative research consisting of individual and group interviews with key agents in the city. Once this information was obtained, a chart was designed to show the uses of time of public services addressed to citizens. Finally, the chart allowed the City Council to determine the **weaknesses which needed to be considered in order to achieve efficient time management in the city.**

The **urban time management plans** constitute one of the tools which Councils have at hand to promote work-life balance, since they coordinate times in the city (opening times in public offices, shops and public and private services, including cultural activities, libraries, entertainment or transport) with the familial, personal and professional demands of the citizens. Town and City Councils are compelled to constantly revise and adapt them.

Along these lines, **Vilagarcía de Arousa Town Council** has implemented a **Time Management Plan**. Firstly, an information campaign was set in motion among local public and private entities with a double objective: to encourage participation and to inform people about the advantages of implementing such an initiative. Secondly, a diagnosis was made in order to establish the reality of existing times in Vilagarcía de Arousa. And, lastly, a so-called “Roundtable Committee”, was created in order to analyse proposals and adopt the appropriate measures and responsibilities.

Beyond time structures, it is also necessary for Town Councils to **schedule urban and mobility planning in order to reconcile and organize times**. Such demand could be specified in the following aspects¹¹:

1. Consider the impact of the urban environment on the daily lives of individuals, particularly women, as well as on the design and arrangement of territory, cities, town and districts.
2. Re-think the way public spaces are organised so that such organization ensures, supports and promotes safety, civility and community life.
3. Stress the relevance of spaces which provide general services (markets, support services addressed to the general public, schools, cultural or sports centres, etc.) and create awareness of them as focal points in the city.
4. Take into consideration the knowledge which women possess – as users of the city – in relation to work and daily life responsibilities, when making decisions regarding urban arrangement and the planning and location of services.
5. Redefine the existing notion of mobility and the role of public and private transport in relation to the way the different social groups use urban space.
6. Bear in mind that public transport should respond to the needs and demands of all social groups (children, teenagers, elderly people, men and women, disabled people) and all sorts of uses (work and/ or professional travelling, personal or daily life travelling).

¹¹ Fundació Maria Aurèlia Capmany (2007). *Conciliació i nous usos del temps*. Institut Català de les Dones, Generalitat de Catalunya, Barcelona.

The importance of urban mobility, encouraged **Santa Coloma de Gramenet Town Council** to introducing a plan to **Improve Accessibility to Enable Family and Personal Life Balance** with the purpose of ensuring people's mobility and, subsequently, improving work-life balance and uses of time.

The initiative consisted of installing mechanical elements, such as escalators, moving walkways and lifts, outside specific urban areas with slopes above 10%, in order to avoid inclines between the different streets and to improve environmental urbanisation. This initiative makes daily travelling easier and less time consuming, improving existing routes and creating others.

In this respect, it is important to draw attention to the plan to implement **“safe school routes”**. These are preferential routes, chosen by pupils when going to school and equipped with special safety measures with regard to signalling, surveillance, etc. This sort of initiative is an example of what it means to turn a city into a space for citizens. The routes provide children with more autonomy in their travelling, allowing them to have contact with their daily environment, their district or their neighbours, offering them a new learning sphere, promoting healthy travelling habits (by bike or on foot), which have in turn positive effects both on their health and on the environment, and improving socialisation and integration in the community.

The local administration will also benefit from this initiative, since traffic jams at schools or on access routes will be reduced, which efficiently results in a decrease in pollution and an increase in safety around the school.

Even if the number of Councils which have implemented **school routes** is very high, one should highlight the initiative implemented by **Barcelona City Council** in the realm of the Mobility Agreement (2000-2004).

This initiative was structured in three stages. During the first stage, awareness-raising and educational programmes were set in motion, routes were designed and the necessary material (t-shirts, banners, waistcoats...) was prepared. The second phase consisted of examining safety along the route and putting the route into operation; that is, children – accompanied by monitors – started using it. In a final stage, conclusions and proposals for improvements were presented.

Conclusions on how to implement initiatives regarding time management in cities

The analysis of the initiatives implemented in this context leads to the following results:

1. Local Bodies face the challenge of making **towns or cities inhabitant-friendly so that citizens** can find balance between the different spheres in life.
2. With that objective in mind, public policies should take the following measures into consideration:
 - **Co-ordinating times** in the realm of general and supporting services.
 - Co-ordinating travelling and **improving urban planning and mobility**, in order to reconcile times.
3. The following **initiatives** have been implemented in this area: research on the uses of time in cities, time management plans for the local area or school routes.
4. **Information and raising awareness** campaigns, as well as **political commitment**, are **Key success factors** for these initiatives.

2.3. Councils as service providers and organisers

In numerous cases, the lack of time available to **achieve work-life balance** is not a result of inadequate distribution of working hours, lack of flexibility at work or time-consuming travelling, but rather reflects the **constraints in certain resources and necessary infrastructures**.

An excess of duties in the domestic and familial spheres together with professional obligations, compels citizens to resort to public or private services, which substitute their own personal involvement in these tasks. **The demand for certain domestic, educational or personal care services has evidently increased**, even in cases when the person has complete time flexibility at their disposal, which should enable them to achieve work-life balance. In other instances, however, this balance remains out of reach due to the limited availability of leisure and free-time services, as it is usually the case in rural or isolated areas.

There are, thus, **needs to be met which Town and City Councils could satisfy** by directly providing goods and services, coordinating and regulating the already existing services or by granting the private sector a variety of subsidies or other incentives which promote the creation of these types of services, working, in a word, for the ultimate goal of achieving work-life balance.

To do so, **Councils intervene**, to a greater or lesser extent, with the objective of harmonising the uses of time. Firstly, they **provide citizens with access to services and infrastructures** that have an impact on achieving this objective. In particular, those services and infrastructures are:

- A. Services supporting work-life balance designed to reduce familial responsibilities and domestic chores:
 - Addressed to child-care.
 - Addressed to care-dependent persons.
- B. Other services, alternatives or spaces designed to entirely develop the personal sphere and the active use of leisure and free-time (sports centres, cultural activities, etc.).
- C. Other services (time banks).

These services can be structured in two different forms:

- Directly: through public provision and private or public production. That means that these services can be produced by the private sector, but financed or supported by the local administration, either through subventions, administrative concessions, agreements or any other mechanism of financial support.
- Indirectly: in the form of resources transfer or funding for families by bearing certain costs of services supporting work-life balance (such as financial aid for nursery schools, for long-term care of dependent people, etc.) in order to ensure that citizens have access to all work-life services, no matter what their nature is.

The role played by Local Bodies in the arrangement and co-ordination of public and private services within their area should not be forgotten either. In this respect, Councils should:

- Promote and supervise support services with appropriate quality standards and, when applicable, provide the necessary control and social supervision mechanisms.
- Evaluate what services are focusing on, how they are designed and whether they meet the old and new demands which arise from all segments of the population.
- Encourage that detailed information with regard to services policies is supplied to citizens, so that they become aware of their existence and know how to use them.

2.3.1. WHO CAN LOOK AFTER MY CHILDREN WHEN I AM UNABLE TO?

Social changes and, most specifically, the **incorporation of women into the labour market has instigated an increasing need for child-care**, since the major part of the time which was spent in domestic chores and child-care is now invested in remunerated work. Many studies and also European authorities hint at the lack of child-care services as being one of the main obstacles for the incorporation of women into the labour market.

The reality, founded on traditional stereotypes, shows that many women are obliged to expand their time to be able to take care of the same domestic duties as they did before and, on top of that, to comply with working hours which are not very flexible. In addition, when mothering, women cannot be substituted by any other person in the fulfilment of their care-giving tasks. Despite the increase of females in the labour force, there are certain tasks within the private sphere in which equitable distribution of responsibilities is still non-existent.

Making the different duties compatible often becomes an unattainable goal, **because time is a scarce and limited resource. While fulfilling those obligations within the professional, personal or familial spheres, one cannot simultaneously take care of a child.**

The solution to this problem, a problem with a higher incidence among women, **involves creating work-life balance policies which support and promote child-care services, also encouraging their use.** However, it is not just a case of implementing work-life balance policies for women, since that is precisely what this Guide expressly disapproves of, but rather a case of supporting work-life balance from the approach of joint responsibility between women and men.

The goal is, therefore, to find short-term solutions for the conflict which – mainly – women have to face and, at the same time, work to change social structures and to achieve full joint-responsibility. All this requires time investment and strategies such as the ones outlined below.

Since social needs with regard to child-care first were noticed, Town and City Councils have implemented work-life balance services in this respect. Such services, which have been regarded as best practices, are meant to solve two different sorts of problems: on the one hand, incompatibility of

working hours and school hours and, on the other hand, the impossibility of taking care of children at certain moments, due to either professional or personal obligations.

The **discrepancy between working and school times** leads to having to resort to a child-care service in those intervals of time in which work and school do not coincide.

Castellon Town Council and
Vilagarcia de Arousa
Town Council

Various local bodies, as in **Castellon (Morning and Afternoon School)** or **Vilagarcia de Arousa (Early Bird Plan)**, have chosen to **offer child-care services for children aged 3 to 12** in all or some schools. On school days, schools open in the morning from 7:30 to 9:00 in Castellon, and from 8:00 to 9:15 in Vilagarcia de Arousa. The service is also offered in the afternoon from 17:00 to 18:30 in Castellon, whereas in Vilagarcia de Arousa, the **Balanced Afternoons** service keeps schools open from 15:30 to 21:00.

Gijon Town Council

Gijon Town Council offers a very particular service within the **11x11 Project**, which keeps three schools in town open for 11 hours for 11 months a year. The service offers several **activities** to children, such as: a music workshop, a children's book club, talks on health and good values, socio-educational activities, co-education, etc.

Quart de Poblet
Town Council

The **cost** for using these services varies from one initiative to another. Whereas the service in **Quart de Poblet Town Council (Out of School Hours Welcome Service for Pupils)** is **free of charge**, other Councils assume part of the cost through subventions, so that the final price for families is very low. The popularity of these services within the local sphere lies precisely on their affordable prices.

Furthermore, the flexible conditions of use – i.e. services may just be used on individual days or at different times – in some of these services is one of the key success factors since they adapt to the special or specific needs of families.

Diffusion and promotion are, without any doubt, key elements on the success of these initiatives. Nonetheless, as shown through the analysis of best practices, Councils have confronted two generalised problems when putting them into practice: firstly, the **refusal of schools** to have their premises open to external staff beyond their usual opening times; and, secondly, the **great financial effort** this initiative demands from the Town Council. The first obstacle was overcome through negotiation, awareness-raising campaigns and meeting the demands of schools regarding opening times.

School holidays also represent a problem for numerous parents, whose vacation time does not coincide with their children's holidays.

Aranda de Duero Town Council organises **Supportive Urban Summer Camps**, which, besides favouring work-life balance, aim to **use free-time** to bring social values closer to children, to acquaint them with other cultures and traditions and to **prevent anti-social behavior**. These Summer camps take place in two state schools from Monday to Friday (from 9:00 to 15:00) during July. The initiative was free of charge for families until 2009, but now families have to pay 10€ for each child every fortnight. (However, families with financial difficulties are exempt from this cost). Among other difficulties, this service is challenged by **excessive demand**, since the number of applications is higher than the number of places on offer, so that applicants have to be selected through a public draw.

There are also instances when one **is unable to take care of children due to other tasks or obligations**. This circumstance has a negative effect on people's well-being and their quality of life. Aware of this conflict, some town councils have set in motion several services aim at alleviating or solving this problem. These services are particularly characterised by their **flexibility**, since they are intended to solve **specific, rather than permanent needs**. For that reason, there are limited number of days and hours in which families can be benefited from this service. These initiatives are **either free of charge or very reasonably priced, because they are funded**, partly by the Local Bodies. The enormous success of these services is also based on the **professionalism** of the staff taking care of children from different ages, as well as for having adequate premises and **equipment**.

In a similar move, **Badalona Town Council**, has established a **Parents' Center** which offers child-care service for children aged 0 to 12. The service is free of charge and has **extended opening hours** (from 8:30 to 13:00 in the mornings, and from 16:30 to 20:30, in the evenings), but it **cannot be used more than three days a week** or for longer than **three hours**. In order to make use of this child-care service, one only needs to ring in advance to find out if there are places available. Besides carrying out playful activities or providing children with after-school support (learning habits or autonomy, school diaries...), the service also offers **psycho-pedagogical support** to families, while promoting the creation of a **meeting point and a space for co-operation between mothers and fathers**, since it is particularly addressed to single-parent families, individuals lacking extended families, immigrants or grandmothers or grandfathers, who are very often overwhelmed by the responsibility of taking care of children. **Several volunteers co-operate** with the Community Center as "supportive babysitters", an essential support to maintaining the success of the initiative.

On their part, **Esplugues de Llobregat Town Council** offers an *ad hoc* space within the scope of their programme **Little Minutes**, in which children from **16 weeks up to 3 years** are looked after, while their mothers and/or fathers make use of **the town's sports facilities or they fulfil personal tasks**. This service is part of a strategy to build up the private and personal sphere, which is essential for maintaining a good quality life. Mothers and/ or fathers can only make use of Little Minutes **for three hours in a row and two days a week**, either in the morning (11:30 to 14:00) or in the afternoon (15:00 to 18:00), from Monday to Saturday.

The **Lalín Town Council** offers the so-called **Open Space for Children**, where children (aged 3 to 12) can stay, while their families fulfil their professional or personal tasks. The service opens from 14:00 until 21:00 during the school year, and offers two shifts during school holidays (from 7.30). Nonetheless, a **maximum** stay of seven hours a day has been established for this service, to which, however, families can resort as many days a week as they need. For families with mobility difficulties this initiative offers the possibility of falling back on other **municipal resources, which undertake the task of bringing children from their schools to the Open Space**: namely, home help service staff and time bank staff. This possibility has helped to overcome one of the obstacles that initially hindered the success of the initiative. **Funding** was yet another challenging problem, although the service was free of charge during the first year, families are now charged for it. Prices, however, are relatively low, because the service is partly subsidised.

The **Personalised Care Programme** in **Aldaia Town Council** aims to cover the **specific family needs** with regard to **child and long-term care of not severely dependent persons**, so that families do not need to employ home help or contract a rigid service or structure. This service functions Monday to Saturday with extended opening hours (from 7:00 to 20:00). Families are allowed to use it **four hours a day at the most**. Access to the service is uncomplicated: one just needs to inform the council (by phone or directly at the premises) of the date, time and length of time when the service will be needed. The success of the initiative is rooted on its advertising campaigns, which have ensured that citizens are aware that the service is up and running for them.

The Nanny Homes implemented by **Puente Genil Town Council**, offered a very different alternative in comparison to previous initiatives. The council aimed to support work-life balance for parents, who were either employed, going through education programmes or waiting on their incorporation into the labour market, and it offered child-care services **for children less than 6 years-old**. The element which made this service special was that **children**

were looked after in their care-givers homes. Both the professional and personal profiles of the women in charge of the Nanny Homes, as well as the minimum requirements of the houses themselves were established and supervised by the Town Council. The service needed to **be requested on a monthly basis**. It offered very flexible times from 7:00 to 21:00 and adapted its features every month according to people's needs. The Nanny Homes were funded and its payment made by hour via cheque. The price was 1€ per hour of service, half of which was subsidised. The personalised attention, homely atmosphere and professionalism of the caretakers were all key success aspects for the initiative. Campaigns to **raise social awareness** were also needed because many of the potential users of the service counted on a familial network, conscious of their responsibility towards the children. However, the service had to be interrupted due to problems with funding, since the low price of the service could hardly cover expenses, thus demanding a considerable financial effort.

Beyond the general needs that families have to face in relation to child-care, when referring to work-life balance it is essential to reflect upon the **fundamental requirements** of certain social groups at risk of social exclusion, since the **conventional and normalised services cannot fulfill their demands**. Such is the case of **victims of domestic gender violence or single-parent, low-income households**. For these cases, Local Bodies provide certain services designed to lessen or minimise those specific needs, taking into account the particular situation. These services are **flexible and free of charge**, and they also include **psychological support**, both for the children and their mothers, as well as actions intended to help the latter's incorporation into the labour market.

Along these lines, **Molina de Segura Town Council** has implemented a **Work-Life Balance Service for Victims of Violence against Women**, which assists both women and their children. In the realm of this **high quality service**, children are looked after when their mothers are not able to do so. The service also considers the children's **socio-educational well-being** and encourages them to develop values such as equality, respect and consideration for others, also increasing their **self-esteem**. Women are provided with training and **educational programmes**, with the objective of terminating the situation of violence and enabling them to **recover their autonomy** in all aspects of their lives. The **highly qualified team** and the **continuous assessment**, which makes it possible to amend mistakes and introduce improvements, are key elements in this project.

Kanguras Service (Babysitters) promoted by the **Campo de Criptana Town Council** in collaboration with the Women's Institute in the region of Castilla-La Mancha, is a service provided by professional babysitters at home. The "kanguras" pick up the children from

Campo de Criptiana
Town Council

school, feed them, and assist care-dependent persons, etc. The service is **free of charge** and can be used for **three hours a day** at the most. The service initially faced excessive demand, which could not be met due to a lack of resources. The problem was solved by other services already implemented in the Town Council (play centres or after-school activities), which were then complemented by the services provided by the “kanguras”. The Women’s Institute also made their own employment list of caregivers available to families, so that those in need of assistance could employ them privately.

Cordoba Town Council

In the realm of the **Timesharing Project**, Cordoba Town Council is committed to systematically offering a cultural and leisure service to meet the target group’s needs and **look after children whose mothers are registered in educational, professional training or social participation projects within the municipal sphere**. This service enables mothers to remain in these programmes, also facilitating the creation of support networks and increasing social awareness, social involvement and autonomy for those benefited by the service.

Alcala de Henares
Town Council

The **Play Group** in Alcala de Henares Town Council is not only addressed to female victims of domestic violence, but also specifically considers their needs. Since these women lack of social networks, they are in need of more **extended opening hours at the Play Group**. Thus, today the Play Centre opens from 8:00 to 15:00 and from 16:00 to 20:00 in a flexible way. Also, their children are also provided with priority psychological attention tailored to their specific needs.

Lastly, and to conclude this heading dedicated to work-life balance services supplied by the Local Bodies with the objective of supporting citizens regarding child-care, it is necessary to mention the **schools, pre-school education** (first stage, from 0 to 3 years) or, as they are popularly known, **kindergartens**, since they represent one of the most highly demanded services nowadays. In this respect, Norway sets a good example. The Norwegian **Kindergarten Act** (1975), with its successive amendments, **guarantees the entire population the right to obtain a place in a kindergarten** and makes Local Bodies responsible for coordinating and organising the existing resources – that is the existing kindergartens – in each municipality to ensure that the entire population has access to them. That means that from January 2010 any family not granted a place in their own municipality will even have the right to sue the Town Council for that very reason.

In this regard, the initiative introduced by **Bærum Council**, in force in all Councils in Norway, consists of **coordinating all kindergartens located in the area, regardless of who is in charge of them** (whether it is a state or private school, or managed by a religious order or voluntary association, etc.). The Town Council **unifies the access system** and is also in charge of **processing the applications** and sorting out the list of pupils admitted. It is also responsible for determining **the maximum price of services**, the **minimum opening hours** and for guaranteeing **the minimum quality criteria of the premises**. This form of management and coordination enables the Municipality to offer a service with similar minimum conditions and features for all Norwegian citizens. However, the initial **reluctance of private centres** had to be conquered before setting this initiative in motion.

Strong political commitment, both from the Government and the Parliament, which have put pressure on all Town Councils in the country so that they guarantee the legal right to a place in a kindergarten for the entire population of Norway, undoubtedly constitutes the initiative's key success factor.

CONCLUSIONS ON HOW TO PROVIDE AND SUPPORT WORK-LIFE BALANCE SERVICES ADDRESSED TO CHILDREN

Being the closest administrative level to citizens, Local Bodies know best about what the demands and needs are, and are certainly more aware of the services' choice in their area. Consequently, **Local Bodies are meant to co-ordinate public policies designed to create childcare services, and should also support, promote or induce their use.**

The analysis of initiatives shows that councils pursue several lines of action, in order to respond to social demands:

- Taking care of children during periods in which work and school times are incompatible. In order to do so, councils have chosen to organise socio-educational activities in some schools and to keep them open before and/or after classes. Key success factors for these initiatives are making supporting services flexible and **affordable** for families.
- Taking care of children while their **parents invest time in other personal or professional activities**. In this case, Local Bodies also provide **very flexible services** with **long opening hours**. However, in order to avoid misuse the use of such services is limited.
- Local Bodies also offer services designed to satisfy the needs of groups at risk of social exclusion and whose demands cannot be met by the usual services. Such is the case of childcare **services adapted** to the children of women suffering domestic gender violence or in danger of social exclusion. All these services are free of charge and offer psycho-pedagogical assistance for the children.

Besides the provision of childcare services, Local Bodies **advocate improving the management of resources** in this realm, to efficiently achieve a maximum coverage and the best quality.

2.3.2. WORK-LIFE BALANCE SERVICES FOR DEPENDENT PERSONS: CARING FOR THE ELDERLY AND THE DISABLED

The drop in birth rates and an increase in life expectancy – owing to health advancements and the economic, social and cultural developments which are characteristic of welfare states – have resulted in an increasingly aged population, which is therefore more likely to become dependent on somebody else to carry out daily tasks. In this respect, the **protection of people in need of care is an ever increasing problem**, which developed societies have to confront and which is particularly severe in countries such as **Spain** and, to a lesser extent, **Norway**, which are witnessing how their populations are **subject to a continuous ageing process**.

In Spain, the **39/2006 Act of Promotion of Personal Autonomy and Long-Term Care** (Act 39/2006 passed on 14th December; BOE n. 299) accepts, in legal terms, the challenge of assisting those people in a situation of special vulnerability, who require support to carry out basic tasks in their everyday life, to reach more personal autonomy and to be able to wholly exercise all their rights as citizens.

The National Plan for Care-Dependence – which will be gradually implemented by 2014 – expects to provide assistance and a series of fundamental services to more than 800.000 people in need of special attention and, thus, to improve their autonomy and personal development. Nowadays, **long-term care represents** one of the most **resource and time consuming areas** within the familial realm, and, in Spain, it has become a central topic in the debate about work-life balance.

In Norway, there is not a global law of an integrative nature which concentrates on care-dependence as it is the case in Spain, because **long-term care for the elderly and the disabled is the responsibility of the welfare and health services**, even if there is no specific regulation with regard to certain rights or services.

In light of this state of affairs, **what is the role of local Governments?** Town and City Councils should under no circumstance remain strangers to this situation, particularly taking into account their proximity to citizens, which enables them to play a very relevant role.

In spite of the complexity of the Spanish map of competences among the different territorial administrations, **Local Bodies rely on a scope for intervention and competence with the purpose of providing services designed to assist care-dependent persons** and, thereby, improve work-life balance in their area. Indeed, the Care-Dependence Act reveals the need for co-operation among the different administrations and, in particular, with Local Bodies, entitling them to partake in the National Plan for Care-Dependence¹².

¹² Art. 12 in the Care-Dependence Act determines that “1. Local Bodies will participate in the management of long-term services, in accordance with the regulations in their respective Autonomous Regions and also with the competences they have been assigned by the legislation in force. 2. (...) they will participate in the Territorial Council for Autonomy and Assistance of Care-Dependent People in the form and condition the Council establishes”.

In **Norway**, however, Councils have extensive competences and financial resources, as they are **responsible for social services and for the long-term care of the elderly and the disabled**, both privately as well as in institutions.

In any case, and beyond the respective legal frameworks, the analysis of initiatives regarding work-life balance reveals that measures and steps are being taken in this sphere. With this regard, one of the **priorities** in the different initiatives, which were implemented by the Town Councils and examined in this study, is to ensure that care-dependent people, both the elderly and the disabled, are **able to remain at their usual domicile and, thus, close to a familiar environment for the longest time possible**. This option favours work-life balance for both men and women, but particularly for women who are responsible for elderly or disabled persons, because these initiatives function as resources which promote personal autonomy or replace the caregiver, granting them some time for themselves.

With these objectives in mind, **Vilagarcía de Arousa Town Council (Eat at Home)** and **Aranda de Duero Town Council (Municipal Service of Meals for the Elderly and the Care-Dependent)** offer **meal services at home**.

In the case of **Vilagarcía de Arousa**, the beneficiaries are **people over 60** with limited autonomy and who lack a familial support network to fulfil their needs, as well as **care-dependent people** in need of help when preparing their meals. The service consists of a **weekly supply of seven complete meals** at a price of 6.93 € a day. Of this 6.93 € the beneficiary only contributes 1.85 €. The personnel in charge of the delivery also show how meals are prepared and dispose of any food which has gone off or is out of date. If the beneficiary does not have the appropriate electrical appliance at his or her disposal, those considered necessary will be provided on loan. There are two **disadvantages** in relation to this initiative: firstly, setting a **price**, even if it is very low, **represents a drawback when applying for the service**; and thus the initiative involves a considerable financial effort for the Town Council. And, secondly, it is essential that the person has the appropriate space to preserve food for a week.

In **Aranda de Duero**, the age limit for this initiative is set at 65. Therefore the beneficiaries are seniors **over-65**, with no relatives to rely on, and who have limited mobility and difficulties orientating themselves when moving in the city. Beneficiaries can also be **disabled people** (with a disability equal to or over 75%). Retired or early-retired people **over-55** or people with a **disability over 65%** have the option of **receiving their meals in the dining room of a day centre and in neighbourhood associations**. The price is then set by a commission, but will always be affordable, since **the low cost for the beneficiaries is a key success factor of the initiative**.

In keeping with the philosophy of improving the quality of life of adults with specific physical assistance and/or equipment needs, **Bærum Council** favours **concentrating the management and coordination of all rehabilitation services, thus**, offering these people the aid and the support they need to increase their autonomy, ensuring that they can remain near their familial environment and delaying or avoiding them having to be admitted in a care institution. In this framework, people with special needs are **accompanied during the rehabilitation process** i.e. for the period in which the **treatment and physiotherapy** take place and where the patient needs the service (work place, home, etc.). The access to **support tools and technical aid** for a determined period of time is also provided, while the required equipment is also installed for the patients at home. The fact that the service is **free of charge** and that there is **excellent coordination among** the different services guarantees the success of the initiative. However, the service implemented in Bærum entails two difficulties: firstly, the **waiting lists** for patients to be visited at home by a therapist; and, secondly, the long waiting time until the specific equipment requested by the patient is received. With regard to this last point, the procedures are being simplified to speed up the whole process.

On a different matter but still with regard to long-term care of the elderly and disabled people, one should bear in mind **the impact it has on the work-life balance of the members of the family who are responsible for these caring tasks— mostly women**. This is, without a doubt, a problem worth considering, which is, *de facto*, observed in the Spanish Care-Dependence Act and has also been noticed by some Local Bodies, as several of the initiatives examined confirm. Among other objectives, these initiatives are designed to **alleviate the responsibility of those in charge of care-dependent** people and to give them time and space to breathe, since theirs are straining duties, not only physically, but also from a psychological perspective.

Since 2005, **Aranda de Duero Town Council** has given **financial support to caregivers of severely care-dependent people**, which is **intended to fund the appointment of a person** (not a family relative), **to support the caregiver in the family in relation to the dependent person's daily domestic chores, personal hygiene and care and mobility**, both inside and outside the house. This appointment should be done directly or through an organisation rendering such services and it should be established for a minimum of 20 hours and a maximum of 30-40 hours a week. Even if it initially **proved complicated to find capable individuals who were willing to accept the work**, the solution found made the implementation of the initiative possible: beneficiaries were put in touch with qualified candidates, who were registered in the **employment list** of the Guidance and Counseling Programme of the Department for Social

Action in the Town Council. Regarding this initiative, it should be noted that in Spain the Care-Dependence Act includes, among other measures, assistance services which in many ways coincide with the services granted by Aranda Town Council. An example is the “financial aid for looking after a person in the family and support to non-professional caregivers” (art. 18). For that reason, this financial aid will gradually disappear in Aranda, as the citizens’ needs will be covered by the Care-Dependence Act.

For its part, **Aldaia Town Council** has set in motion a **Personalised Care Programme**, which includes a flexible service designed to assist severely care-dependent people in specific instances. The service has already been analysed in previous sections about child-care services.

Finally, **Majadahonda Town Council** has introduced a service known as **Day Care Service (SEDA)**, which aims to support the work-life balance of those people who are responsible for elderly people, in cases in which resources do not correspond with the characteristics and needs of other beneficiaries. The service, which is free of charge, is addressed to elderly people with **developing light or moderate care-dependence** and it offers **preventive and welfare attention**. The service consists of **carrying out** cognitive stimulation, recreational or cultural **activities** from 10:30 to 13:30 in a day centre for the elderly in the municipality. In order to solve problems that relatives might have when bringing the elderly to the day centre, i.e. opening times, the initiative includes an **adapted transport service** to bring beneficiaries from their houses to the centre. Other key success factors of this initiative lie in the **commitment of the qualified staff and the political will** to set it in motion. Also, the initiative did not require a large investment, since the Town Council could benefit from the existing structures and resources at the day centre in town.

Beyond creating long-term care services for the elderly and care-dependent, town councils should pay special attention on **how resources are managed, in order to offer a high-quality service**, able to meet the beneficiaries’ needs.

In this respect, Norway, and most specifically **Mandal Council**, has created a **Home-Based Services Centre for the Elderly and/ or the Disabled**, which **centralises and co-ordinates all existing services at a municipal level** (day centres, home assistance, home medical

assistance, special transport for care-dependent people, tele-assistance, etc.), **regardless of whether these services are rendered by a public or by a private institution**. Concentrating services results in **more efficient** use; services are also **more flexible**, since the number and duration of visits is modified in accordance with the user's requests. On the other hand, if it is ever necessary – due to changing needs and requirements – to transfer the person to another type of service, the relocation process is immediately initiated.

CONCLUSIONS ON HOW TO PROVIDE AND SUPPORT WORK-LIFE BALANCE SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY AND THE DISABLED

The following conclusions can be drawn from the analysis presented above:

- **Local Bodies play a central role** with regard to the provision of care services addressed to the elderly or disabled people, as the attention they need involves an obligation within the familial sphere which takes time from other activities in the personal and professional spheres.
- The current socio-demographic context – as reflected on our ageing population – represents a challenge for the Public Administration in general, but also for Local Bodies in particular.
- In Spain, in spite of the complex map of competences, **Local Bodies count on a great degree of intervention and competence** with regard to providing long-term care services, as established in the Support of Personal Autonomy and Long-Term Care Act (39/2006).
- The study of best practices reveals that councils are pursuing several lines of action within this realm:
 1. Provision of **long-term care services** (either for elderly or disabled people) to ensure that they can live **at their home and in a family environment for the longest possible time** (“meals on wheels”, rehabilitation services and technical aid). **Affordable prices or services** which are **free of charge** constitute key elements for success.
 2. Setting up of services designed to **free people in charge of long-term care from certain responsibilities and give them time and space to breathe**, without neglecting the stimulating activities that care-dependent people need (personalised care, companionship services). In this respect, **flexibility** is one of the most appreciated aspects.
 3. **Improving resources management and offering quality services, which are adapted** to the care-dependent people needs and their families’.

2.3.3. ENCOURAGING LEISURE AND FREE-TIME

The various approaches to the notion of work-life balance have mostly assimilated a dual perception of the problem, setting up a conflict between familial (which is very often reduced to “familial responsibilities”) and professional life, not to mention other aspects, such as leisure, education or social participation. However, taking the notion of work-life balance depicted in this Guide – that is, as the balance existing between different spaces (work, family life, child and long-term care, personal sphere) – as the starting point, leisure will then represent an essential element to balance out the time we devote to all the different spheres in life.

Leisure is therefore revealed as a key sphere in a person’s life, because it is the time people spend in doing what they really like, on what they enjoy and what they like to share. Today we are witnessing an ever more extended process of **democratisation of leisure and free time**, in which leisure is understood as an **undisputed universal right**, as a manifest reality everybody should be able to delight in.

In this respect, **Town Councils face the challenge of designing, and providing citizens with, the necessary means to enjoy leisure and free time** through certain activities that are part of a human experience, and which favour personal development and improve quality of life.

The initiatives promoted by the Local Bodies, with the objective of supporting leisure and free time activities among their citizens, have also been examined in this Guide. They can be classified in two different groups:

- a. On the one hand, those initiatives which intend to organise activities to promote and **provide access to leisure to those people who have special difficulties accessing it**.

Such is the case of **people with a disability**, who have **very specific needs** and cannot opt for the normalised resources. It is therefore necessary to adapt leisure times and spaces, which do not have therapy or rehabilitation as their immediate objective. These are, after all, additional services which **enable work-life balance for families insofar as they alleviate the caring responsibilities** whilst the disabled person is enjoying leisure activities. **Aldaia Town Council** has implemented a **Leisure Centre for the Cognitively or Psychologically Impaired**, which offers a leisure programme three times a week to **under 18s with a severe mental disability**. The programme involves recreational, educational and personal care activities.

For its part, **Molina de Segura Town Council** has created a **School for Adapted Sports**, addressed to **children and young people aged 5-25**, with **mental, physical, and sensory disabilities and moderate autonomy**. In this case, the service opens during the month of July and has **extended opening hours** (Mondays to Fridays from 8:30 to 14:30), with the objective of **enabling citizens to assume their familial and professional responsibilities**. The school offers physical and sport activities and also a choice of workshops, which are adapted to the different stages of development of the users. The highly-qualified team of caregivers and the involvement of parents in the work process should be mentioned as some of the best aspects of this initiative. A key success factor was also the implementation of a **continuous assessment system**, which enables the authorities to quickly rectify errors and introduce improvements.

The main objective of the **Brave Women Leisure Programme** is to promote the idea that women use their free time in a creative way, turning leisure into a tool for personal improvement, which can also help improve relationships and create a social network. The programme, which was set in motion by **Santa Cruz de la Palma Town Council**, organises **cultural and sports activities** for groups of a maximum of 25 women. The programme offers numerous activities ranging from a boat trip to see dolphins to *paintball* or a night walk around town. Prices range from 12 € to 18 € per person. The **affordable cost and the appeal of the activities**, which are not very usual for the women taking part in them, are two reasons which have led to the success of the initiative. Besides promoting leisure among women, it should be emphasised that this programme has also become a **tool to raise awareness among women and improve their self-esteem**.

- B.** On the other hand, there are also initiatives to encourage shared-leisure **between parents and their children**.

A good example of this type of initiative is the **Municipal Play Group “Almudena Carretero” in Aranda de Duero**. **Children between 2 and 8 years old** have the possibility of attending the play centre Mondays to Fridays from 17:00 to 20:15, and Saturdays in the morning, to participate in different **recreational activities** (storytelling, workshops, etc.), which are organised by two monitors. **Mothers and fathers** also have the option of **sharing these activities** with their children or, else, **spending that time on a different leisure activity** (reading,

surfing the web, etc.). The achievement of the objectives is guaranteed by the **extended opening hours**, the fact that the service is **free of charge** and **easy to access**. Nonetheless, the Town Council did face some obstacles when first trying to implement the service. One of them was finding a **location** for the play centre – **the existing infrastructure of the old school was finally used for this purpose** – and, also, the impossibility of hiring qualified staff for the activities in the play centre. This last obstacle was overcome through an agreement with the Parents' Association (AMPA), which assumed the task, while the Town Council organised the physical space and its maintenance.

The initiative “**Temps de barri, temps educatiu compartit**” (“Neighbourhood Time, Shared Educational Time”), led by **Barcelona City Council**, offers **leisure and free-time activities both on the premises and in the school yards of several schools, which are kept open beyond teaching hours** on weekends and where children can take part in, even if they do not usually attend this particular school. This initiative is also supported by a **companionship service**, which guarantees access for children. This is part of a global strategy, promoted through the Programme for New Social Uses of Time (see section 2.1. on p. 29f) and which positions neighbourhoods **as points of reference in day-to-day life** and as the most suitable spaces to implement initiatives favouring work-life balance. One of the features which has made “Neighbourhood Time” a successful initiative is its **participative network methodology**, which defines the action plan in accordance with a process of discussion and analysis among all the social agents involved. This methodology has a positive impact on **social cohesion**. The programme offers necessary quality services in a nearby environment (the neighbourhood), so that citizens do not invest too much time in travelling and instead spend it in other activities.

CONCLUSIONS ON HOW TO PROVIDE AND PROMOTE LEISURE AND FREE TIME SERVICES

The analysis of the initiatives implemented by Local Bodies in order to promote leisure time led to the following conclusions:

- **Leisure** represents a fundamental element to achieve work-life balance and it is also an **unquestionable right for all citizens**.
- **Local Bodies** take up the **challenge** to offer citizens the resources required to enjoy leisure and free time.
- The analysis of best practices reveals that councils pursue several lines of action to achieve their objectives:
 1. Organising leisure services and activities addressed to those **citizens less able to access them** (i.e. disabled people or women). In many cases, they fulfil a double function: on the one hand, they **encourage people to enjoy their leisure and free time**; on the other hand, they constitute a **new means to achieve work-life balance**.
 2. Setting in motion services to enable parents to share their leisure and free time with their children.
- Among the aspects that ensure the success of this sort of initiatives, the following ones should be underlined:
 - A. **Quality services**, for which qualified and professional personnel is appointed.
 - B. **Affordable fees** for families.
 - C. **Easy access** in terms of proximity and management.
 - D. **Encouraging citizens to get involved** in the initiatives implemented.

2.3.4. OTHER BEST PRACTICES

Other initiatives, which have been set in motion or promoted by Local Bodies, in their capacity as providers and organisers of services supporting work-life balance, are summarised in this section. Due to their nature, these initiatives have not been included in the defined categories (namely, child-care, long-term care for the elderly or the disabled or promotion of leisure and free-time).

The following specific initiatives will be discussed:

- Organising time banks.
- Composing resource guides of services encouraging work-life balance.
- Supporting private initiatives in the creation of quality work-life balance services.
- Supporting voluntary work.

2.3.4.1. Time Banks

Time Banks are made up by **groups of people with the common goal of exchanging their time and spending it on specific child-care** (taking them to school, after-school support, organising parties for children, leisure activities, etc.) or **long-term care tasks** (doing the shopping, moving objects around, listening or reading to care-dependent people, etc.) or also on **domestic chores** (cooking lessons, assisting with the cooking, after-school support for children, etc.). The objective of this initiative is getting to know and trust others in order to find a solution to daily needs, as well as supporting work-life balance.

The **exchange and value unit is time**, regardless of the service offered or received. In this bank, time is the main capital and, therefore, the currency unit. All abilities have the same value, that is, **everything is worth the time that it takes to do it**.

By implementing Time Banks, **Town Councils** not only try to support balance among life spheres, but also **encourage co-operation** between men and women, individuals and families, between different age groups **within the community** in an organized and accessible way.

The **Time Bank**, which is promoted by **Alcala de Henares Town Council**, started its activity in 2007. The project implementation has not always been easy. **Vilagarcia de Arousa Town Council** has recently set in motion another Time Bank. In both cases the success of the initiative is based on its intense coordination, especially with regard to **attracting participants**, informing them about the service and encouraging their participation. However, despite this

intense campaign, one of the inconveniences faced by the Time Bank in Alcala de Henares is the **poor participation of young people in the initiative**.

Similarly, at the **beginning**, both Time Banks were affected by the same problem: most people offered their services, but none of them demanded help. This **lack of exchange** was solved through a **monthly meeting**, in which participants got to know each other better and, as a result, the trust needed to exchange their time grew among them.

2.3.4.2. GUIDES TO RESOURCES ENCOURAGING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Town Councils, besides their capacity as providers and organisers of external services encouraging work-life balance, have a very important role in **making citizens aware** of the existence of these services. In this regard, the development, publication and diffusion of **catalogues or resource guides** ensure that people **learn of the work-life balance resources and services existing in their area** and, in this way, encourage the use of the structures which have already been implemented.

The manifest need in society for **services encouraging work-life balance**, which support and help cover the daily citizens needs in relation to caring tasks, leisure, and education or regarding domestic chores, has led to an increase in such services, which are, however, **not always known by citizens**. Very often, information is diffuse or does not exist at all, thus produces situations of inefficiency, which prevent citizens from resorting to existing services, either because they do not know of their existence or how to access them.

Granada Town Council opted to create a **Resources Guide to Services Encouraging Work-Life Balance** in order to inform families of the different resources, services and programmes encouraging work-life balance, which were offered by private, subsidised or public organisations in the area. The Guide to Resources, which also includes a chapter on the regulations in force relating to work-life balance, is available in two formats: a printed version, which can be downloaded from the Town Council's webpage, and a multimedia version, in sign language, so that the hearing impaired can also make use of it.

2.3.4.3. SUPPORTING PRIVATE INITIATIVES IN THE CREATION OF QUALITY SERVICES ENCOURAGING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

This Guide has repeatedly insisted on the need that Town and City Councils should give an answer to citizens' demands with regard to services encouraging work-life balance. However, it is worth noticing that beyond the direct provision of resources, Councils also have the non-exclusive option of

encouraging, through different tools or actions, private initiatives favouring **the creation of proximity services**, as well as assuring certain minimum levels in terms of the **quality of services**.

Some of the actions which Town Councils can implement in this respect are:

- Awarding **funding to initiate activities in this sector**, or **other financial aid** addressed to the creation of infrastructure in companies (i.e. kindergartens or dining facilities).
- Organising employment workshops and reinforcing educational training addressed to **setting up a services company in order to support work-life balance**. One example could be the **implementation of financial services** with gender awareness, which support and give advice regarding this matter to businesses or self-employed people. An additional objective will often be fulfilled: the emergence of activities, which usually take place in the irregular and informal economy, since it is a sector in which this phenomenon is an evident reality.
- On the other hand, new business initiatives in the proximity service sector have to face financial, administrative and cultural obstacles which prevent the idea from being put into effect. The **creation and consolidation of a local network and agreement between entities and agents**, in a coordinated and participative way, reveals itself as a mechanism to collectively overcoming all difficulties.
- Introducing **measures to certify the quality** of the services being offered.

In keeping with this philosophy, **Madrid City Council** has promoted an initiative to **Support the Creation of Proximity Services and a System of Quality Assurance**. The programme revolves around three pillars: a) planning **an educational itinerary for resourceful women**, with the objective of starting a business, b) introducing **systems to improve quality management**, which involves both training in this field, as well as teaching people how to achieve a quality seal, and c) conducting a **study** to detect market opportunities. Two relevant elements should be highlighted regarding this initiative: **co-operation** between Government, trade unions and business organisations and the **integrative response** to the demands for services.

2.3.4.4. SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERING

In the realm of work-life balance, **voluntary work** plays a central role because balance in our lives necessarily involves joint-responsibility. However, this does not only mean joint-responsibility among the social and institutional agents (companies, trade unions, public bodies, associations, etc.), but also among citizens and among private agents, because efforts should start to be made individually. Thus, individually and altruistically, people can volunteer to carry out many of the **activities which are necessary to harmonise the different time-spheres** of life (for example, long-term care, childcare, etc.) and, by doing so, involve themselves in and for the community.

In this respect, **Town and City Councils**, aware of their economic role and the associations existing in their area, have the opportunity to **redirect social actions, coordinate voluntary work and support non-profit private organisations**, which promote and manage such work.

Mandal Council

Likewise, the **Voluntary Services Centre** implemented by the **Mandal Council** favours exchange and interaction between people with time on their hands and those who need help or assistance in carrying out daily tasks. The Centre **coordinates and concentrates on several support and work-life balance initiatives in co-operation with child and family advice centres:** help with doing the shopping, accompanying others to see the doctor, after-school support, etc. The **close relation existing between public and private entities funding the Centre** (NGOs, Church and Local Administration) and the exclusive commitment of a salaried **qualified professional** as **manager** of the institution are the most relevant success factors for the initiative.

2.4. Changing mentalities: a question of ideas and awareness

As it has been previously examined, **work-life balance affects virtually all spheres in life** and, for that reason, the real possibility of putting work-life balance into effect **depends on a large group of people and socioeconomic agents** (public sector, companies, families, etc.). In addition to economic and labour-related factors, other elements, such as **social and cultural values, stereotypes, beliefs and attitudes hinder work-life balance**. In this regard, the following should be named as among the most important obstacles to work-life balance: persistence of a socially legitimated traditional gender role structure, permanence of a traditional mentality regarding female roles and skills both at home and at work, existence of certain female and male stereotypes, lack of a joint-responsibility model, disparate way in which society and the economic system value productive work, the way in which caring, leisure or domestic activities are evaluated or the current set of values with regard to family, work or leisure.

Our society **has experienced a substantial change** in the past number of decades. Certain social changes, such as the appreciation of leisure and free-time, incorporation of women into the job market, developments in familial structures or our increasingly urbanised society, etc. have modified the way individuals live and so their needs. Nonetheless, work organisation and time, services addressed to citizens, perception of individual responsibilities and other factors which considerably determine our quality of life, have not evolved at the same pace. This circumstance has resulted in a situation of imbalance among the different spheres in life: professional, familial and personal.

In order to achieve work-life balance, citizens must be aware in the first place of the discrepancy that exists between their realities and the system where they live in. **Raising awareness about the need for work-life balance is therefore essential when trying to find a balance in our society.** With the objective of making this discrepancy gradually disappear at least in some facets of our life, work-life balance should also be a primary concern in the realm of municipal policies.

Considering the current climate, the **social contract**, which had prevailed since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, is **not valid** anymore, since the model linked to gender division of productive and reproductive activities is no longer applicable to our present-day mentality and society, according to which **equity, equal opportunities and economic independence are central to personal development.** Even if social conscience has evolved, this evolution is not reflected in reality, in the social uses or in the effective distribution of professional and domestic roles.

In light of this situation and with regard to work-life balance, **social education and awareness** is the essential preliminary step towards a **gradual change of mentality and perception about the need for people to freely choose the way they want to distribute their time.** This implies to assume that work-life balance is not a female issue, which is merely limited to the familial sphere or to child and long-term care, and accept its broader scope: work-life balance means improving quality life and citizens well-being.

With this regard, both assimilating the meaning of work-life balance and applying the principle of joint-responsibility in its three dimensions (individual, familial and social) play an essential role in achieving work-life balance and, ultimately, effective equality between men and women. Work-life balance is, thus, fundamental to strengthening the professional and personal spheres, in women's case, and the familial and domestic spheres, in men's one, increasing the value of all these areas, which are indispensable for the individual personal development.

Raising social awareness about this problem and about the lack of a joint-responsibility model not only within the family but also among the different socio-economic agents (public sector, private sector, etc.) is a *sine qua non* requirement to find – on equal conditions – a higher balance between the familial, personal and professional spheres in life. With regard to awareness-raising, the public sector and, hence, Local Bodies can have a very important impact on society, i.e. through awareness-raising campaigns.

Aware of their role as “engines for change” and their proximity to citizens, **Local Bodies** have promoted several communication and awareness-raising initiatives. They understand that, in order to **change the social, business and economic structure, it is necessary**, in the first place, to **make the different agents aware** of the problem and then work out the most suitable solutions. Consequently, **social awareness is a basic tool for changing the social structure and adapting it to the new way in which citizens live and understand their lives.**

In accordance with the complexity of work-life balance, awareness-raising campaigns should not just concentrate on a single area, but rather focus on different spheres, such as:

A. Schools

B. Companies

C. Citizens

A. Schools play an essential role in raising awareness among young people, the adults of the future, whose ideas and ways of understanding life will define society in the long run. In the short term, initiatives in this sphere can also have an impact on the pupils' families, since children may start questioning gender stereotypes within the family and try to incorporate joint-responsibility in their lives, becoming, thus, engines for change.

Estella-Lizarra Town Council

Along these lines and since 2002, **Estella-Lizarra Town Council**, through its **Local Agreement for Work-Life Balance** has implemented awareness-raising campaigns to promote **joint-responsibility in parenting and domestic** chores. The involvement of schools is a key factor, because through them awareness-raising messages **reach children** and, ultimately, their families. The campaign consists in giving children under 8 a **small gift for their fathers, with different mottos underlining the importance of joint-responsibility in child-care and domestic tasks** and the masculinity of such activities. The gifts used in different campaigns are useful (kitchen gloves, baby bottles, teddy bears, kitchen clocks, fridge magnet boards, etc.) so that men are reminded of the message and can internalise it every time they use the object.

The initiative is also supported by very visible **posters and publicity campaigns** of great impact on the media due to their **controversial content**, by articles published in local newspapers, talks with famous men to encourage male participation – as men are generally rather reluctant to get involved in such matters – in workshops and courses on work-life balance. The role of schools, thus, strengthens the campaigning impact, fueling debate **beyond the social or political scope into the familial and personal sphere**.

Likewise, **Getafe Town Council** has increased the awareness of teachers, office staff and parents' associations about the importance of work-life balance and equality by means of a study on the **Situation of Work-Life Balance and Equality in Pre-School and Primary Education** in Getafe. The Study examines the **tools and resources** which exist in Getafe's educational context. The obstacles faced by schools when **incorporating new contents in the classroom or**

in organisational structures reveal how difficult it is to introduce change and raise awareness not only in the educational, but also in the entire municipal sphere. The **cooperation** existing between the Department of Education and Childcare and the Department of Women and Equality enables a **mainstreaming approach to work-life balance** and can serve as a model for implementing awareness-raising activities with other municipal Departments, expanding the field of action to include other areas which are traditionally less participative.

A further initiative within the educational realm has been undertaken by **Campo de Criptana Town Council**, which has set in motion **Awareness-Raising Campaigns About Joint Responsibility in Schools**, with the objective of correcting bad habits acquired during childhood and raising awareness about the **advantages of joint-responsibility** and the negative consequences of an imbalanced distribution of duties between women and men. To that end, both role-playing games and **life simulation games** were employed as methodological tools, because these are very efficient as learning devices in order to change the perceptions and mindsets of very young pupils, but also those of older ones, with more enrooted ideas. **Children and teenagers** are confronted with different realities which **break down stereotypes**, question the gendering of certain activities and raise awareness about problems which may result from discrimination.

B. On the other hand, **businesses** represent an essential area of action regarding work-life balance, since work is granted the largest amount of time in contemporary society, as time spent working is the only time that is positively valued, both in economic as well as in social terms. Moreover, the **gradual incorporation of women into the job market** has meant that they are, basically, the only ones affected by having to reconcile familial, professional and personal spheres, since men have not intensified their activities and responsibilities in the domestic realm or in caring for their families. Most women have to endure **double work burden** which results in them being physically and psychologically exhausted.

Steps taken by the business sector to encourage work-life balance not only improve the situation of employees, but also **increase** their **loyalty** to the company, their motivation and, ultimately, their **productivity**. Job-rotation costs, work absenteeism or stress and fatigue-related illnesses will decrease. In conclusion, **the company will also benefit from** the efforts entailed by a change in mentality and organisational structures. Raising awareness in companies about the benefits of work-life balance will result in more flexibility with regard to **work times and spaces and the setting in motion of other measures which support work-life balance and joint-responsibility**.

Work-life balance is an essential aspect of human resources management, which is in turn a key element to creating added value within businesses. For that reason, traditional organisational

structures should adapt and evolve to keep and attract people, whose ways of life and mentalities have radically changed in the last 30 years. Once companies understand the relevance of this matter, they will be able to act accordingly and improve their image, appeal and profitability.

Santa Marta de Tormes Town Council

With the objective of raising awareness among local small and medium-sized businesses about the benefits of work-life balance, as a means of increasing productivity, **Santa Marta de Tormes Town Council** implemented a far-reaching campaign through its **Programme for Flexible and Work-life-Balanced Businesses**. They also informed companies of the financial support, awards and tax benefits linked to the implementation of these measures, as well as of the obligations existing since the passing of the Effective Equality for Men and Women Act (3/2007, 22nd March). In order to spread this information, the Council compiled and published a **guide** which included, on the one hand, a **theory-based analysis of the need for work-life balance** and, on the other hand, resources at hand (financial support, funding, etc.) at **regional and national level** to promote work-life balance in the business sector. In order to achieve the greatest diffusion and to reach businesses most efficiently, the guide was **personally brought** to businesses in the course of **information and counselling visits**. The guide was also forwarded to the municipal service for work-life balance.

Madrid City Council

Madrid City Council set in motion a general **Awareness-Raising Campaign** targeted towards businesses and concentrating on their role regarding work-life balance. The campaign consisted of **making society aware of the work practices which improve balance among one's life spheres**, as well as of using campaigns on the radio to present work-life balance as a **top-priority issue at work**. The initiative addressed to university students was particularly relevant, as it tried to **anticipate the problem before it arose**. In the near future, university students may have the chance either to demand such measures as an integral part of their working conditions as employees, or, indeed, may have, as employers or people in charge, to implement measures which have an effect on the working conditions of others. The perfect **adjustment of the content to the way information was transmitted to the objective population** was a very wise move from Madrid City Council. The objective population identified with the hypothetical situations suggested in the radio campaigns, which improved the diffusion of the awareness-raising message.

The **cascade effect** is yet another aspect to take into account with regard to education and awareness-raising. Once employees working at the Council or other local bodies which implement policies and initiatives addressed to citizens are aware of the relevance of work-life balance, they will consciously incorporate this perspective into their own projects. In this regard, it is essential to train employees at local bodies in the issue of work-life balance, because the local sphere is the most

appropriate field of action for transforming society, as local policies are the closest to citizens.

Leon Town Council

In this respect, **Leon Town Council** has organised a **Training Course in “Coeducation and Joint Responsibility”** for **qualified staff** in charge of its **educational activities for children**. Faced with the problem of scheduling this initiative out of work hours, participation has been encouraged through the incorporation of topics on equality and a gender-related approach into these activities, as a **requirement for the appointment of staff**. This initiative **reduces the imitation of sexist models** in certain recreational and educational spheres, while it has an effect not only on the qualified staff organising the activities, but also on the children attending them and even on their families.

C. Beyond the initiatives planned for specific social groups or contexts, councils have implemented different programmes with the objective of raising awareness among the entire **population**. This is predominantly achieved through work-shops in which activities are taught and men and women exchange usually gendered tasks. These tasks are intended to **break down clichés and change the mental disposition** of a large number of citizens, who are still governed by the intertwining of practices and assumed social values. This very particular way of raising awareness and breaking down stereotypes, besides spreading necessary knowledge, is especially interesting for the following reasons:

Alcala de Henares Town Council

Alcala de Henares Town Council organised “**Personal Autonomy and Domestic Skills Sharing Workshops**” addressed mostly to the **adult population** and, partly, to **people with cognitive disabilities**. This initiative has encouraged an in-depth reflection upon equitable participation in the domestic realm, non-sexist education in the family, the possibility of personal and social relationships being built on equality or upon existing stereotypes. Workshops were organised in two-session: the first part was meant to prompt reflection and analysis, with the objective that everyone, man or woman, had a chance to consider what s/he could do to improve joint-responsibility in every sphere of life. In a second stage, participants dealt with the topic of **traditionally gendered domestic chores**. Aware of the difficulties of attracting participants, particularly men, to these types of activities, which are meant to pursue reflection and debate with regard to equality and joint-responsibility, Alcala de Henares Town Council used this second part of the work-shop – intended to achieve more domestic autonomy – as an **incentive to increase social participation**. The implementation of a **life-simulation methodology**, which should be highlighted as a key-factor for the success of the initiative, enabled a deeper internalisation of the concepts discussed both during the first stage, by means of **group dynamics exercises**, as well as in the learning section, in which each participant was responsible for teaching a task and then it was decided in plenum which were the most interesting activities to be taught.

With regard to awareness-raising and education on equality for men and women, in general, and with work-life balance issues, in particular, a **fundamental and habitual problem** has been detected in the numerous activities implemented by the different institutions in charge of equality (council departments, institutes, advice centres, etc.): the **abundant female representation and the scarce participation and interest among the male population**. Nonetheless, it is necessary to note that awareness-raising, education, active participation and a **complete involvement of men is a *sine qua non* requirement to achieving joint-responsibility**. However, Councils were not unaware of this situation and, in some cases, they have been able to overcome this difficulty.

Pamplona Town Council

Pamplona Town Council has dealt successfully with the matter by putting into practice **Task Exchange Workshops** which are spread over a number of years thus motivating participants to get involved time and again. In the realm of the workshops, participants are taught very useful daily tasks which, due to gender stereotyping, they have never carried out. With that aim, two equally-sized workshops are created: one for men and one for women. The initiative is then advertised in the press. Even if the number of female applicants has been higher, the number of participants has virtually been the same, since all applicants are sorted out according to gender before the draw takes place via a computer ballot system. Applicants can also **register by phone**, ringing the municipal information number, which eases the process of registering for the draw and, therefore, the **participation** of the most reluctant addressees. In addition, **the interest of the local media** in the initiative can also help reduce gender stereotypes and encourage male participation in the workshops, because men will see other men fulfilling those activities and being applauded by society.

Aranda de Duero
Town Council

The initiative implemented by Aranda del Duero Town Council is equally interesting due to their determination to attract and motivate men to participate. The Council put forward **DIY at Home- Workshops** addressed to women, and **Feeding and Caring for your Baby – Workshops** addressed to a male audience. Nonetheless, the latter did not attract a large enough number of participants and, for that reason, the approach was changed to offer a **“Domestic Skills”-Workshop**.

CONCLUSIONS ON HOW TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE OF MENTALITY WHICH FAVOURS JOINT RESPONSABILITY

Before concluding, the following lessons can be learned from the analysis of the initiatives previously examined:

1. **A change of mentality is a long and difficult process**, particularly among the adult population, whose perceptions and stereotypes are deeply-rooted. **Raising social awareness among young people is very effective**, and also essential to make change possible in the long run. In order to have an impact on the adult population, it is helpful to implement initiatives, **which are either continually in place over a longer period of time or which are offered briefly but repeatedly over several years and within different realms**, so that messages catch on little by little over citizens. Since work-life balance is a common element to many facets of life, it is relevant to put different type of measures into practice with the common goal of supporting **joint-responsibility**, because they can generate exponential effects by fueling social debate and encouraging people to think in depth about issues such as joint responsibility and gender equality.
2. **Male participation should be strengthened**, not only regarding leading and organising social awareness activities, but also as part of the target population for the initiatives. Raising awareness among this half of the population is particularly relevant to spread out the idea that **work-life balance is not a female issue**: beyond gender differences, work-life balance enables all individuals **to accept responsibility and freely develop all the different aspects of their life**. Also, since role models are an essential part of any learning process, only by increasing the number of men and women who question the current situation and are conscious of the changes needed to ensure work-life balance, will it be possible to effect those changes in all spheres.
3. If social awareness is present in the different spheres of life (familial, work, personal, social...), it will be easier to **overcome sexist stereotypes** linked to gender tasks and activities. The need for individuals to reconcile all activities they want, or need to do, will also be more evident.

Therefore, **engaging all the different spheres of socialisation (schools, companies, public services, families, the media, etc.) in raising social awareness** will lead to a broad understanding of work-life balance. This will then not be limited to the professional and familial level, but will include other activities related to the personal realm which are equally necessary and desired.

4. Lastly, it is essential to **address the concerns of different social groups and take their different sensitivities** into consideration in order to catch their attention regarding the importance of work-life balance. Policies designed to raise social awareness should have the **target audience in mind** and adapt contents to their features, tastes and expectations.

Guide TO BEST PRACTICES FOR PROMOTING
WORK-LIFE BALANCE THROUGH
Local Bodies in Spain and Norway

3

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

Work-life balance is one of the challenges faced by society at the dawn of the 21st century. The intense socio-demographic, economic and cultural changes which have taken place in recent times in the developed world have given this question the highest priority in the political agendas. Thus, work-life balance stands as one of the key-issues in Europe regarding policies on employment or equal opportunities for men and women, because, since the Luxemburg Summit in 1998, work-life balance has been related to protecting the European social model, which to a great extent, depends on the increasing number of women partaking in the labour market.

Norway and Spain are strangers to this situation; on the contrary, factors such as the incorporation of women in the labour market, the population aging, the mainstream cultural transformations regarding the family as a concept and the division of roles between women and men, have compelled public policies to support the notion of a work-life balance for citizens. In this respect, two central observations need to be made in order to introduce these conclusions:

First of all

It is necessary to underline that “work-life balance” is a term often equated to the idea of “making family and work duties compatible, as they are usually done by women”. What is meant here is that references to this term frequently hint at the problems women face when trying to find a certain harmony between their personal and work-related responsibilities. However, throughout this Guide, we have been able to prove that work-life balance is a complex and rather multidimensional phenomenon.

Therefore, not only women – who far from balancing, are merely accumulating tasks –, but also men, and the entire society, is affected by the desire to achieve a balance between the different spheres in life. Joint responsibility – understood in a holistic sense – proves to be the solution to this conflict; a joint responsibility, which should define not only the private sphere between women and men, but also the familial one – as intergenerational bound – and the social realm, structuring the interaction among the different agents who take part in it (companies, trade unions, State, citizens, etc.).

To put it briefly, in order to achieve work-life balance, society needs to assume joint responsibility as a philosophy and norm for life, and social agents need to be committed to create a social structure which suits a more balanced distribution of professional and familial duties, but at the same time, that leaves room for personal needs and demands, allowing the individual self-construction. To sum up, it is necessary to enable individuals to make use of their time freely.

In the second place

The restrictive and dual interpretation of “work-life balance”, i.e. **a dilemma between family and work**, should be emphasised here. In particular, two main ideas need to be taken into account: first, work and family responsibilities run parallel, guaranteeing the preservation and evolution of society; second, a dual notion of work-life balance overlooks the innate **needs for personal development**.

For this very reason, the recommendation should be to avoid a one-dimensional view of the family sphere as a niche of responsibilities and duties, which need to be made compatible with work in order to take into consideration other aspects related to the individual sphere (leisure, education, social participation, etc.).

When the issue is considered carefully, the evolution from the term work-life balance to the idea of **harmonisation of the use of time**, also conceived **as a right for all citizens**, becomes self-evident. Lack of time and sparse, or nonexistent possibilities of distributing one’s own time in a rational or harmonious manner, are then perceived as having a negative effect on the quality of life of individuals.

How can Local Bodies contribute to work-life balance?

As it has been previously indicated, the balance between professional and familial responsibilities, which needs to be reconciled with the personal realm, is certainly a complex issue that goes beyond the individual sphere to become a social problem.

In this sense, local bodies, holding legal instruments required in the area of work-life balance for both Norway and Spain, should **intervene to create policies favouring work-life balance on two levels:**

- As co-responsible agents: to help achieve balance in the way that individuals make use of their time.
- As government level: being the closest body to citizenship, knows it very well people needs and demands; and being a local authority, it regulates and specifies schedules and times for different social services (centres for childcare or long-term care, public services, public transport, etc.).

What challenges will Local Bodies face with regard to work-life balance?

Taking gender issues and equal opportunities into consideration, local public intervention will have an effect on the multi-dimensional reality of work-life balance by facing the following challenges:

- Stress the urgency of preventing tensions caused by the lack of work-life balance through well addressed social policies.
- Become models to be followed and fuel changes, setting examples with their own forms of organisation of work structures and opening times.
- Stimulate employment and the constitution of work-life balance-friendly businesses, which will then establish the belief that work-life balance is not a cost, but rather an opportunity to improve productivity and retain talent, because employees would be able to develop a feeling of company loyalty.
- Ensure mainstreaming regarding work-life balance within local and travel policies, in order to synchronise local and individual times, so that towns are at the inhabitants' disposal in relation to using time and space.
- Improve centres and services that provide care for children, elderly and disabled people, so that they are universally accessible and have excellent quality levels.
- Grant the citizenship free time and the opportunity to enjoy it, through leisure activities and social participation.
- Encourage changes with regard to the process of socialisation and norms and values existing in society in order to ensure, on the one hand, that joint responsibility becomes a basic principle in the community life and, on the other hand, that the value of reproductive work and social care is enhanced.

HOW SHOULD THE LOCAL BODIES APPROACH THESE CHALLENGES?

The analysis of the proposed initiatives throughout this Guide has demonstrated that Local Bodies count on the instruments and capacity to face the aforementioned challenges: they are indeed already taking action in this realm. The best practices, which had been examined, systematised and compared, enable us to distinguish three different areas of action, on which work-life balance policies should be focussed. Those areas are specified below:

Time management and economy

Time management and economy: this area includes, on the one hand, those initiatives aimed at making working time and space more flexible, both within the public body itself as well as beyond, in local businesses. On the other hand, it includes all measures directed to make the city a space for its citizens and their wellbeing, which implies coordinating times and improving transport and travel systems.

Provision of services

Provision of services with an effect on harmonisation of time: Local bodies should ensure that citizens have access to services and infrastructures linked with work-life balance. Specifically, these should be services supporting individuals and families, aimed at lessening family responsibilities and household tasks, and other sorts of services, forms or spaces, intended to develop the individual sphere, as well as the use of leisure and free time.

Social awareness

Social awareness: This section refers to all initiatives intended to raise social awareness and educate citizens with regard to achieving work-life balance and promoting a joint-responsibility model, not only within the familial structure but in the public sphere.

A methodology for intervention should be added to these three areas of action. This methodology revolves around the employment of policies from an integral perspective, as indicated below:

Integral policies

The existence of this intervention strategy, which is based on the structuring of local work-life balance policies from a local perspective, aims at a mainstreaming approach to work-life balance and at intervening simultaneously and in a coordinated manner, in the three main areas: time management and the economy, provision and supply of services and social awareness.

3.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations stem from the analysis conducted in this Guide. They are meant to favour intervention initiatives, which, from the local bodies, should enable citizens to strike a balance between their familial and professional duties, and to reconcile those with the personal sphere. The proposed initiatives are listed below:

Transversal and integral intervention initiatives

Work-life balance is a complex phenomenon, in which several areas and agents are involved. As a consequence, the implementation of a mainstreaming and integral methodology of intervention proves to be the most suitable way of finding solutions to this problem which citizens face on a daily basis.

The following elements are required for an intervention to be successful: integration and coordination of all areas of action (education, employment, social services, etc.): mainstreaming in all areas of intervention and among all programmes involved; **leadership and political support** since a great effort and energy are required to promote such initiatives; **rationality** to efficiently manage the resources; employment of a methodological system: analysis, planning and assessment.

Intervention initiatives addressed to companies

Within the private sector and with regard to initiatives with an impact, it is advisable that Local Bodies:

- Carry out campaigns to inform and raise social awareness, with the goal of changing the idea of mandatory presence at workplace and demolishing the notion that work-life balance represents a financial burden for companies. It is necessary to constitute a philosophy based on a direct relation between work-life balance, productivity and talent retention, all three of which are necessary in an

environment defined by globalised and technological competition. Thus it is key to insist on the quality of work, rather than the quantity of working hours. With that aim, it is necessary to implement social awareness campaigns and consultation services within this area of action.

- Induce companies – through incentives and distinctions (subsidies, financial support, awards, quality certificates, priority in public tenders, etc.) – to the employment of new forms of working time and space management (flexitime, compact daily or weekly working hours, etc.) or the integration of new technologies as a basic tool to achieving balance (working from home, videoconferences, etc.).

Intervention initiatives: The local body as employer

Within the realm of the Local Body **as employer**, it is advisable that those bodies:

- Become an example for the rest of society, by **fueling changes and initiatives**. In this respect, it is necessary that local bodies take their responsibility towards their employees, by improving and expanding the general regulation and also furthering, in the Spanish case, the implementation of the “Plan Conciliar de la Administracion General del Estado” (“National Plan for Work-Life Balance”).
- This approach requires a development within the “spirit” of every institution, a new work philosophy based on self-management and trust. Implementing new measures is not enough: it is necessary to make staff familiar with those measures and to encourage their use, avoiding at the same time any gender discrimination or tensions among the personnel, which would damage the working environment.
- Use tools such as new technologies, since they constitute a pillar to a favorable work-life balance.

Intervention-initiatives with an effect on urban times and spaces in the city

With regard to **time and space management** in the city, local bodies should:

- Promote the participative and mainstreaming nature of urban initiatives, as revealed in plans and programmes, and particularly influence those aspects that relate directly to uses of time, urban planning, provision of services and their opening times, traveling (frequency, timetables, and availability) and the co-ordination of services and work-places with long-term care services and institutions. In this respect, political commitment and support, and social awareness and participations prove to be key elements for the success of the intervention.

Initiatives providing services and infrastructures

In their capacity as **services and infrastructures providers**, favouring work-life balance, local bodies should:

- Improve access to **long-term and child care** in order to break down existing obstacles for work-life balance in those areas. Not only is it necessary to expand opening times and make them more flexible, in order to meet citizens demands, it is also indispensable to increase the number of places available.
 - Childcare services should be targeted above all to meet the needs created by the existing incompatibility between school and work times and also during school holidays. However, they should also enable fathers and mothers to enhance their personal sphere by allowing them to use their free time and by supporting the development of activities and cultural, leisure and sports centre (libraries, community and sports centres, etc.).
 - Moreover, those services and activities should be financially accessible to all citizens and their cost should also be regulated with regard to the financial situation of the family.
 - In this respect, it is basic to **improve the management of services and make full use of existing structures** such as educational or community centres, so that the situation does not become unsustainable from a financial point of view. Frequently, it is not more resources, but more imagination which is needed.
-

Initiatives to promote a change in beliefs and mentality in society

Local bodies are key-elements **with regard to social awareness and education**:

- **Social awareness and educational campaigns** represent essential tools that have an effect on public opinion and fight against stereotypes. The initiatives taken in the realm of education to make society aware of the need for change, should bear in mind the factors responsible for keeping certain attitudes and stereotypes alive with regard to traditional gender divisions. They should also insist on the importance of joint responsibility and the necessary presence of women in the labour force, reinforcing their productive role, rather than focusing only on their reproductive role.
- **Education on joint responsibility, co-education and time management** should start early in life, since today's boys and girls will be tomorrow's men and women. The co-operation and

involvement of schools is essential in this respect.

- It is important that the **work-life policies and measures** to be implemented **target men** explicitly **too**, in order to stimulate joint responsibility and show that work-life balance does not only affect women.
- When defining policies to raise social awareness, it is essential to bear the audience in mind (children, teenagers, university students, business people, general public , etc.), in order to make them suitable and address people's worries, taking into account diversity issues, with the aim of attracting their attention regarding the importance of work-life balance.

In spite of all these recommendations, we should bear in mind that in order to achieve **balance among all spheres in life, we need local bodies to implement work-balance policies, but we also need to promote a truly responsible familial and social culture**, since that is the only way to transform society and achieve a better quality of life for us all.

GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES FOR PROMOTING
WORK-LIFE BALANCE THROUGH
Local Bodies in Spain and Norway

4

4. appendix. DESCRIPTION OF BEST PRACTICES

This section offers a summary of each project referred to in the analysis. For those interested in finding out more about any of these initiatives, please see the project website where further details are provided. <http://www.balancequilibrio.net>.

Best Practices

4.1. An integrated approach to promote worklife balance

“AVILES FINDS WORKLIFE BALANCE” PROGRAMME • AVILES TOWN COUNCIL	102
NEW SOCIAL USES OF TIME (NUST) PROGRAMME • BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL.....	104
METHODOLOGICAL APPLICATION OF THE UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO WORKLIFE BALANCE • CASTELLDEFELS TOWN COUNCIL	106
LOCAL AGREEMENT FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE: “DIFFUSION HELPS SPREAD WORKLIFE BALANCE, KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS ENABLE UNDERSTANDING AND INVOLVEMENT” • ESTELLA-LIZARRA TOWN COUNCIL.....	108
WORKLIFE BALANCE CONSULTATION BOARD. LOCAL AGREEMENT FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE • GRANADA TOWN COUNCIL	110
AGDER REGIONAL GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL • VEST AGDER AND AUST AGDER COUNTY	111
PROGRAMME OF LOCAL AGREEMENTS FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE • INSTITUTE FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN NAVARRE.....	112

4.2. One goal: managing and saving time

4.2.1. Flexibility in working hours and place of work

4.2.1.1. Involvement in local businesses - incentives for private initiatives

WORKLIFE BALANCE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME IN BUSINESSES “AWARD FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE - BUSINESS CATEGORY” • ALCORCON TOWN COUNCIL.....	113
NETWORK OF BUSINESSES IN NUST • BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL	114
GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES IN BUSINESSES IN FUENLABRADA 2008 • FUENLABRADA TOWN COUNCIL.....	115
BEST POSSIBLE MODEL OF WORK AND FAMILY LIFE BALANCE IN BUSINESSES • HOSPITALET DE LLOBREGAT TOWN COUNCIL, VILAFRANCA DEL PENEDES TOWN COUNCIL, BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL AND MOLINS DE REI TOWN COUNCIL (BARCELONA); MOLLERUSSA TOWN COUNCIL AND SEU D'URGELL TOWN COUNCIL (LERIDA); MONTSIÀ PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE (TARRAGONA); OSONA PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE (BARCELONA / GERONA) .	116
AWARDS FOR BUSINESSES, ASSOCIATIONS, THE MEDIA, TRADE UNIONS AND OTHER PUBLIC AND/OR PRIVATE BODIES SUPPORTING THE INCORPORATION OF BEST PRACTICES IN WORKLIFE BALANCE WITHIN THEIR ORGANISATION • VALDEMORO TOWN COUNCIL	117

4.2.1.2. Local Government as an employer

EXPERIENCES OF TELEWORKING WITHIN CASTELLDEFELS TOWN COUNCIL • CASTELLDEFELS TOWN COUNCIL ...	118
STUDY TO ENCOURAGE WORK AND FAMILY LIFE BALANCE AMONG THE EMPLOYEES OF CORDOBA COUNTY	

COUNCIL • CORDOBA PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE	119
FLEXIBILITY IN WORKING HOURS AND PLACE OF WORK • KRISTIANSAND COUNCIL	120
RIGHT TO WORK FULL-TIME FOR PART-TIME EMPLOYEES • KRISTIANSAND COUNCIL	121

4.2.2. A city for citizens: Friendly spaces and hours

SCHOOL ROUTES • BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL	122
REPORT ON USES OF TIME IN THE CITY OF LUGO • LUGO TOWN COUNCIL	123
IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY TO ENABLE FAMILY AND PERSONAL LIFE BALANCE • SANTA COLOMA DE GRAMENET TOWN COUNCIL	124
TIME MANAGEMENT PLAN • VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL	125

4.3. Councils as service providers and organisers

4.3.1. Who can look after my children when I am unable to?

ALCALA DE HENARES CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUP • ALCALA DE HENARES TOWN COUNCIL	126
PERSONALISED CARE PROGRAMME • ALDAIA TOWN COUNCIL	127
SUPPORTIVE URBAN SUMMERCAMPS • ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL	128
'CASAL DE MARES I PARES' (PARENTS' CENTRE) • BADALONA TOWN COUNCIL	129
KANGURAS SERVICE (BABYSITTERS) • CAMPO DE CRIPTANA TOWN COUNCIL	130
'ESCOLA DE MATI I DE VESPRADA' (MORNING AND AFTERNOON SCHOOL) • CASTELLON TOWN COUNCIL	131
TIMESHARING PROGRAMME • CORDOBA CITY COUNCIL	132
'MINUTS MENUTS' (LITTLE MINUTES) • ESPLUGUES DE LLOBREGAT TOWN COUNCIL	133
11X11 PROJECT • GIJON TOWN COUNCIL	134
OPEN SPACE FOR CHILDREN • LALIN TOWN COUNCIL	135
WORKLIFE BALANCE SERVICE FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN • MOLINA DE SEGURA TOWN COUNCIL	136
NANNY HOMES • PUENTE GENIL TOWN COUNCIL	137
OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS WELCOME SERVICE FOR PUPILS: 'MATINAL XIQUETS' • QUART DE POBLET TOWN COUNCIL	138
EARLY BIRD PLAN • VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL	139
BALANCED AFTERNOONS • VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL	140
MUNICIPAL COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF NURSERIES AT A FIXED PRICE • BÆRUM COUNCIL	141

4.3.2. Caring for the elderly and disabled people

FINANCIAL AID FOR CARERS OF HIGHLY DEPENDENT PEOPLE IN LONG TERM CARE ▪ ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL	142
MUNICIPAL SERVICE OF MEALS FOR THE ELDERLY AND CARE-DEPENDENTS ▪ ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL	143
DAYCARE SERVICE (S.E.D.A.) ▪ MAJADAHONDA TOWN COUNCIL	144
'XANTAR NA CASA' (EAT AT HOME) ▪ VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL	145
COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ▪ BÆRUM COUNCIL	146
HOME-BASED SERVICES CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY AND/OR DISABLED PEOPLE ▪ MANDAL COUNCIL	147

4.3.3. Encouraging leisure and free-time

LEISURE CENTRE FOR THE COGNITIVELY OR PSYCHOLOGICALLY IMPAIRED ▪ ALDAIA TOWN COUNCIL	148
MUNICIPAL PUBLIC PLAYCENTRE: "ALMUDENA CARRETERO" ▪ ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL	149
TEMPS DE BARRI, TEMPS EDUCATIU COMPARTIT (NEIGHBOURHOOD TIME, SHARED EDUCATIONAL TIME) ▪ BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL	150
SCHOOL OF ADAPTED SPORTS ▪ MOLINA DE SEGURA TOWN COUNCIL	151
"BRAVE WOMEN" LEISURE PROGRAMME ▪ SANTA CRUZ DE LA PALMA TOWN COUNCIL	152

4.3.4. Other best practices

ALCALA DE HENARES TIME BANK ▪ ALCALA DE HENARES TOWN COUNCIL	153
RESOURCE GUIDE TO SERVICES ENCOURAGING BALANCE BETWEEN FAMILY AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE ▪ GRANADA TOWN COUNCIL	154
SUPPORT FOR THE CREATION OF PROXIMITY SERVICES AND A SYSTEM OF QUALITY ASSURANCE ▪ MADRID CITY COUNCIL	155
VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TIME BANK ▪ VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL	156
VOLUNTARY SERVICES CENTRE ▪ MANDAL COUNCIL	157

4.4. Changing mentalities: A question of ideas and awareness

ADULT SCHOOL FOR PERSONAL AUTONOMY. SKILLS SHARING WORKSHOPS ▪ ALCALA DE HENARES TOWN COUNCIL	158
GENDER EQUALITY WORKSHOPS FOR WOMEN AND MEN ▪ ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL	159
AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS ABOUT JOINT RESPONSIBILITY IN SCHOOLS ▪ CAMPO DE CRIPTANA TOWN COUNCIL	160

AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS IN ESTELLA-LIZARRA PROMOTING JOINT RESPONSIBILITY ▪ ESTELLA-LIZARRA TOWN COUNCIL	161
STUDY OF THE STATE OF WORKLIFE BALANCE AND EQUALITY IN INFANT AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN GETAFE MUNICIPALITY ▪ GETAFE TOWN COUNCIL	162
TRAINING IN “COEDUCATION AND JOINT RESPONSIBILITY”: THE BASIS FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE ▪ LEON TOWN COUNCIL	163
MADRID CITY COUNCIL AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS ▪ MADRID CITY COUNCIL	164
TASK EXCHANGE WORKSHOPS ▪ PAMPLONA TOWN COUNCIL	165
DO YOU KNOW WHAT WORKLIFE BALANCE IS? BENEFIT FROM IT! PROGRAMME OF FLEXIBLE AND WORKLIFE-BALANCED BUSINESSES ▪ SANTA MARTA DE TORMES TOWN COUNCIL	166

4.1. An INTEGRATED APPROACH TO ENCOURAGE WORKLIFE BALANCE

"AVILES FINDS WORKLIFE BALANCE" PROGRAMME

DRIVING BODY: AVILES TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Asturias

Autonomous Community: Asturias

Target groups and/or bodies

General population of the municipality of Aviles; specifically minors, the elderly, disabled people and council staff.

Description

The "AVILES WORKLIFE BALANCE" initiative stands out for the way it combines all the actions, resources, programmes and projects connected to reaching balance between family and professional life undertaken in the municipality of Aviles. This is achieved by applying various common criteria to all the actions: global approach, analysis–planning–evaluation, rational management of resources; and participation, coordination and interlinking of all those involved, both internally within the political and operational staff of the council itself and externally in terms of all the social agents of the region, including private businesses.

As a result of this approach, public involvement aimed at encouraging worklife balance is achieved from an integrated and coordinated perspective, creating a thorough and ordered overview of actions.

Actions developed within the framework of the Aviles Worklife Balance Programme target two groups: specific groups of the municipality's population and council staff. A summary as follows:

1. Main actions aimed at the population.

a. In education:

- "Opening Schools to the Community" Programme, offering cultural and sporting activities outside normal school hours, as well as a canteen, for both lunches and breakfasts.
- 'Early Care' Programme, which works through municipal-run schools for children aged 3 and under, including provision of breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks.
- 'Holidays with T.I.A.' Programme, consisting of organised activities for children during the Summer, Christmas and Easter holidays.
- "Centre for Improving Use of Digital Technology" offering technological training to individuals or groups at risk of exclusion.

b. In employment training:

- "Municipal Playgroup" Programme, offering childcare for children aged 3 and under during training or employment activities such as courses, orientation interviews, etc. at the Council.

c. In Social Services:

- "Home Based Care" Programme, for people with difficulties in day-to-day living who do not receive help from their family.

2. Initiatives aimed at Aviles Council employees.

A series of measures for worklife balance incorporated into the Working Conditions Agreement for Public Employees of Aviles Town Council 2008-2011.

Two committees were created to ensure the initiative's success:

- A 'Follow-up' and Evaluation Committee, which meets twice a year, presided by the Regional Councillor for Social Welfare. Its members are: politicians and technicians from regional and/or city councils, representatives from other local governments, representatives of NGOs and other social bodies and representatives from other associations in the region.
- A Permanent Committee chosen by the previous committee, consisting of fewer members, with proportional representation of all organisations. This commission also meets twice a year with the following goals:
 - To evaluate which guidelines are to be prioritised and decide the measures to be undertaken each year.
 - To devise suitable evaluation indicators, enabling the Plan to be followed up.
 - To analyse the actions proposed by each Department to ensure objectives are achieved.

To study needs and proposals for actions

Duration of the initiative: 2006 - 2010.

Contact

Organisation: Área de Bienestar Social, Servicios Municipales de Mujer del Ayuntamiento de Avilés (Department of Social Welfare, Municipal Women's Services, Aviles Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 98 552 75 46 / 29 E-mail: Mujer@ayto-aviles.es Website: <http://www.ayto-aviles.es>

New social uses of time programme (NUST)

Driving BODY: BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL

Province: Barcelona

Autonomous Community: Catalonia

Target groups and/or bodies

Inhabitants and businesses of Barcelona.

Description

Barcelona City Council has created a Department and post responsible for New Social Uses of Time (2003) to promote and manage policies relating to the use of time in the city through the NUST Programme. The challenge is to place people's time (not only work time) at the centre of a new social model balancing different areas of life.

This includes key areas for action and various challenges which are being met with the participation of Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations. It requires a multi-disciplinary approach affecting various aspects (changes in working hours, smooth-running of services, mobility, planning and design of public spaces, etc.).

There are lines of action in the following areas:

1. Observation of current situation.

Knowledge management, information gathering, research and surveys are needed to find out about and evaluate dysfunctions. To this end, the following initiatives have been set up:

- a. The 'Time Lab', designed as a tool to diagnose the current situation and ensure visibility of time policies developed in different places. Publications, studies and existing legislation are made available to anyone interested.
- b. A 'Study Plan', concerning research useful for analysis and strategic decision-making relating to time management policies. Among the studies undertaken, the following are noteworthy:
 - Survey into uses of time and public space.
 - Innovative experiences within Barcelona businesses.
 - Social uses of time in the Metropolitan region of Barcelona.
 - Social uses of time in Barcelona. A prospective vision.
 - Social uses of time in Barcelona. 2006 update.
 - Working time: outcome of European Union initiatives.
- c. 'Time Files' - a collection of documents on various subjects relating to new social uses of time. They aim to raise awareness and increase the debate on paradigms of time use in the city and the local sphere. By way of example, titles include:
 - Time policies: an open debate.
 - New times, new uses and new technologies.
 - Uses of time and mobility.
 - Uses of time and families.
 - Time File: Organisation of work time, competitiveness and quality of life.
 - Men and their times: Hegemony, negotiation and resistance.

- d. Systems for sharing information, awareness-raising and sharing experience: this includes the webpage itself, as well as a NUST bulletin and an online leaflet to explain significant aspects of policies and related actions.

2. Social Intervention.

- The NUST programme involves various actions, including some pilot projects to help the city adapt to citizens' uses of time.
- Actions target day-to-day, local spheres such as neighbourhoods, workplaces or schools, with the participation of the relevant agents and communities.
- As such, various programmes have been set up including:
 - “Neighbourhood time, shared educational time.” (for further information read the specific section about the initiative).
 - Network of Businesses for NUST” (for further information read the specific section about the initiative).
 - Time bank.
 - Campaigns.
 - Production and distribution of the guide “What are we doing today?”, with the aim of informing people of the activities organised by Barcelona City Council in four basic areas (education, leisure, culture and holidays) which affect children's time, after school or during weekends and holidays.
 - “Bcn.es time”. A personalised training and information scheme, carried out in three Public Information Offices. These are designed to show what the webpage bcn.cat and the citizens' folders provide, to carry out administrative procedures with the Barcelona City Council.

3. Agreement and participation.

- Given the nature of use of time policies, which cut across many aspects, they require the participation and involvement of as many agents as possible: municipality representatives, citizens, associations, businesses, labour organisations, networks of cities.
- The NUST Department participates in the “Network of European Cities”. Together with Barcelona's regional government, it promotes the “Network of Cities and Villages for New Social Uses of Time”, made up of twenty five municipalities and a local council, aiming to encourage joint reflection on this area of local politics.

Duration of the initiative: 2004 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de Nuevos Usos Sociales del Tiempo, Ayuntamiento de Barcelona (Council for New Social Uses of Time, Barcelona City Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 93 402 32 13 E-mail: laboratorideltemps@bcn.cat

Website: <http://www.bcn.es>

METHODOLOGICAL APPLICATION OF THE UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO WORKLIFE BALANCE

DRIVING BODY: CASTELLDEFELS TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Barcelona**

Autonomous Community: **Catalonia**

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of Castelldefels municipality.

Description

To pave the way for implementing and carrying out a Council Equal Opportunities Plan which considers worklife balance a universal right, the following milestones were established:

- Setting up a process of political agreements in order to approve proposals aimed at encouraging and promoting balance between the personal and professional life of citizens, with the aim of building a new model for daily life and uses of time (2003).
- A Gender Audit, carried out with the support of the Barcelona County Council. Its aim was to analyse and diagnose the municipality and to enable a political and technical presentation of results to the council staff (2003-2004).
- Creation of a committee made up of different Town Council departments to create a report on initiatives, services or projects in Castelldefels related to new uses of time (2004).
- A two-phase study, the first a “Diagnosis of the Organisation in Relation to Worklife Balance” and the second a “City Plan: Castelldefels, a City Working Towards Worklife Balance” (2004-2005).
- Presentation of a Motion for Worklife Balance and Joint Responsibility at the Council plenary session in February 2005.
- Creation of the Council Equal Opportunities Plan (2005). Unanimous approval at the Council plenary session (February 2006) and presentations to various groups (operational staff, political staff, etc.) (2006).
- Approval by the municipal government board to join the Local Network for New Uses of Time, run by the Equality & Citizenship Department of Barcelona County Council (2005).

Following the approval of the Council Equal Opportunities Plan a number of initiatives relating to worklife balance were set up. The following points give an overview:

1. Internal – the Council as an employer:
 - a. Pilot teleworking scheme.
 - b. Staff training in areas such as worklife balance, joint responsibility and new uses of time.
 - c. Creation of a municipal intranet with information about the progress of the Council Equal Opportunities Plan, specifically about new social uses of time.
 - d. Email and intranet distribution of information of interest to council staff relating to worklife balance and time management.

2. For the general public:

a. Awareness-raising.

- Organisation of Awareness Raising Days relating to new forms of time management and joint responsibility.
- Training initiatives for businesses to raise awareness about the importance of worklife balance.
- Co-education project in a state Secondary School.

b. Services.

- Creation of a Nursery School (0-3 years of age) and signing of an agreement to build two further schools.
- Creation of a single office for public enquiries.
- Extending opening hours: for public enquiries, council sports centre, library, schools...
- Childcare Services and Children's Playgroup for families who want to take part in activities and courses organised by the council.
- Increase in Childcare Services, Home Care and Sign Language Interpreters for activities organised by the Department of Equality Policies.
- Inclusion of gender and worklife balance issues in urban planning of public spaces involving all the municipal areas organised by the urban planning departments.

c. Information technology.

- Ajuntament obert/'Open Council' digital certificate for public procedures.
- Virtual Office for public enquiries.
- Wi-Fi. Free Internet access zones and training courses.
- Website for Castelldefels citizen associations.
- Local home tele-assistance service.
- Creation of a Calendar section in the municipal website.
- Women on the Web programme.

d. Mobility.

- Car-sharing.
- Night bus.

Duration of the initiative: 2005-2010.

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Políticas de Igualdad, Ayuntamiento de Castelldefels (Department for Equality Policies, Castelldefels Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 93 665 11 50 Website: <http://www.castelldefels.org>

Local agreement for worklife balance: "diffusion helps spread worklife balance, knowledge and awareness enable understanding and involvement"

Driving body: ESTELLA-LIZARRA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Navarre Autonomous Community: Navarre

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of Estella-Lizarra.

Description

A total of 18 bodies, of various types (business associations, Trade Unions, schools, Parent Associations, etc.) led by the Estella/Lizarra council, signed a Local Agreement for Worklife Balance in 2006, with the following aims:

1. Consolidation of the Local Agreement for Worklife Balance.
Efforts were concentrated on technical training regarding the ethics of care. A large portion of time was dedicated to this through consultancies offered by the Gender Equality Institute of Navarre, within the framework of the "Programme of Local Agreements for Worklife Balance". The training led to a greater understanding of the idea of worklife balance, and enabled bodies to work together towards joint responsibility.
2. Finding out the current situation in Estella-Lizarra in terms of worklife balance and joint responsibility.
A diagnostic study was carried out in 2007 with the aim of finding out citizens' opinions. Men and women of various ages and from various socio-economic backgrounds were interviewed. 208 personal surveys were completed and two work groups were formed, one made up of men, the other of women. The results of these studies have informed the guidelines of subsequent work.
3. Extending the Agreement's impact, both qualitatively and quantitatively.
Groups who had not signed the Agreement whose participation was considered to be important were encouraged to join. Thus, five new organisations signed the Agreement in 2005, including a health centre, a voluntary organisation and the Association of Trade and Hospitality. The result, made it clear in the renewal of the Agreement in 2009, is a much wider and diverse perspective on worklife balance, joint responsibility and the ethics of care. Furthermore, it allows a more efficient use of resources for worklife balance.
4. Making the programme more popular and implementing it in different council and local spaces and activities, through the following measures:
 - a. Campaigns about fathers' joint responsibility and other topics in collaboration with schools. (Please see specific initiative for further information.)
 - b. Agreement-Contract "towards a better life together". This is read to couples getting married in civil or church ceremonies. They are given the opportunity to sign it.
 - c. Training: Courses aimed at men of all ages to make them more sensitive to the issue and to involve them in taking joint responsibility for household tasks, such as caring for dependents and children. This campaign is also directed at young people of both genders.

- d. Production and support of resources for worklife balance. These are considered a public right, and should not be seen as solely to help women improve worklife balance. The Agreement aims to promote a change in mindset regarding pioneer, necessary services, so they start to become mainstream and are offered by the appropriate departments and/or bodies. Good examples are:
- New “Baby playgroups” at Christmas, Easter and extra Summer groups.
 - Founding of the *Elderly People’s Social Group*, running since December 2008. This service is designed for elderly people who are moderately care-dependent. Two afternoons a week they can take part in activities, games, workshops and day-trips to stimulate and maintain their abilities and skills. This provides relief for families responsible for elderly people, helping them achieve better worklife balance. It also promotes social involvement, preventing physical and social exclusion, and slows down progressive physical and mental deterioration of the service users.
- e. Co-ordinating and cooperating with all schools: training on the topic in collaboration with the Teachers’ Centre and creation of the network “*Spokespeople for Joint Responsibility*”.
- f. Working with the Council’s Work’s Council in order to set an example in the town.
- g. Media Involvement: Inviting representatives to work and training sessions related to the Agreement so they become acquainted with the concept and philosophy of joint responsibility. Participation in weekly and fortnightly 20 minute programmes on both local radio stations. Monthly hour-long discussions with several people and voice connections are organised.
- h. Other activities:
- Creation of “The Exchange Basket” time bank.
 - Creation and distribution of a resource guide for worklife balance in the area of Estella-Lizarrá.
 - Monthly street leafleting on market day.
 - Specific activities with the facilitator from the Women’s Centre and the Council’s Youth Section.

Duration of the initiative: 2006 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Área de la Mujer e Igualdad, Ayuntamiento de Estella-Lizarrá, (Department of Women and Equality, Estella-Lizarrá Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 948 54 82 37

E-mail: areadelamujer@estella-lizarra.com Website: <http://www.estella-lizarra.com>

WORKLIFE BALANCE CONSULTATION BOARD. LOCAL AGREEMENT FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE

DRIVING BODY: GRANADA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Granada Autonomous Community: Andalusia

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of the city of Granada especially women responsible for dependents.

Description

The Worklife Balance Consultation Board was developed within the framework of the Equal EU Initiative “Time Jugglers” project.

It consisted of periodic meetings (every four or five months) between relevant local agents in order to respond effectively to issues related to achieving balance between family, personal and professional life.

These meetings were used to exchange information relating to worklife balance (laws, available local services, adequacy of these services, new requests, etc.); to give workshops; to distribute work tools; and to come to agreements and compromises in related matters.

Non-member organisations were invited to participate in board meetings, depending on the issues in question.

Some of the areas covered by the Boards were:

- Current worklife balance and the value of reproductive work: awareness raising among women and men.
- Obstacles to women being employed and promoted.
- Sharing of strategies and actions.
- Time, space and services: reorganisation of social use of time.
- Role of women in rural areas.

A Local Agreement for Worklife Balance in Granada was considered necessary to consolidate the Boards. This involved all the relevant social, political and economic agents, enabling an integrated and comprehensive approach to working for balance among family, professional and personal life.

Duration of the initiative: The Boards were in place from October 2005 to December 2007. In April 2008 the Local Agreement for Balance Among Personal, Professional and Family Life was signed and continues to be in force (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Instituto Municipal de Formación y Empleo, Ayuntamiento de Granada (Municipal Institute of Training and Employment, Granada Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 958 21 55 41 Website: <http://www.imfegranada.es>

Agder Regional Gender Equality Council

Driving Body: REGIONAL AGDER GENDER EQUALITY BODY

County: Vest Agder and Aust Agder

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of the Agder region.

Description

The Regional Agder Gender Equality Council was created in 2005 in response to evidence showing that the County of Vest Agder was at the tail end of Norwegian regions in terms of gender equality. The area is characterised by higher than average unemployment levels and a labour market with considerable gender segregation. The aim of the Council is to mainstream gender equality making it an essential part of strategic regional planning, and as a result, improve quality of life.

The Council is made up of representatives from various local Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations: the two counties in Agder, regional government, diverse businesses and trade unions, the university, the regional branch of the National Welfare Agency and the Norwegian Association of Regional and Local Authorities. Its main activities are:

- Participation in conferences and international projects about gender equality.
- Promotion of research projects and development work on gender equality.
- Collaboration with the Gender Equality Centre at Agder University, opened in 2008.

One of the research projects promoted by the Council which stands out is "Free Choice for Equality". This project, started in 2006, aims to encourage equal opportunities from a young age. Its goal is to encourage youth to choose the training and profession they really want, free of traditional gender stereotypes. In doing so, they hope to narrow the huge gender division currently found in the region's labour market, a division accentuated by the fact that the majority of women only work part-time. Measures undertaken include:

- Campaigns in schools aimed at teachers, students and parents.
- Providing non-traditional role models for children.
- Employment of male staff in nurseries, etc.

Duration of the initiative: 2005 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Agder Gender Equality Council.**

PROGRAMME OF LOCAL AGREEMENTS FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE

DRIVING BODY: INSTITUTE FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN NAVARRE

Province: Navarre Autonomous Community: Navarre

Target groups and/or bodies

Local bodies in Navarre regulated by the Regional Law 6/1990, of 2nd July, Regional Government of Navarre.

Description

In signing a Local Agreement local bodies commit to working together towards a series of objectives aimed at helping citizens of the region improve balance between family, personal and professional life.

INAL organises and offers:

1. Annual public tender for local bodies to participate in the Programme of Agreements.

Local bodies wishing to get involved in the programme are selected according to criteria based on population and their commitment to equality.

2. Meetings with representatives of councils, to inform about participation in the programme.

3. Design, monitoring and renewal of Agreements that have expired or are about to. Specifically:

a. Technical assistance during the process.

b. Personalised training in Gender and Equal Opportunities for representatives of the bodies that sign Local Agreements for Worklife Balance.

c. Resources for awareness-raising and support of citizenry.

4. Awareness-raising by organising conferences, participating in events and publishing resources.

5. Subsidies by the Government of Navarre to local councils to organise services and activities included in the Agreement.

The process of signing a Local Agreement should preferably be led by the City Council and involve the largest possible number of public and private bodies and organisations in the area. The agreements aim to achieve the greatest possible social and institutional consensus.

Duration of the initiative: An annual programme since 2004.

Contact

Organisation: Instituto Navarro para la Igualdad (Institute for Gender Equality in Navarre).

Telephone: (+34) 948 20 66 04 Website: <http://www.navarra.es>

4.2. one goal: managing and saving time

4.2.1. FLEXIBILITY IN WORKING HOURS AND PLACE OF WORK

4.2.1.1. INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL BUSINESSES – INCENTIVES FOR PRIVATE INITIATIVES

WORKLIFE BALANCE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME IN BUSINESSES "AWARD FOR WORKLIFE BALANCE - BUSINESS CATEGORY"

DRIVING BODY: ALCORCON TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Madrid** Autonomous Community: **Community of Madrid**

Target groups and/or bodies

Businesses in the municipality of Alcorcon and their staff.

Description

Worklife Balance Awards are awarded to companies with headquarters in the Municipality of Alcorcon which apply measures for their staff to improve balance between professional and family life including:

- Extension of maternity, paternity, adoption and fostering leave.
- Extension of breastfeeding leave.
- Improving the legal conditions for the reduction of working hours and leave of absence for care of relatives needing long-term care.
- Flexible working hours.
- Training during work hours.
- Job-sharing.
- First choice of holidays, depending on family responsibilities.
- Facilitating relocation close to family members.
- Services for care-dependents: nurseries, daycare centres, etc.
- Information on specialised care centres.
- Financial aid for those giving long-term care.

Duration of the initiative: This permanent initiative started in 2007. The third Worklife Balance Awards for businesses in the municipality were celebrated in 2009.

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Alcorcón (Women's Department, Alcorcon Town Council)**.
Telephone: **(+34) 91 664 83 13** Website: **<http://www.ayto-alcorcon.es>**

NETWORK OF BUSINESSES IN NUST (new social uses of time)

Driving Body: BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL

Province: Barcelona

Autonomous Community: Catalonia

Target groups and/or bodies

Businesses in the municipality of Barcelona belonging to the network and their staff.

Description

Businesses within the New Social Uses of Time (NUST) network share a common philosophy of promoting workers' new social uses of time. They aim to create a work culture in which efficiency, working towards goals and the use of technology to the advantage of people and business competitiveness are key values.

The network focuses on:

- Sharing information, knowledge and initiatives.
- Finding out about the experiences of other countries and businesses.
- Public recognition of the progress and innovative work they are carrying out in the field of new uses of time.

Specific actions carried out by the Network, promoted by the Local Council are:

- Training days to promote the sharing of knowledge between businesses which are part of the NUST Business Network.
- Conferences and debates to create synergies with trade unions and employers' associations working to improve people's time management skills.
- A free assessment service for businesses which are part of the Network.
- A Guide to Good Models for better use of time, "Businesses and people" was published. The aim of the guide is to draw attention to the work of businesses within the Network which are innovative in time management practices.
- A forum for sharing practical experiences with Spanish and European companies that are developing similar initiatives.
- Production of a DVD to publicly recognise the innovative efforts of the businesses within the network.

Duration of the initiative: 2006 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Dirección de Nuevos Usos del Tiempo, Ayuntamiento de Barcelona (Directorate of New Social Uses of Time, Barcelona City Council).

Telephone: (+34) 93 256 45 98 Website: <http://www.bcn.es>

Guide to Best Practices in businesses in Fuenlabrada, 2008

Driving Body: FUENLABRADA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Madrid Autonomous Community: Community of Madrid

Target groups and/or bodies

Businesses in the municipality of Fuenlabrada, Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations.

Description

The guide is divided into three parts:

1. Regulations regarding balance among professional, family and personal life. This part describes the main challenges regarding worklife balance in the current regulations.
2. Measures and strategies for promoting balance among professional, family and personal life. This section describes the main measures and strategies developed by companies. They are classified into a. Measures that extend and improve on the regulations; b. Flexibility Measures; c. Measures to improve proximity of care services; d. Other measures relating to worklife balance, and e. Complementary measures.
3. A selection of good practices undertaken by businesses in Fuenlabrada. This section describes a series of measures implemented by 10 businesses in the municipality of Fuenlabrada, to promote balance among professional, family and personal life.

Duration of the initiative: 2005 - 2008.

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Igualdad y Empleo del Ayuntamiento de Fuenlabrada (Department of Gender Equality and Employment, Fuenlabrada Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 91 606 74 12

Website: <http://www.ayto-fuenlabrada.es>

BEST POSSIBLE MODEL OF BALANCE IN PROFESSIONAL AND FAMILY LIFE IN BUSINESSES

Driving bodies: HOSPITALET DE LLOBREGAT TOWN COUNCIL, VILAFRANCA DEL PENEDES TOWN COUNCIL, BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL AND MOLINS DE REI TOWN COUNCIL (BARCELONA); MOLLERUSSA TOWN COUNCIL AND LA SEU D'URGELL TOWN COUNCIL (LERIDA); CONSELL COMARCAL DEL MONTSIÀ (TARRAGONA); OSONA COUNTY COUNCIL (BARCELONA / GERONA)
 Provinces: **Barcelona / Lerida / Tarragona / Gerona** Autonomous community: **Catalonia**

Target groups and/or bodies

- In business: human resources managers and directors.
- In trade unions: trade union delegations, equality officers and technical training staff.
- In politics: those responsible for work and occupation areas and for equality policies.

Description

This forms part of the first phase of the Equal EU Initiative: “Tempora: tots els temps en un temps” (“Time: all the time at once”) (2001-2004).

For the development of the best possible model of balance between professional and family life, the project has:

1. Found and analysed existing conditions: through individual surveys to human resources staff and employees of over 100 companies.
2. Designed and carried out two distance-training schemes for executives and trade union representatives (60 hr programmes). These were aimed to promote business strategies which take into account people's personal and family situations, in the form of human resources training policies and in general business negotiations.
3. Prepared a model of best practices with the participation of all involved in the process. Its aim was to define new worklife-friendly organisational systems in the workplace.

Duration of the initiative: 2001-2004.

Contact

Organisations: **Barcelona, Hospitalet de Llobregat, Molins de Rei, Mollerussa, de la Seu d' Urgell y Vilafranca del Penedes Town Councils; Montsià and Osona County Councils.**

AWARDS FOR BUSINESSES, ASSOCIATIONS, THE MEDIA, TRADE UNIONS AND OTHER PUBLIC/PRIVATE BODIES SUPPORTING THE INCORPORATION OF BEST PRACTICES IN WORKLIFE BALANCE WITHIN THEIR ORGANISATION

Driving Body: VALDEMORO TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Madrid** Autonomous Community: **Community of Madrid**

Target groups and/or bodies

Businesses, associations and media representatives in the Municipality of Valdemoro.

Description

This project consists of awards being presented to public or private businesses in the Municipality of Valdemoro which successfully incorporate measures, or even a plan, for worklife balance within their organisation to improve productivity and profits. The award is also given to associations within the municipality demonstrating good practices, as well as local media that have published stories that promote worklife balance and equal opportunities.

Alongside the award, necessary work tools and information are provided through technical and operational support. This aims to establish measures for worklife balance in the organisations of Valdemoro through collective bargaining. The following steps were undertaken to ensure this:

- a. Firstly, a mailout was sent to businesses of the municipality by the Women's Section of the Department of Social Affairs, Women and Family, offering them the service.
- b. Secondly, practical and easy to use educational materials were produced. These 12 sheets detail the methodology to incorporate measures for worklife balance.
- c. Thirdly, businesses are offered individual tutorials. These teach them how to create their own worklife balance plans.
- d. Finally, once the plans have been analysed, the assessment team recommends public recognition for the businesses that have successfully produced their plans.

Duration of the initiative: From 2008, indefinitely. (An agreement is signed annually with the Community of Madrid.)

Contact

Organisation: **Área de Mujer, Concejalía de Acción Social, Mujer y Familia, Ayuntamiento de Valdemoro (Women's Section, Department of Social Affairs, Women and Family, Valdemoro Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 91 809 96 66 E-mail: mujer@ayto-valdemoro.org Website: <http://www.valdemoro.es>

4.2.1.2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

EXPERIENCES OF TELEWORKING WITHIN CASTELLDEFELS TOWN COUNCIL

DRIVING BODY: CASTELLDEFELS TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Barcelona**Autonomous Community: **Catalonia**

Target groups and/or bodies

Employees of Castelldefels Council.

Description

Castelldefels Council initiated a pilot teleworking scheme, led by the Department for General Services and Internal Affairs. It involved:

1. Setting up a pilot scheme, within a broader project aimed at supporting worklife balance as a universal right.
2. Using the methodology of the sample test group of teleworkers and control groups.
3. A limited lifespan.
4. Visiting other projects, such as the European Union Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market (OHIM).
5. Finding out results of the Pilot Teleworking Scheme for Civil Servants of the Ministry of Public Administration.
6. Developing opportunities to share experiences by means of a Teleworking Conference.

Following the initiative, a SWOT analysis was undertaken with interesting results, showing, for example, that:

- Teleworking by nature is a voluntary and individualised way of working.
- Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations should be part of implementation and evaluation of the project.
- It is essential that teleworkers are on an equal footing with other workers. This applies to salaries, promotion, and trade union issues.
- The possibility of returning to the office is important. A minimum period is established.

Duration of the initiative: The pilot scheme ran from February 2006 until June of the same year.

Teleworking will be part of the (internal) Municipal Gender Equality Plan, which is expected to be approved in the first term of 2010.

Contact

Organisation: **Dirección de Servicios Generales y Régimen Interior, Ayuntamiento de Castelldefels (Department for General Services and Internal Affairs, Castelldefels Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 93 665 11 50 / 93 635 25 00

E-mail: oac@castelldefels.org Website: <http://www.castelldefels.org/es>

STUDY TO ENCOURAGE WORK AND FAMILY LIFE BALANCE AMONG THE EMPLOYEES OF CORDOBA PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE

Driving Body: CORDOBA PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE

Province: Cordoba

Autonomous Community: Andalusia

Target groups and/or bodies

Employees of Cordoba Provincial Committee.

Description

The study had the following specific objectives:

- To draw attention to successful measures for achieving worklife balance within Cordoba Provincial Committee. To determine to what degree the workforce currently make use of their rights (diagnosis of the current situation).
- To promote the Human Resources Department's commitment to worklife balance. To give them an active role in aiming for equal opportunities in businesses.
- To involve Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations in the promotion of worklife balance within Cordoba Provincial Committee.
- To show Cordoba Provincial Committee employees the benefits to be gained from worklife balance, following the approval of the Gender Equality Act and the Public Employee Basic Statute, so as to raise awareness before the negotiations on the new collective agreement and Civil Service agreement.
- To work towards civil servants receiving the same level of rights and benefits relating to worklife balance, with a view to the following negotiation of a collective and Civil Service agreements.
- To ensure the staff of Cordoba Provincial Committee knows their rights regarding worklife balance, following the changes resulting from the Gender Equality Law and Basic Statute of Public Employees and autonomous regulations expanding on it.

The decisions and proposed measures aimed at promoting worklife balance in the staff of the Provincial Committee were one of the starting points for negotiating and developing the organisation's Equal Opportunities Plan.

Duration of the initiative: 1st January - 31st December 2007.

Contact

Organisation: Departamento de Igualdad, Diputación Provincial de Córdoba (Gender Equality Department, Cordoba Provincial Committee).

Telephone: (+34) 957 21 14 36 Website: <http://www.dipucordoba.es/>

Flexibility in working hours and workplace

Driving body: KRISTIANSAND COUNCIL

County: Vest Agder

Target groups and/or bodies

Workers in the Kristiansand Council, although it can be applied to all Norwegian public administration, local and national, and the private sector.

Description

This working system is based on flexible hours and locations and applies to all levels of public and private sectors. It emerged in the 1980s in response to workers' needs, particularly those caring for children or with other special family circumstances. It aims to help achieve balance between working time and personal/family life.

This system is currently implemented not only in Kristiansand Council, but throughout Norwegian public administration, both at local and state level. It also applies to much of the private sector, particularly administrative and/or senior staff, and, to a lesser extent, to staff responsible for production, service provision and customer services.

On the one hand, average working hours are 37.5 hours a week in the public sector and 40 hours in the private sector. Whenever possible, working hours are continuous between 08:00 and 15:00 (Summer) or 08:00 and 16:00 (Winter). There are a few basic compulsory hours to fulfil in most positions. When working days include a lunch break, it is 30 minutes long, and start and finish times are flexible.

On the other hand, employees can choose to work following a flexible schedule provided they do a certain number of hours per month, as well as completing their assigned duties and responsibilities. This flexibility is made possible by an electronic log of hours worked each day. Employees keep this up-to-date themselves. It divides working time into sections (projects, absences, holidays, etc.) and therefore provides a record of hours during a specific period. If an employee has done overtime, he/she has the right to take the equivalent amount of time off when deemed necessary. When the tasks at hand permit it, it is also possible to work outside the office, through the use of IT.

This way of organising work is based on mutual trust between staff and supervisors, as well as decentralised decision making.

Duration of the initiative: It began in 1990 and will continue indefinitely.

Contact

Organisation: **Department of Social Development, Kristiansand Council.**

Website: <http://www.kristiansand.kommune.no>

RIGHT TO WORK FULL-TIME FOR PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

Driving Body: KRISTIANSAND COUNCIL

County: Vest Agder

Target groups and/or bodies

Staff of the Kristiansand Council; in particular women employed in social services for the care of the elderly, sick and care-dependent.

Description

The "right to work full-time" initiative is aimed at staff working in the municipality of Kristiansand and in numerous other municipalities in Norway. Strongly supported by Trade Unions, it consists of increasing working hours of part-time employees. For the most part these are women in social services in the public sector (working in areas such as care of the elderly, sick or disabled).

Most part-time jobs in the private sector are "rotational" and are occupied by men, while in the public sector they are predominantly based around "shift work" and mainly done by women. Not only are the titles different: working conditions of the former, which are guaranteed by law, are significantly better than the latter.

The "right to work full-time" initiative aims to improve conditions for these workers, who receive low wages and pensions, and are often forced to take on more than one job and to endure poorer working conditions than other employees. It also seeks to improve the situation for service users who are tended to by unmotivated workers who take frequent sick-leaves.

In the Municipality of Kristiansand a pilot project is underway for staff employed in the health and social services sector. The project aims to reduce the amount of time taken as sick leave and to improve continuity within the team treating service users. Full-time jobs are made available for those who want this option. Results thus far show that the number of part-time jobs has declined in favour of full-time jobs. Part-time workers have seen an improvement in worklife balance, along with improved working conditions such as salaries and rights. At the same time there has been an improvement in the service provided to people using health and social services. The only goal that appears not to have been successful so far has been to significantly reduce sick leave among staff.

Duration of the initiative: 2006 - 2011.

Contact

Organisation: Department of Social Development, Kristiansand Council.

Website: <http://www.kristiansand.kommune.no>

4.2.2. CITY FOR CITIZENS: FRIENDLY SPACES AND HOURS

SCHOOL ROUTES

DRIVING BODY: BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL

Province: Barcelona Autonomous Community: Catalonia

Target groups and/or bodies

School children, aged 7 and above, in specific neighbourhoods of Barcelona.

Description

School Routes are flexible and simple paths, selected from the routes taken most often by pupils allowing children to walk from their homes to school.

The project was divided into three phases, as shown in the following plan:

1. Start of the project.

- Initiatives to alert the school community about the need to change habits regarding transport to school. Providing information on School Routes.
- Cycling proficiency classes.
- Study of location of pupils' homes in order to design safe routes to school on foot or by bicycle.
- Preparation of necessary materials for the routes (shirts, flags, signs, high visibility jackets).
- Presentation of the project in neighbourhoods and to the agents involved.

2. Development of the project.

- Children started to use the routes, accompanied by monitors or family members.
- Safety was analysed, with the aim of improving the routes.
- The project involved almost everybody in the neighbourhood: shop owners, public and private bodies, families, municipal administration, local police, associations, schools, teachers and neighbours.

3. Results and suggestions for improvement: Project findings and applications to help improve the routes to school were presented to the relevant bodies.

Duration of the initiative: Development of the project began in 2002 and it continues to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Sector de Movilidad y Seguridad, Ayuntamiento de Barcelona (Mobility and Safety Section, Barcelona City Council).

Telephone: (+34) 93 402 39 99 Website: <http://www.bcn.es>

REPORT ON USES OF TIME IN THE CITY OF LUGO

DRIVING BODY: LUGO TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Lugo** Autonomous Community: **Galicia**

Target groups and/or bodies

General population of the Municipality of Lugo.

Description

In order to achieve the study's goals, the research methodology was based on:

1. Demographic description of the municipality through quantitative analysis of secondary sources.
2. Qualitative research, based mainly on individual and group interviews with key agents from different sectors of the city of Lugo. This research consisted of:
 - a. Selection of eight representatives from Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations to participate in the Consultation Board on Time Planning in the city of Lugo.
 - b. In-depth interviews with the selected representatives, to collect information and share knowledge about time planning in the city of Lugo.
 - c. Two focus groups, one made up of women, the other men, each with five members.
 - d. Direct observation of monthly online meetings between the Mayor and citizens of Lugo. These occur on the Municipality website.

Using information gathered in interviews, from observation and secondary data sources, it was possible to map how the city's public services, both public and private, organise their time.

The study exposed weak spots which suggested the following lines of action to improve time management in the city:

- Facilitate families' time planning, by providing public services for children out of school hours.
- Promote use of new technologies to improve time management.

Duration of the initiative: The study began in 2008 and the results were presented in November 2009.

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de Bienestar Social e Igualdad del Ayuntamiento de Lugo (Department for Social Welfare and Equality, Lugo Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 982 29 72 48 Website: <http://www.lugo.es>

IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY TO ENABLE FAMILY AND PERSONAL LIFE BALANCE

DRIVING BODY: SANTA COLOMA DE GRAMENET TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Barcelona**

Autonomous Community: **Catalonia**

Target groups and/or bodies

General population of the municipality.

Description

The aim of this initiative is to install mechanical facilities such as stairs, ramps and elevators in certain locations within the municipality where the gradient is higher than 10%. This bridges the differences between street levels and leads to better town planning. It aims to make the daily commute easier and less time consuming, by improving existing routes and creating new ones.

The following steps were taken:

1. Identifying population sectors and areas which presented mobility difficulties, based on citizens' complaints and petitions received by the Council.
2. Establishing a technical team responsible for drafting the "Plan for improving mobility and accessibility for pedestrians". The Plan was approved at a council plenary session.
3. Sourcing council funding to set up the initiative.
4. Writing up of a call for tenders to run the project including works, installation and maintenance of machinery.
5. Creating a technical team, with members from various departments, to co-ordinate and supervise the project once the contract had been awarded.
6. Council-led coordination of businesses contracted in setting up and carrying out the necessary work, installing and maintaining machinery and relevant town-planning.
7. Establishing a control centre, created by the Council, for all municipal mechanical facilities. This serves as a central point for information about and speedy solution of any incidents relating to the installed facilities. A fibre-optic web connects each installation with the control centre. This device makes it possible to calculate the number of people using the facilities for evaluation purposes.

Duration of the initiative: It started in 2006 and will continue indefinitely.

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de la Mujer, Salud y Consumo, Ayuntamiento de Santa Coloma de Gramenet (Department of Women, Health and Consumer Affairs, Santa Coloma de Gramenet Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 93 462 40 00 Website: <http://www.gramenet.cat>

Time management plan

Driving Body: VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Pontevedra

Autonomous Community: Galicia

Target groups and/or bodies

General population. Public and private bodies and organisations within the municipality.

Description

The City Time Management Plan started out as a local measure for worklife balance, part of the Second Municipal Equality Plan in Vilagarcia de Arousa, adopted in 2008. The two key aspects of the plan are:

- Time is in short supply and each individual has the right to manage his/her own time. Citizens need to be given the means to achieve this.
- The city's current hours of work are based on traditional family models. This prevents women from entering the workforce.

This Plan aims, therefore, to coordinate opening hours of council offices open to the public, shops, businesses, cultural activities, recreation and public transport with citizens' personal, family and professional needs. The goal is to organise existing schedules more effectively, without requiring extra services, as increasing opening hours would force staff to work longer hours.

The project began in 2009 and thus far has achieved the following:

1. Informing the municipality's public and private organisations about the plan: business associations, guilds and associations of fisheries and maritime industries, public transport companies, neighbourhood associations, women's organisations, political parties, trade unions and government at a local, regional and national level.
2. A diagnostic study, consisting of a questionnaire for businesses, administrative bodies and associations of the city, to determine existing opening hours and people's scheduling needs.
3. Establishment of a Consultation Board to analyse proposals suggested in the questionnaires. The Board is also responsible for taking appropriate action and reaching agreements to organise the city's schedules more effectively. The Board is composed of representatives from all areas of the city's daily life and its first meeting has already been called.

Duration of the initiative: It started in 2009.

Contact

Organisation: Centro de Información a la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Vilagarcía de Arousa (Information Centre for Women, Vilagarcia de Arousa Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 986 09 92 00 E-mail: muller@vilagarcia.es Website: <http://www.ivilagarcia.com>

4.3. COUNCILS AS SERVICE PROVIDERS AND ORGANISERS

4.3.1. WHO CAN LOOK AFTER MY CHILDREN WHEN I AM UNABLE TO?

ALCALA DE HENARES CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUP

Driving body: ALCALA DE HENARES TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Madrid** Autonomous Community: **Community of Madrid**

Target groups and/or bodies

Population, with dependent children, participating in Council-led employment workshops and trade training. To be eligible they should be in training or seeking employment, need financial support or be victims of violence against women.

Description

The kindergarten service is designed for children between 0 and 12 years of age. The opening hours are 8:00 to 15:00 and 16:00 to 20:00. The service is free to users.

To be able to use the centre, families must contact the Women's Department who assess each applicant's needs and availability of places. The profile of prospective service users is very varied, although priority is given to victims of violence against women.

The centre is managed and staffed by a team of education and psychology professionals. Their involvement with the children centres on:

- a. Teaching them to respect and value others' traits and qualities, free of gender or any other kind of discrimination.
- b. Peaceful conflict resolution. Helping them understand that they can have their own personal space without depriving others of theirs.
- c. Priority and personalised attention is given to children of victims of violence against women.

Duration of the initiative: 2005 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Alcalá de Henares (Women's Advice Centre, Alcala de Henares Town Council).**

Telephone: **(+34) 91 877 17 20**

E-mail: **cmujeralcala@ayto-alcaladehenares.es** Website: **<http://www.ayto-alcaladehenares.es>**

Personalised care programme

Driving body: ALDAIA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Valencia** Autonomous Community: **Community of Valencia**

Target groups and/or bodies

Children and people in long-term care (moderate degree) and their families.

Description

The personalised care programme is available from Monday to Saturday from 07:00 to 20:00. During these times care is given to children and people needing long-term care, according to families' needs. The process by which the service is provided is as follows:

- a. The family, either by telephone or in person, says when they require the service to look after their child or care-dependent family member. They can request from one to a maximum of four hours of care per day.
- b. The user is enrolled. The team is kept up-to-date with people being enrolled and discharged so as to be able to welcome and care for users. A registration form, showing arrival and departure times, with a parent's signature if applicable, is used to this end. A form with personal information on the attendee and contact telephone numbers must also be completed. The family receives a card indicating the agreed pick-up time.
- c. During the time requested by the family service users have access to leisure and training activities. Personalised care offered includes catering, hygiene care when necessary (in specially adapted bathrooms) and education and rehabilitative programmes.
- d. A transport service to and/or from the centre is available for elderly care-dependent adults. This is provided through an agreement with the Red Cross.

Incident forms are created to monitor and improve the project. Feedback forms, to gauge satisfaction with the service, are given to users or their families at various times throughout their involvement with the programme and always when they have finished using the service.

Duration of the initiative: 2009 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Área de Participación y Desarrollo del Ayuntamiento de Aldaia (Department of Participation and Development, Aldaia Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 96 198 88 11 Website: <http://www.aldaia-ajuntament.es/es>

SUPPORTIVE URBAN SUMMERCAMPS

Driving body: ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Burgos**

Autonomous Community: **Castile and Leon**

Target groups and/or bodies

People living in the Municipality of Aranda de Duero responsible for children born between 1997 and 2003. Preference is given to families at risk of social exclusion or inequality.

Description

A children's Summer Camp during the month of July to enable parents to continue their normal working lives and activities during the school holidays.

The Summer Camp's month-long programme of activities takes place in two state schools in the municipality. These are open from 09:00 to 15:00, Monday to Friday. Until 2009 the service was offered free of charge, although in the future there will be a minimal charge (10 euros per fortnight).

The content of the children's workshops promotes solidarity, social skills, cultural diversity, participation, awareness of nature and the environment. Activities include group games, sports tournaments, workshops on living together, crafts, drama, etc.

To ensure the smooth running of the program, the monitors carry out continuous evaluation of activities (daily, fortnightly and at the end of each annual camp). They also keep in close contact with operational staff from various Social Services programmes in the municipality when children at risk of exclusion and social inequality are taking part in the camps.

Duration of the initiative: 1996 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de Acción Social, Ayuntamiento de Aranda de Duero (Department of Social Affairs, Aranda de Duero Town Council).**

Telefono: (+34) 947 51 06 19 Website: <http://www.arandadeduero.es>

Casal de Mares i Pares (Parents' Centre)

Driving Body: BADALONA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Barcelona

Autonomous Community: Catalonia

Target groups and/or bodies

Population responsible for children. In particular one-parent households, immigrants and people with problems organising their schedules.

Description

The "Casal de Mares i Pares" provides childcare for children aged 0 to 12 years allowing parents to conduct their daily professional or personal activities. The process by which the service is provided is as follows:

- The opening hours are long, organised in two shifts:
 - 08:30 to 13:00 for children aged 0 to 3 years.
 - 16:30 to 20:30 for children aged 3 to 12 years.
- Badalona Council provides two carers for each age group. The ratio of children/staff is between 15 and 6, depending on the age group.
- The use of the service is limited to no more than three days a week and no more than three hours a day, except for families referred by Social Services who may exceed these restrictions.
- At certain times, demand exceeds supply. In this event, to avoid people arriving at the centre only to find there is no space available, families can telephone the same afternoon or morning to inform the centre of their plans. Reservation is only allowed 30 minutes prior to drop off (the time needed to travel from home to the centre). Whole day reservations are not allowed except in situations where specific needs warrant this.
- It is a free service, subsidised by various public administrations.
- Activities provided by the centre include:
 - For children: Recreational and school support activities.
 - For families: Educational psychology services and a meeting space to form childcare support and cooperation networks.

Duration of the initiative: 2008 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Servicio de Políticas de Igualdad del Ayuntamiento de Badalona (Service of Equality Policies, Badalona Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 93 483 29 32 Website: <http://www.badalona.cat>

KANGURAS SERVICE (BABYSITTERS)

Driving BODY: CAMPO DE CRIPTANA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Ciudad Real

Autonomous Community: Castile-La Mancha

Target groups and/or bodies

Low income women in active employment or in training. Priority is given to those unshared family responsibilities or victims of violence against women.

Description

A care service provided by professionals called 'kanguras' at service users' own homes. It can include taking children to school and collecting them, feeding children when a parent is not home to do so, caring for care-dependents, etc.

There is also a care service for children aged between 3 and 10, outside school hours and also in holidays. Rather than being in the user's home, this is provided at a council-run centre.

The service is funded in collaboration with Castile-La Mancha's Women's Institute. It is free and available up to a maximum of three hours per day so as not to overlap with services provided by nurseries and similar services.

There are weekly meetings between those in charge of this initiative and the project staff, and monthly meetings with the users in order to monitor proceedings and solve any potential problems.

Duration of the initiative: 2005 - 2009.

Contact

Organisation: Centro de la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Campo de Criptana (Women's Centre, Campo de Criptana Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 926 56 31 25 / 926 58 93 90

E-mail: centromujer@campodecriptana.es

Website: <http://www.campodecriptana.info/ayuntamiento/>

ESCOLA DE MATÍ I DE VESPRADA (MORNING AND AFTERNOON SCHOOL)

DRIVING BODY: CASTELLON TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Castellon** Autonomous Community: **Community of Valencia**

Target groups and/or bodies

People with children in Infant or Primary education in the municipality.

Description

The initiative consists of providing a care service for children in Infant and Primary education in the schools they attend. Provided from September to June, it is available from 07.30 to 09.00 (Morning School) and from 17.00 to 18.30 (Afternoon School). The service aims to make school hours more compatible with parent's working hours.

Age-appropriate social and educational activities are provided for pupils who attend outside normal school hours. These are led by instructors with training in co-education, to ensure a gender perspective is incorporated in planned activities. Each centre has at least two members of staff, each responsible for 20 pupils.

To set up this service, the Council first contacts School Principals and Parents' Associations to inform them about the project and request the necessary facilities and equipment. Once it has been agreed that the service will be set up, the Council contracts a company to manage and run the programme, through public tender.

In order for the programme to run smoothly, the following coordination and follow-up measures are put in place:

- a. An Education Coordinator and a Managing Coordinator, chosen by the Council's Gender Equality Department, oversee coordination of the contracted staff, the school management teams and Parents' Associations.
- b. Distribution of an evaluation questionnaire at the end of the school year. This is given to parents to evaluate activities carried out in both the morning and afternoon schools. The results of the questionnaire are shared with the company providing the service and schools, to address any areas that could be improved.

Duration of the initiative: 2005 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Servicio de Igualdad de Oportunidades entre Mujeres y Hombres, Ayuntamiento de Castellón (Department for Equal Gender Opportunities, Castellon Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 964 25 19 79 E-mail: igualdad@castello.es Website: <http://www.castello.es>

TIMESHARING PROGRAMME

DRIVING BODY: CORDOBA CITY COUNCIL

Province: **Cordoba** Autonomous Community: **Andalusia**

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of the Municipality of Cordoba. In particular, single-parent households, victims of violence against women and women living in areas with social transformation needs.

Description

The “Compartitempo” initiative stems from difficulties experienced working with women in projects such as promotion and insertion into the labour force, due the imbalance between men and women’s family responsibilities.

Prior to this program, some measures for worklife balance existed, but they were linked to a single intervention programme. Procedures were too bureaucratic and slow, which undermined its efficiency. This highlighted the need for an open and flexible programme, able to rise to the demands of diversity, to prioritise certain groups of women (victims of violence) without excluding the rest, and to provide an individual and professionalised service.

The programme provides a leisure and cultural service to temporarily support people with dependent children enrolled in Council training, employment, and/or participation projects.

Provision of childcare ensures:

- Women are able to attend training or professional courses.
- Support networks are established.
- Social awareness: individual problems become social problems.
- Empowerment: challenging assumed roles and enhancing life projects.
- Children's leisure time is enhanced. An opportunity for them to be in a different geographical environment and receive educational support.
- Improved communication within families through joint activities.

While the programme eases the stress on women's time, traditional gender roles remain unchanged.

Duration of the initiative: 2007 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de Igualdad, Juventud y Cooperación del Ayuntamiento de Córdoba (Department of Gender Equality, Youth and Cooperation, Cordoba City Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 957 49 99 00 Website: <http://www.ayuncordoba.es>

Minutes menus (Little minutes)

Driving body: ESPLUGUES DE LLOBREGAT TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Barcelona**

Autonomous Community: **Catalonia**

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of the municipality with children aged between 16 weeks and 3 years.

Description

"Minutes Menus" (Little Minutes) is located in a Municipal Sports Complex. The service provides childcare for infants aged between 4 months and 3 years while their parents make use of sports facilities or take part in other activities. The allocated space, which is fully equipped with suitable furniture and educational materials, is approximately 80 m². Two trained, experienced kindergarten workers provide a programme of recreational/educational activities.

Information about the service:

- Open every working day of the year except during August. Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 11.30 to 14.00 and 15.00 to 18.00, Saturday, 11.30 to 14.00.
- Children can stay for up to 3 consecutive hours, 2 days a week. The fee has been 1 euro per hour since 2007.
- There are a maximum of 10 available places at any given time to ensure quality care.
- Reservations are not required, as the service aims to provide a solution for unforeseen childcare needs or for times when parents need to run errands and cannot take children with them.
- Regulations are in place to control the running of the service. Parents fill in a registration form with information on the child to help control attendance.
- The running of the service is contracted to the Pere Tarres Foundation, an organisation with a long history of experience in infant care.

Duration of the initiative: 2007 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Área de Servicios a las Personas, Ayuntamiento de Esplugues de Llobregat (Department of People's Services, Esplugues de Llobregat Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 93 371 33 50 Website: <http://www.esplugues.cat>

11x11 PROJECT

Driving BODY: GIJON TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Asturias

Autonomous Community: Asturias

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of Gijon with school-age children.

Description

This project consists of schools opening for 11 hours a day, 11 months a year. They offer diverse educational and leisure activities for school-age children. The aim is to help parents make work hours and their children's school timetable more compatible.

Features of the service:

- Centres are open from 07.30 to 18.30 on working days, from September to July.
- A flexible system means children can use the service for odd hours and days.
- The price of the service is subsidised by the Council. It was free at the beginning. People on low incomes can receive an additional subsidy.
- Applications can be made through the public information network on the Council's website.
- Activities and workshops, tailored to different age groups, are led by experienced staff. They incorporate the concept of respect for different values, as well as a gender perspective.

The initiative runs along the same lines as other areas of Council intervention:

- In the employment sector: The agreements signed by the Council with the contractors providing the service encourage employment of those who are unemployed, particularly women.
- In terms of gender equality: Staff leading activities for children in the centres are informed about initiatives and programmes relating to equal opportunities within the municipality, enabling them to apply it at work. An example is the "Educating towards equality", a project aimed at the educational community, including pupils, teachers and families.

Duration of the initiative: 2008 – 2011.

Contact

Organisation: Área de Igualdad y Juventud, Ayuntamiento de Gijón (Department of Gender Equality and Young People, Gijon Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 98 518 16 28 Website: <http://www.gijon.es>

Open Space for Children

Driving Body: LALIN TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Pontevedra Autonomous Community: Galicia

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of the municipality who work or are taking part in employment access programmes, with responsibility for children.

Description

The Open Space for Children is a place where children can be left while parents are at work or fulfilling other day-to-day responsibilities.

It provides a space where children aged 3 to 12 years can continue their personal development and socialisation through recreational/educational activities out of school hours and during school holidays.

Features of the service:

- Open from Monday to Friday, 14.00 to 21.00 from September to June, including working days when schools are not open. During school holidays it is open in two shifts: 07.30 to 14.30 and 14.30 to 21.30.
- Children may stay for up to a maximum of 7 hours per day. This is due to educational criteria, to ensure it does not turn into a 'place to park your children'.
- Each family can make their own schedule, depending on their specific needs.
- Other council resources are available to families who have problems getting their children from school to the centre. These include the Home Based Care Service and the Time Bank, which take care of transport.
- The first year the service was free. Currently there is a fee for users, subsidised by the council.
- A current limit of 20 places.
- In order to attend, users must fulfil certain requisites and complete an application form. This is evaluated in terms of the socioeconomic, family and work situation of each applicant.
- Activities offered in this venue include: workshops using recycled materials to make toys, reading and relaxation spaces, free or directed play, storytelling, drama, help with school work, etc.

Duration of the initiative: 2007 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Oficina de Igualdad del Ayuntamiento de Lalín (Gender Equality Office, Lalín Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 986 78 23 52 E-mail: igualdade@lalin.org Website: <http://www.lalin.org>

WORKLIFE BALANCE SERVICE FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Driving BODY: MOLINA DE SEGURA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Murcia Autonomous Community: Murcia

Target groups and/or bodies

Victims of violence against women, with responsibility for children.

Description

An intervention service for families in which mothers, with limited economic and social resources, experience domestic violence. The initiative works with single-parent households whose work and training schedules are not compatible with their childcare needs and who do not have family support to help meet these needs.

Families are referred to the programme by the Council Service for Prevention, Aid and Protection, which is part of the Regional Network of Centres for Victims of Violence Against Women. They receive comprehensive attention from a multi-disciplinary team.

The service addresses both the children and the women themselves. Programmed activities include:

- For children: Diverse and dynamic workshops to hold the children's interest. A participative approach is used to help them feel important and increase self-esteem. Various techniques are used such as role-plays, theoretical presentations with pictograms, positive reinforcement, teamwork, animation techniques, relaxation and group bonding, etc. They also carry out different types of games: presentation, knowledge, affirmation, confidence, communication and cooperation.
- For women: Various training services are offered to help them break out of their violent situation and get back their personal, economic, social and professional independence. Examples include:
 - Monthly workshops on violence against women with the following themes: self-esteem, relaxation, memory, social skills, self-defence, laughter therapy, emotional control and assertiveness.
 - Workshops to encourage integration into the workforce.
 - Specific training courses in various subjects.
 - Self-help groups.

Duration of the initiative: 2008 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Igualdad Efectiva de Mujeres y Hombres, Ayuntamiento de Molina de Segura (Department for Equal Gender Opportunities, Molina de Segura Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 968 38 86 94 / 3

E-mail: mujer@molinadesegura.es Website: <http://www.molinadesegura.es>

Nanny Homes

Driving Body: PUENTE GENIL TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Cordoba Autonomous Community: Andalusia

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of the municipality who work or are in training, with responsibility for children.

Description

This initiative was launched as part of the Igual@Vid@ (Equal Life) Project, funded by the 2005-2007 Equal EU Initiative. In "nanny houses" experienced, qualified workers provide childcare for children under six, thus allowing their parents to work or attend training to access employment.

Features of the service:

- Childcare takes place in the home of the service provider. Their home must be properly adapted and equipped to provide a personalised service for a maximum of four children in a family setting.
- Hours are flexible (07:00 to 21:00) and can be changed once a month upon request. To use the service the applicant must be working, attending training or in the process of creating a company and her/his spouse's schedule must overlap.
- The "nanny houses" are paid for in service-cheques, according to hours of care. The price is 1€ per hour. Between 50% and 100% of the cost is subsidised depending on the service user.

The following process took place to set up the project:

1. Agreement on requirements for houses: facilities, location, equipment and health and safety measures. Financing of furniture purchases.
2. Selection and training of the women who were to work as childminders. Supervision of selected houses to ensure they met the required conditions.
3. Processing each woman's license to open a business. This required an inspection by the council technical team.
4. Diffusion campaign to publicise the service. In some cases financial aid was offered to service users to help cover the cost.

Duration of the initiative: 2006 - 2008.

Contact

Organisation: Servicios Sociales Comunitarios, Ayuntamiento de Puente Genil (Community Social Services, Puente Genil Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 957 60 92 72 Website: <http://www.puentegenil.es>

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS WELCOME SERVICE FOR PUPILS: "Matinal xiquets"

DRIVING BODY: QUART DE POBLET TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Valencia** Autonomous Community: **Community of Valencia**

Target groups and/or bodies

Population responsible for children aged 3 to 12 years.

Description

The "Matinal Xiquets" service involves all schools in the municipality opening from 07:00 to 09:00 every school day throughout the academic year. It provides a care service for school children aged 3 to 12 years, including breakfast, thereby allowing families to balance schedules with jobs and other activities: going to hospital, to court, travel, exams, etc.

The service is free to all users. It offers a completely flexible schedule, not only in terms of daily attendance hours, but also by making it possible to use the service for odd days, weeks or months.

Each school has the necessary space and equipment to provide the service, including tables for group games and craft activities, kitchen for breakfast preparation, rest-mats for younger children, etc.

Children's activities are coordinated by two monitors in each centre, with teacher or socio-cultural animation training. Activities include: development of good habits, personal independence, relationship-building, sharing of attitudes and values such as peace education, equal opportunities, health education, etc.

The Council takes on the cost of staffing and material resources to implement the service (breakfast, materials, games, etc.). Schools provide the space.

Each year, at the end of the school year, the monitors providing the service present a report to the Council's Education Department and the school management team. This report shows to what extent objectives have been fulfilled. Information for the evaluation of the initiative is obtained through questionnaires evaluating user satisfaction.

Duration of the initiative: 1997 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Àrea de Igualdad de Oportunitades, Ayuntamiento de Quart de Poblet.** (Department of Equal Opportunities, Quart de Poblet Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 96 152 12 31 E-mail: dona@quartdepoblet.org Website: <http://www.quartdepoblet.es>

EARLY BIRD PLAN

DRIVING BODY: VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Pontevedra

Autonomous Community: Galicia

Target groups and/or bodies

People with children in Infant and Primary education.

Description

The Early Bird Plan involves schools in the Municipality of Vilagarcia de Arousa being open from 08:00 to 09:15. This allows parents to leave their children there before the start of classes, thereby achieving a better balance between school and work schedules.

Use of the service is very flexible, as it can be used every day or on an occasional basis. The fee is determined by the Parents' Association. This organisation is responsible for dealing with applications and charging service users according to their use of the service.

The service is provided during the school year, from September to June. Children are cared for by a specially trained monitor who organises social and educational activities appropriate to the children's ages.

To ensure the programme runs smoothly, monitors stay in regular contact with the schools' Parents' Associations and with the Department of Education.

Duration of the initiative: January 2007 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Centro de Información a la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Vilagarcía de Arousa (Women's Information Centre, Vilagarcia de Arousa Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 986 09 92 00 E-mail: muller@vilagarcia.es

Website: <http://www.ivilagarcia.com>

Balanced afternoons

DRIVING BODY: VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Pontevedra**

Autonomous Community: **Galicia**

Target groups and/or bodies

People with children aged 3 to 9 years old.

Description

In the Balanced Afternoons project a school in the municipality is open Monday to Friday, from 15:30 to 21:00, throughout the academic year. This allows parents to leave their children there to participate in social and educational activities while they are at work. The service charge ranges from a maximum price of 50 euros per month to free depending on household income.

Activities are organised by two trained members of staff. The aim is to promote children's learning and all-round development. A group participation approach incorporates values of equality and solidarity from a gender perspective. Content includes:

- Activities to promote knowledge about nutrition, good hygiene and healthy, fun snacks.
- Games to improve cooperation, conflict resolution, confidence and communication.
- Recycling activities and getting to know the environment.
- Library activities, reading and creating stories.
- School support.

To use the service, an application must be submitted to the Department of Social Services. They evaluate application requests according to specified criteria, then publish successful applications. A waiting list is created for non-successful applicants.

At the end of each school year a service user satisfaction survey is completed by families. The results are incorporated into a final report which includes the fulfilment of objectives, suitability of materials and activities, etc.

Duration of the initiative: 2008 - 2011.

Contact

Organisation: **Centro de Información a la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Vilagarcía de Arousa (Women's Information Centre, Vilagarcia de Arousa Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 986 09 92 00 E-mail: muller@vilagarcia.es

Website: ww.vilagarcia.com

Municipal coordination and management of nurseries at a fixed price

Driving Body: BÆRUM COUNCIL

County: Akershus

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of the municipality with responsibility for children aged 1 to 6 years old.

Description

The Norwegian Childcare Act (1975) was introduced in response to the country's lack of child care provision and the inequalities within its availability. The Act, and its amendments, guarantees the right to a nursery place for the entire target population. It makes local authorities responsible for coordinating and organising the municipality's existing childcare resources to ensure access. As of January 2010, any family without a place in a local nursery can sue the Council.

Bærum Council's initiative, in force in all Norwegian municipalities, aims to establish council coordination of all nurseries located in the municipality regardless of ownership (whether public, private, religious, belonging to voluntary organisations, etc.). The application system is centralised and involves submitting an online or paper form. The team responsible for managing applications allocates places according to certain criteria such as location, age and specific needs of families. Admission and waiting lists for all nurseries are available on the Internet.

Parliament has set a maximum fee for the service, and the councils are responsible for the quality. The current maximum fee is 300 Euro per month for each child. There are discounts for two children from the same family onwards. Minimum opening hours are from 08:00 to 17:00, although many centres are extending these to suit parents' needs.

One of the priorities in these nurseries is the equal treatment of boys and girls and the transmission of values of gender equality. In 2004 the National Action Plan for the Recruitment of Men into the Childcare Profession was launched. This aimed to increase the number of male staff employed in these centres from 10% to 20%. The goal was to help get rid of gender stereotypes and achieve a balanced distribution of housework between women and men.

Duration of the initiative: It began in 1975 and is ongoing. It has been improved and updated over the years.

Contact

Organisation: Bærum Kommune (Bærum Council).

Website: <http://www.baerum.kommune.no>

4.3.2. CARING FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED PEOPLE

Financial aid FOR CARERS OF HIGHLY DEPENDENT PEOPLE IN LONG TERM CARE

DRIVING BODY: ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCILProvince: **Burgos** Autonomous Community: **Castile and Leon****Target groups and/or bodies**

Population of Aranda de Duero with responsibility for severely care-dependent relatives.

Description

In this initiative, financial aid is given to families with severely care-dependent members with the aim of enabling them to hire additional help with household chores. Extra help can be hired directly by the family (according to conditions laid down in the Royal Decree 1424/1985 of 1 August, which regulates terms of employment for those working in domestic service) or through an agency.

Eligibility is based on the following guidelines:

- a. One application per severely care-dependent individual.
- b. The hired help may under no circumstances be the usual caregiver within the family, nor may they be related to the caregiver.
- c. The contract must be for a minimum of 20 hours per week and a maximum of 30 or 40 hours per week.
- d. The person requesting financial aid must submit a contract signed by the worker and evidence of their enrolment as an employer in social security. When relevant, the contract should be signed by the agency providing the service.
- e. In the result of the care-dependent being hospitalised or temporarily admitted to a residential home to provide relief for the family, financial aid is suspended during the stay.
- f. If the care-dependent is a user of the council's home help service, this is suspended during receipt of financial aid except in exceptional cases.

Duration of the initiative: 2005 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de Acción Social, Ayuntamiento de Aranda de Duero (Department of Social Affairs, Aranda de Duero Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 947 51 06 02 Website: <http://www.arandadeduero.es>

Municipal service of meals for the elderly and care-dependents

Driving Body: ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Burgos Autonomous Community: Castile and Leon

Target groups and/or bodies

Elderly people and/or care-dependents registered residents of Aranda de Duero.

Description

The Meals service is for elderly people and/or care-dependents living in the municipality. It is managed by the Council's Social Services in collaboration with a private company. Two types of services are offered:

- a. Delivery of meals to the service user's home. This is available to people who fit into one of the following categories: over 65, disabled to a level of 75% or higher, those with limited mobility; people up to second degree blood relation of the applicant, who are also over 65 years of age and/or with a level of disability of over 65%.
- b. Meals provided at a day centre and the headquarters of two neighbourhood associations. This is available to people over 55 who are retired, have taken early retirement, those receiving unemployment benefits and their spouses, or those with a level of disability equal to or greater than 65%. The service user should not have any infectious/contagious disease.

The initiative is carried out according to the following steps:

1. Social workers and those responsible for the Council's Employment Guidance and Advice Programme set a pricing structure and service regulations.
2. Creation of a committee to evaluate and approve applications for the service. Results are presented in a report including information about the applicant's mobility, ability to independently prepare meals, shop and clear plates and dishes and their economic, social and family situation, etc.
3. Eligibility for the Meals Service is decided on a point-system according to the criteria set in the service regulations.

Duration of the initiative: 2007 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Acción Social, Ayuntamiento de Aranda de Duero (Department of Social Affairs, Aranda de Duero Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 947 51 18 21 Website: <http://www.arandadeduero.es/>

Daycare Service (S.E.D.A.)

Driving BODY: MAJADAHONDA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Madrid** Autonomous Community: **Community of Madrid**

Target groups and/or bodies

Elderly people at the onset of basic to moderate care-dependency, and their families.

Description

The S.E.D.A. service provides preventive care and assistance for elderly people who are beginning to become care-dependent. It aims to improve their quality of life and to allow service user's families to carry out work and leisure activities.

Features of the programme:

- a. A free service aimed at those elderly people not provided for by other resources such as day care centres requiring users to come in by their own means, or residential homes for those who are highly dependent.
- b. A transport service to and from the centre for those that require it. Service users can be collected from their homes in accessible, adapted vehicles from 09.30 to arrive in time for the start of activities at 10.30. When activities finish, at 13.30 transport is also provided to take them home or they can be collected by their families. Activities run from 10.30 to 13.30.
- c. Activities include cognitive stimulation, leisure, recreational and cultural activities, social integration activities and others aimed at improving relations between family members.
- d. S.E.D.A. also offers guidance and advice to families and intervenes in situations of family conflict.
- e. The service can be requested by the individual, their family or an institution.
- f. In order to gain access to the service a member of the family is interviewed by a social worker to assess the socio-familial situation. The technical team then determines whether the resource is appropriate and the individual care programme best suited to the applicant. In the event of any changes in circumstances that originally qualified the user, the family is guided to the most appropriate care service for the new situation (residential homes, day care centres, home care service, voluntary organisations, etc).

Duration of the initiative: 2000 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Área de Mayores, Ayuntamiento de Majadahonda (Department of Elderly People, Majadahonda Town Council).**

Telephone: **(+34) 91 634 91 67 / 29** Website: **<http://www.majadahonda.org>**

Xantar na casa (Eat at home)

DRIVING BODY: VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Pontevedra

Autonomous Community: Galicia

Target groups and/or bodies

Socially excluded care-dependents aged between 18 and 60.

Description

"Eat at home" is a meals delivery service for care-dependents or people over 60 needing help with food preparation, due to lack of personal independence or family support. The service provides a weekly delivery of seven three-course meals, one for each day of the week. A contracted business transports the food in specially adapted vehicles which maintain the necessary temperatures and refrigeration.

When they first start using the service, users are given a guide to hygiene, preparation and handling of food. Company staff also check that the service users have the right appliances for preparing and eating meals. If this is not the case, the service includes the loan of such equipment, on deposit.

During the project's first year (2009) the daily meal cost was 6.93 euros. Of this service users contributed 1.85 euros and the rest was covered jointly by the Arousa Town Council and the Galician Local Government through the Consorcio Galego de Igualdade e Benestar (Consortium for Social Welfare and Equality).

Applications to use the service are made to the council by users. They are assessed by the municipality's Department of Social Services, which, taking into consideration the programme guidelines, writes a report and decides the list of users to propose to the Consortium for Social Welfare and Equality.

Duration of the initiative: 2009 onwards.

Contact

Organisation: Centro de Información a la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Vilagarcía de Arousa (Women's Information Centre, Vilagarcia de Arousa Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 986 09 92 00 E-mail: muller@vilagarcia.es

Website: <http://www.ivilagarcia.com>

COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

DRIVING BODY: BÆRUM COUNCIL

County: Akershus

Target groups and/or bodies

People aged over 18, in need of temporary or permanent care.

Description

A municipal service coordinating physiotherapy provision and the free loan of special equipment for people dependent on short or long term care. Equipment can be loaned for a maximum of two years. The aims are twofold: to enable people to continue living in their own homes without having to enter specialised centres, and to allow families caring for them to improve the balance between work and personal schedules.

Individuals with special needs are assisted in their process of rehabilitation for the time it takes to regain their independence in everyday life. Two types of assistance are available:

- Physiotherapy which can take place wherever the patient most needs it, whether at school, work or home. Treatment is provided on an individual basis, but there are also group activities for Parkinson's patients: to improve strength and balance, cognitive problem-solving, exercises in swimming pools, etc. Close contact is maintained between the team of therapists providing these services and the nursing teams of the different districts, as well as hospital staff.
- Practical tools and technical assistance are provided by occupational therapists. There is a free loan of equipment such as crutches, wheelchairs, adapted beds, etc. Equipment is loaned for a limited period of time and the service also offers installation of the necessary equipment in the homes. Local Authorities are responsible for equipment loans for a maximum period of two years. After this, central government assumes responsibility, on completion of an application.

Support services and equipment are provided to service users free of charge. Only in the case of needing an adapted car is there a charge, which is determined according to the applicant's economic situation.

Duration of the initiative: 1970 onwards.

Contact

Organisation: Rehabilitation Services, Bærum Council.

Website: <http://www.baerum.kommune.no>

Home-based services centre for the elderly and/or disabled people

Driving body: MANDAL COUNCIL

County: Vest Agder

Target groups and/or bodies

Elderly people and/or care-dependents, and their families.

Description

A Council home-based care service which co-ordinates and centralises the whole range of services available to the elderly and/or care-dependents, regardless of whether the provision comes from public or private bodies, religious organisations, NGOs, etc.

Services offered, through the Centre for Home-Based Services are:

- Day care centres, with activity programmes in the mornings and afternoons.
- Home help service for everyday household chores such as cleaning, shopping, etc.
- Home health care service, such as nursing or administering medication.
- Meal delivery service.
- Special transport service for people with disabilities. An adapted accessible vehicle, which can be used as a taxi, is made available at the same price as public transport.
- A personal 24 hour Security Alarm. A device, permanently worn around the neck, which can be pressed in any kind of emergency. This notifies staff, who immediately travels to the individual's home.
- Independent, specially-adapted apartments are available within the Centre at an additional cost.

These services are all based in the same office allowing for greater efficiency and also providing more flexibility. It is possible for the number and duration of visits to be adjusted according to the changing needs of each person. For example, in the case of a service user's health deteriorating, the number of visits and/or duration of visits can be increased immediately or a decision can be made to admit the individual to a specialised centre.

Some services, such as healthcare, are free to service users. The cost of others, such as home help or provision of meals, is decided according to each person's income.

Duration of the initiative: 1982 onwards.

Contact

Organisation: **Mandal Council.**

4.3.3. ENCOURAGING LEISURE AND FREE-TIME

LEISURE CENTRE FOR THE COGNITIVELY OR PSYCHOLOGICALLY IMPAIRED

DRIVING BODY: ALDAIA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Valencia** Autonomous Community: **Community of Valencia**

Target groups and/or bodies

Under 18s with severe cognitive or psychological impairment.

Description

Features of the initiative:

1. Construction of a multipurpose centre ('Mirall de la Participacio-Matilde Salvador') in the municipality. Adaptation of the ground floor to make it a suitable venue.
2. The programme of recreational activities runs three afternoons a week for children and young people under 18 with severe cognitive or psychological impairment. This works as follows:
 - a. Admission to the service: young people are referred to the professional team which then admits them to the programme and is responsible for their care. To maintain an up-to-date record of service users there is a document to record arrivals and departures with a parent's signature when necessary. A personal information sheet is completed for each service user which includes contact telephone numbers. A further document is handed to parents which outlines agreed collection times.
 - b. The service user is welcomed into the service and joins in recreational and educational activities. Personal care, including meals and hygiene, is provided when necessary.

An incident record sheet is kept to monitor and improve the project. An evaluation form is also completed when service provision comes to an end.

Duration of the initiative: 2004 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Área de Participación y Desarrollo del Ayuntamiento de Aldaia (Department of Participation and Development, Aldaia Town Council).**

Telephone: **(+34) 96 198 88 11** Website: **<http://www.aldaia-ajuntament.es>**

Municipal Public Playcentre "Almudena Carretero"

Driving Body: ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Burgos Autonomous Community: Castile and Leon

Target groups and/or bodies

Population of Aranda de Duero with children aged between 2 and 8 years old. In exceptional cases, families of children with special educational needs who do not fit into this age group.

Description

A free playcentre providing recreational and leisure activities for children aged 2 to 8 years old. Opening hours are Monday to Friday from 17:00 to 20:15, organised in two consecutive shifts, and Saturdays. Due to the high demand for the service, service users may only attend one of these shifts.

Two monitors organise activities such as storytelling, workshops, games, etc. for groups of up to a maximum of 25-30 children. Parents stay in the centre, either participating in the activities with their children, or using the time for other leisure activities such as reading, Internet access, etc.

The playgroup takes place in the premises of a former school whose Parents' Association works with the Council to manage and fund the service. The signed agreement states that the Council provides and maintains the physical space and the Parents' Association contracts staff and provides the necessary materials for the activities.

Duration of the initiative: 2008 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Cultura y Educación, Ayuntamiento de Aranda de Duero (Department of Culture and Education, Aranda de Duero Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 947 51 12 75

E-mail: educacion@arandadeduero.es

Website: <http://www.arandadeduero.es>

TEMPS DE BARRI, TEMPS EDUCATIU COMPARTIT (NEIGHBOURHOOD TIME, SHARED EDUCATIONAL TIME)

Driving body: BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL

Province: Barcelona

Autonomous Community: Catalonia

Target groups and/or bodies

Children in the municipality of Barcelona in Infant, Primary and Secondary Education, and their families.

Description

A team of technical/operational staff belonging to the various bodies involved - The Barcelona Institute of Education, the city districts and the Jaume Bofill Foundation – was established to lead the programme.

Services and resources:

- Quality extracurricular activities open to the whole neighbourhood. These are jointly organised or coordinated by Parents Associations, organisations and schools.
- Opening of schoolyards at weekends for public use. They are attended by monitors and are open to all children, regardless of whether or not they are pupils at the school.
- Weekend Family Activities, organised by different schools and Parents' Associations.
- Service to accompany children to the neighbourhood's open activities, so as to guarantee their access and mobility.

Information on the programme is made available through a resource and activity guide. It is distributed to all families of school children, as well as neighbourhood institutions, facilities and services. There are also leaflets and posters advertising all available activities.

Registration for the public extra-curricular activities is done through the website: www.bcn.cat/tempsdebarri where information about family weekend activities is available.

Duration of the initiative: 2006 - 2011.

Contact

Organisation: **Dirección de Nuevos Usos del Tiempo, Ayuntamiento de Barcelona (Department of New Social Uses of Time, Barcelona City Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 93 256 45 98 Website: <http://www.bcn.es>

SCHOOL OF ADAPTED SPORTS

Driving Body: MOLINA DE SEGURA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Murcia Autonomous Community: Murcia

Target groups and/or bodies

Families with children aged 5 to 25 years old, with minor cognitive, psychiatric or physical disabilities.

Description

The School of Adapted Sports is aimed at people aged between 5 and 25 with minor physical disabilities or cognitive, psychiatric or sensory impairment who possess a certain level of independence. The service is provided from Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 14:30 during the month of July.

The centre offers sports, physical activities (hydrotherapy, psychomotor skills, maintenance fitness, etc.) and various workshops. These take place in or out of water and are adapted to individual users' stages of development, from early childhood to adulthood.

The active nature of the provision aids service users' development and helps them improve their physical abilities. A participative, child-centred approach is taken which helps improve self-esteem and social skills, taking notice of their ideas and opinions and reinforcing all their efforts.

The initiative is organised by the Department of Gender Equality, through an externally contracted organisation.

It is subject to continuous assessment tracking to what extent objectives and programmed activities are adapted to personal situations and concerns of the users and the needs of target families. Quantitative indicators are developed and gathered, such as the number of families and youth involved, as well as qualitative indicators, such as the degree to which objectives have been met, service users' satisfaction and impact on the population.

Duration of the initiative: 2008 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Igualdad Efectiva de Mujeres y Hombres, Ayuntamiento de Molina de Segura (Department of Gender Equality, Molina de Segura Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 968 38 86 94 / 3 E-mail: mujer@molinadesegura.es

Website: <http://www.molinadesegura.es>

"Brave Women" Leisure Programme

Driving Body: SANTA CRUZ DE LA PALMA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Santa Cruz de Tenerife

Autonomous Community: The Canary Islands

Target groups and/or bodies

Women in Santa Cruz de La Palma.

Description

A series of cultural and leisure activities, exclusively for women, to promote their development and personal growth. The programme began in 2008 under the title "Time for brave women". It enjoyed considerable success with a high level of participation. As a result it was repeated in 2009 with the name "The return of the brave women." A total of four activities took place between October and December. The price for each activity ranged from 12 to 18 euros per person. A discount was available for those attending more than two activities. A maximum of 25 women could participate in each activity. Registration was through the Council's Social Services offices.

Activities:

- "Brave women on board": a boat trip to visit parts of the coast and see dolphins at sea.
- "Brave women on an adrenaline-fuelled adventure": A game of paintball (a competitive simulation game which involves throwing balls of paint) and a cycle ride through the area.
- "Brave women round town": a night tour of Santa Cruz de La Palma visiting some of the most important parts of the city. The tour culminated with the reading of a manifesto against violence towards women and live music.
- "Brave women tour La Palma": a trip to towns in the north of the island, to explore the area's local food and culture.

Duration of the initiative: It started in 2008 and, to date, has taken place each year (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Servicios Sociales, Ayuntamiento de Santa Cruz de La Palma (Department of Social Services, Santa Cruz de La Palma Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 922 41 81 60 / 61

E-mail: asuntosociales@santacruzdelapalma.es

Website: <http://www.santacruzdelapalma.es>

4.3.4. OTHER BEST PRACTICES

ALCALA DE HENARES Time Bank

Driving Body: ALCALA DE HENARES TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Madrid** Autonomous Community: **Community of Madrid**

Target groups and/or bodies

General adult population of Alcala de Henares.

Description

The "Time Bank" is a social network made of men and women which aims to achieve greater solidarity in the community. People offer a number of hours of their time, offering a service they can provide and, in return, can claim time needed to achieve better balance among family, personal and professional life. The network is managed in the following way:

1. The team in charge of the project meets with the individual wishing to participate. During this meeting they explain the system, encourage supply and demand of activities and provide information about current offers and contact information of all members and their activities. A registration form is completed and an 'hours' chequebook is handed to the new member.
2. Once a member, the individual can start to trade in services. Examples include:
 - a. Accompanying elderly people in activities such as theatre trips or helping them cook. Accompanying young people, for example collecting them from school or spending time with them. Accompanying people with Alzheimer's.
 - b. Helping the elderly with activities such as shopping and moving objects.
 - c. Listening, reading to people who are unable to do so.
 - d. Domestic skills workshops and teaching people how to do small household repairs.
 - e. Help with homework and tutoring.
 - f. Organising children's parties, storytelling, leading leisure activities, etc.

Duration of the initiative: 2007 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Alcalá de Henares (Department of Women, Alcala de Henares Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 91 877 17 20 E-mail: cmujeralcala@ayto-alcaladehenares.es

Website: <http://www.ayto-alcaladehenares.es>

Resource guide to services encouraging balance between family and professional life

Driving body: GRANADA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Granada Autonomous Community: Andalusia

Target groups and/or bodies

Families in the city of Granada and towns in the East Mountains region, as well as institutions, businesses and bodies where change is needed to improve worklife balance.

Description

The "Resource Guide to services encouraging balance between family and professional life" was developed under the Equal EU Initiative (of 2005-2007), "Time Jugglers ", led by Granada's Council Institute of Training and Employment.

The Guide lists and describes all resources, services and programmes in the city of Granada and the East Mountains region useful to improve balance among professional, family and personal life. It provides specific information on different issues such as care, education, health, administration, etc.

Resources, services and programmes are grouped by type: 1. Worklife balance services, 2. Community social services, 3. Andalusian Employment Service, 4. Social Security, 5. Trade Unions, 6. Councils, 7. Health centres; 8. Public Transport and 9. Other services.

The guide also includes a final section providing information on the rules and regulations governing balance among professional, family and personal life.

Duration of the initiative: The Guide was published in 2006.

Contact

Organisation: Instituto Municipal de Formación y Empleo, Ayuntamiento de Granada (Municipal Institute of Training and Employment, Granada Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 958 21 61 20

Website: <http://www.imfgranada.es>

SUPPORT FOR THE CREATION OF PROXIMITY SERVICES AND A SYSTEM OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

Driving Body: MADRID CITY COUNCIL

Province: Madrid Autonomous Community: Community of Madrid

Target groups and/or bodies

Women in training, women entrepreneurs and future entrepreneurs in proximity services. Families who use proximity services and businesses from the proximity service sector.

Description

This initiative was developed under an Equal EU Initiative Project (1st convocation). It was structured around three areas of intervention offering an integrated response to service needs; initial diagnosis, *ad hoc* training for the consolidation of business ideas in the sector and quality certification.

1. Design of an 'entrepreneurial itinerary' aimed at women entrepreneurs intending to set up businesses in the service sector to improve balance among professional, family and personal life. It used the gender perspective and aimed to get rid of the stereotypical idea that only women are responsible for care-dependents.
2. New systems for improved quality management. These aimed to improve mechanisms of quality assurance for businesses providing support services for worklife balance. Criteria for achieving quality certification were established, which were relevant to the sector or service and taking into account the conditions of the entrepreneurs, who, in most cases, were low-income women. A system was set up to allow each company to acquire and maintain a "Quality Seal" awarded by the programme.
3. A market survey of services supporting worklife balance to learn about opportunities for setting up local services in this field. It included a selection of innovative ideas for business projects which resulted from a qualitative study conducted with groups of potential service users.

Duration of the initiative: Throughout the length of the Project: 2001 - 2004.

Contact

Organisation: Área de Gobierno de Empleo y Servicios a la Ciudadanía, Dirección General de Igualdad de Oportunidades, Ayuntamiento de Madrid (Government Department of Employment and Public Services, General Office of Equal Opportunities, Madrid City Council). Telephone: (+34) 91 480 11 31 / 91 480 11 32
E-mail: dgiguldadoport@munimadrid.es Website: <http://www.munimadrid.es>

Vilagarcía de Arousa time bank

DRIVING BODY: VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Pontevedra

Autonomous Community: Galicia

Target groups and/or bodies

General adult population of Vilagarcía de Arousa.

Description

The "Time Bank" is a network for the exchange of services, skills and knowledge. It is made up of people who volunteer their time, providing a service, and in return ask for services from others to enable them to improve balance among family, personal and professional life.

To become part of the network individuals indicate what services they can offer and what they will want in return. They then sign a letter of membership of the time bank, agreeing to accept the rules and regulations of the service.

Activities exchanged by members include homework assistance, housework or home repairs, running administrative errands, accompanying people to leisure and free time activities, tasks related to new technologies, transport to hospitals, shopping, etc. The payment system for each service provided is an hour of time which is paid into the member's "bank account". The number of hours received is therefore proportional to the number of hours given.

The Department for Women leads and coordinates the service through the Coordinator of the Women's Information Centre. It is responsible for encouraging the active involvement of women's groups in raising awareness about the project through a Collaboration Agreement with the Mestura Women's Federation to provide a member of staff to manage the bank.

The initiative is monitored through monthly evaluation and coordination meetings between Mestura Women's Federation and the Department for Women. In addition monthly reports provide information on the number of exchanges made, as well as information about new and departing members.

Duration of the initiative: 2009 onwards.

Contact

Organisation: Centro de Información a la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Vilagarcía de Arousa (Women's Information Centre, Vilagarcía de Arousa Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 986 09 92 00 E-mail: muller@vilagarcia.es Website: <http://www.ivilagarcia.com>

Voluntary services centre

Driving Body: MANDAL COUNCIL

County: Vest Agder

Target groups and/or individuals

General population of Mandal.

Description

The Voluntary Services Centre connects people who have free time and can offer their services to people in need of assistance in their daily lives, such as families with dependent children, elderly people, care-dependents, immigrants or refugees. 75% of Norwegian municipalities now have a centre of this nature following the Government's "Programme of volunteer centres", launched to help organise volunteer resources under council management.

Support provided by Centre volunteers is carried out in cooperation with local children's centres and local family centres and includes: helping with the shopping, accompanying people to doctor/hospital appointments, helping children with homework (an increasingly in-demand activity often offered by retired teachers), minor home plumbing or electrical repairs, telephone calls, childcare while parents perform other tasks, etc.

The Centre also organises group recreational and social activities such as daytrips, cultural activities, and visits to residential homes for the elderly, leisure activities, etc. It also offers some general services such as I.T. and internet courses, support groups for certain illnesses or addictions, to help with difficult family situations, distribution of sand for gritting the streets in icy conditions, etc.

The Centre's funding comes from various public and private institutions, and everyone who works there (currently 160 individuals) does so on a voluntary basis. There is one paid member of staff who acts as the centre co-ordinator. This person receives requests for assistance and assigns duties to volunteers depending on their skills and availability.

The Centre is governed by a board appointed by the public and private funding bodies. This board meets regularly and once a year holds a meeting open to all volunteers and service users.

Duration of the initiative: 2003 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Mandal Voluntary Services Centre.**

4.4. Changing mentalities: a question of ideas and awareness

ADULT SCHOOL FOR PERSONAL AUTONOMY. SKILLS SHARING WORKSHOPS

DRIVING BODY: ALCALA DE HENARES TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Madrid** Autonomous Community: **Community of Madrid**

Target groups and/or bodies

Adult population of Alcala de Henares, particularly those cognitively impaired.

Description

The initiative consisted in "Knowledge sharing" and "Independent living" workshops. Each course was between 20 and 30 hours, roughly divided into sessions of two and a half or three hours. Each session had two parts:

- a. First part: participants shared knowledge with each other about everyday life, such as home maintenance (repairs, etc.), cleanliness and hygiene, care of clothing, home decorating and gardening, cooking, health and leisure, finances for the home, etc. Each participant was responsible for teaching an activity to the rest of the group which the group then put into practice together.
- b. Second part: under the guidance of teachers experienced in dynamic group leadership, the group reflected on and discussed themes such as gender stereotypes and roles assigned based on gender, inequality between women and men, gender equality policies, what it means to be a man or a woman, etc. They then sought solutions to specific situations of inequality, to problems living together arising from an imbalance in responsibilities and, ultimately, lack of balance between professional, personal and family life.

During the courses, participants, with their teachers, attended activities organised for International Women's Day or International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women by the Department for Women. The topics covered in these events were used in discussions and debates during subsequent sessions.

Duration of the initiative: October 2007 – December 2008.

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Alcalá de Henares (Department of Women, Alcala de Henares Town Council).**

Telephone: **(+34) 91 877 17 20** E-mail: **cmujeralcala@ayto-alcaladehenares.es**

Website: **<http://www.ayto-alcaladehenares.es>**

Gender equality workshop for women and men

Driving body: ARANDA DE DUERO TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Burgos

Autonomous Community: Castile and Leon

Target groups and/or individuals

General population of Aranda de Duero.

Description

Practical workshops to teach men domestic skills traditionally performed by women and vice versa. Workshops aimed at men are called "domestic skills" workshops and involve learning tasks such as cooking, ironing, cleaning. Workshops for women are called "DIY at home" and are about learning how to complete tasks such as small electrical and plumbing jobs, use of tools such as drills, etc.

The courses, which are each 15 hours in duration, are held in the evenings after working hours to make it easier for students to attend.

At the beginning and end of each workshop, a meeting is held between staff and participants to discuss and analyse the experience.

The Department for Women is responsible for organising the project, finding teachers, advertising the courses and structuring the sessions based on the number of participants, etc.

Duration of the initiative: 2006 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Mujer e Igualdad de Oportunidades, Ayuntamiento de Aranda de Duero (Department of Women and Equal Gender Opportunities, Aranda de Duero Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 947 51 00 72

Website: <http://www.arandadeduero.es>

Awareness raising campaigns about joint responsibility in schools

Driving body: CAMPO DE CRIPTANA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Ciudad Real

Autonomous Community: Castile La Mancha

Target groups and/or bodies

Local pupils in their 6th and 8th year of school.

Description

This project is based on the philosophy that educating about joint responsibility from an early age is the starting point for achieving a better balance between women and men in house and family work. It paves the way for new social uses of time, free of gender stereotypes.

The Women's Centre of Campo de Criptana Council identified the need to work alongside teachers in primary and secondary schools to raise awareness and educate students in order to correct bad habits learned in childhood.

Main focus areas:

- Day to day work carried out by mothers in the home and the negative consequences for their health resulting from having to work a double-shift.
- Benefits for the whole family of sharing responsibility for household chores.

Two sessions were organised for pupils in the sixth and eighth year in each of the local schools. The first session focused on equal gender opportunities. Using role-play, pupils learned about discrimination for women having to work double-shift, in the workplace and then in the home, and the importance of joint responsibility. The second session focused on relaxation techniques to control violence.

A questionnaire was given to students to assess to what extent they had understood and taken on the ideas in the workshops.

Duration of the initiative: 2005 - 2009.

Contact

Organisation: Centro de la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Campo de Criptana (Women's Centre, Campo de Criptana Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 926 58 93 90

E-mail: centromujer@campodecriptana.es

Website: <http://www.campodecriptana.info/ayuntamiento>

Awareness-raising campaigns in Estella-Lizarrá promoting joint responsibility

Driving body: ESTELLA-LIZARRA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Navarre

Autonomous Community: Navarre

Target groups and/or bodies

General population of Estella-Lizarrá, particularly men.

Description

A series of campaigns about joint responsibility in parenthood and other related issues was launched within the framework of Estella-Lizarrá's Council intervention for improved worklife balance, based on a Local Agreement and the firm belief that spreading awareness of these ideas encourages worklife balance. The project has included the following initiatives:

- In the first campaign washing up gloves were given out. They bore the slogan "If you're a man, dare to wear them."; "Put your gloves on." (Si eres hombre, ¡átrevete!: ponte los -jar itzazu."); "Ven a coger el guante"). Posters were produced showing a man wearing washing up gloves and holding a baby.
- In the following campaign babies' bottles were handed out together with a card with the slogan "This is also a man's job. Working towards responsible fatherhood."
- In 2007 a controversial, high-impact campaign was launched with a poster showing a man frying eggs, with the slogan "Working towards responsible fatherhood. Don't touch them: fry them!". (A humorous double entendre). Alongside this nappies were distributed to homes with the slogan "Put me on! This is also a man's job."
- In 2008 the free gift was a teddy bear with the slogan "Caring is also for men" and a card for school children to give to their parents which read, "Dad, caring is also for men". That Christmas kitchen clocks were given out with the slogan "Life is better when we share work and time."
- In 2009 a poster was made with the slogan "Life is better when we share" featuring four of the region's well-known men performing household chores. Magnetic whiteboards were also given out, with the words "Dad, take note; this is also for men".

These campaigns are accompanied by opinion articles in newspapers, along with television and local radio station appearances. They continue throughout the year with particular focus on key times such as Christmas.

Workshops and courses on infant care and massage, and household survival are also offered to men to raise awareness about joint responsibility for housework and childcare.

Duration of the initiative: 2002 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Área de la Mujer e Igualdad, Ayuntamiento de Estella-Lizarrá (Department of Women and Gender Equality, Estella-Lizarrá Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 948 54 82 37 E-mail: areadelamujer@estella-lizarra.com Website: <http://www.estella-lizarra.com>

STUDY OF THE STATE OF WORKLIFE BALANCE AND EQUALITY IN INFANT AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS in Getafe Municipality

DRIVING BODY: GETAFE TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Madrid** Autonomous Community: **Community of Madrid**

Target groups and/or bodies

People connected to Infant and Primary Schools: pupils, teachers, administrative staff and Parents' Associations and, by extension, the general population of the municipality.

Description

Research into the current situation regarding work life balance and gender equality in Infant and Primary schools in the municipality and the subsequent publication of a report of the research findings and best practices.

The report was distributed to the entire education community through a public presentation, and was also released on CD. This event served as an opportunity to officially acknowledge participating schools, paving the way for meetings, exchanges and proposals for joint plans of action between schools and the Council's Department of Women and Equality.

Preparation process for the study:

- a. Presentation of the initiative to schools.
- b. Theoretical recommendations and design of a questionnaire to gather information on existing initiatives and resources in schools promoting worklife balance and gender equality.
- c. The universe of study was determined: 32 public and chartered schools in the municipality.
- d. Field work: completion of the questionnaire, in person, in each participating school.
- e. Analysis of information collected.
- f. Preparation and delivery of the final report.
- g. Presentation of the findings at a public event. Public release of results.
- h. Sharing best practices and setting up joint projects and initiatives.
- i. Reflection on needs identified during the study and designing strategies to improve Council policies for gender equality and worklife balance.

Duration of the initiative: 2008 - 2009.

Contact

Organisation: **Delegación de Mujer e Igualdad, Ayuntamiento de Getafe (Women and Equality Office, Getafe Town Council).**

Telephone: **(+34) 91 208 04 59** Website: **<http://www.getafe.es>**

Training in "coeducation and joint responsibility": The basis for work-life balance

Driving Body: LEON TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Leon** Autonomous Community: **Castile and Leon**

Target groups and/or bodies

Council staff in charge of educational work with children.

Description

This project is based on the philosophy that education about joint responsibility from an early age is the starting point for achieving a better balance between women and men in house and care work. It paves the way for new social uses of time, free of sexist stereotypes.

Leon Council's Women's Office identified the need to train staff working with children and minors so they are able to integrate a gender perspective into their work and deliver non-sexist models of education.

They organised a 24 hour training course for council staff working with children in different schools. Content included identifying examples of gender inequality, review and revision of educational materials from a gender perspective, sharing initiatives and educational materials already developed in the field of coeducation and joint responsibility, developing coeducational syllabuses and methods.

The course was held out of recipients' working hours. It was devised and taught by two members of staff from the Department of Social Welfare and Women, one a psychologist and gender expert, the other the equal gender opportunities officer.

A practical hands-on approach was used, based on achieving workshops and teamwork. The final part of the course was the presentation of an actual intervention project for each course attendee's post.

As an incentive, it was established that the course would be taken into account in subsequent council selection processes.

After the course, an informal work network was created, made up of the council staff who works with minors and the gender equality agent who gave the course. Its aim is to solve questions on coeducation and study some aspects seen in the course further.

Duration of the initiative: April - June 2009.

Contact

Organisation: **Concejalía de Bienestar Social y Mujer, Ayuntamiento de León (Department for Social Welfare and Women, Leon Town Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 987 89 57 29 / 54 37 Website: <http://www.aytoleon.es>

Madrid City Council awareness raising campaigns

DRIVING BODY: MADRID CITY COUNCIL

Province: **Madrid** Autonomous Community: **Community of Madrid**

Target groups and/or bodies

Society in general, public workers (from departments of employment, education/training, gender equality, etc.) and professionals from other bodies (associations/NGOs, trade unions, businesses and business organisations, the media, etc.).

Description

The "Madrid Businesses and Worklife Balance" awareness campaigns were developed by the City Council within the Equal EU Initiative (2nd convocation).

Three campaigns took place:

1. Rules for worklife balance: "If your job changes your life, why can't life change your job?" A leaflet detailing ten visions of achieving balance among professional, family and personal life. It also suggests examples of specific and long-lasting measures. To ensure wide distribution, the leaflet was sent out with various widely-circulated financial magazines/newspapers.
2. Radio spots on worklife balance: The "If your job changes your life, why can't your life change your job?" awareness campaign included two radio commercials: "Conference Call" (a telephone call between two executives) and "Job Interview", showing situations where worklife balance is a priority. The commercials show how an increasing number of companies are offering staff more flexible working styles to help make their work more compatible with the rest of their lives.
3. "We have a shared dream... let's make it come true. Keys to worklife balance." An overview of what social position is necessary to become aware of the need for all social agents to establish measures in all areas of life.

These are primarily aimed at university students, not only as future entrepreneurs, but also sons and daughters, future fathers and mothers and educators. The goal is to encourage them to adopt measures for better worklife balance in order to improve quality of life.

Duration of the initiative: Throughout 2007.

Contact

Organisation: **Área de Gobierno de Empleo y Servicios a la Ciudadanía, Dirección General de Igualdad de Oportunidades, Ayuntamiento de Madrid (Government Department of Employment and Public Services, General Office of Equal Opportunities, Madrid City Council).**

Telephone: (+34) 91 480 11 31 / 91 480 11 32

Website: <http://www.munimadrid.es>

Task exchange workshops

Driving body: PAMPLONA TOWN COUNCIL

Province: Navarre

Autonomous Community: Navarre

Target groups and/or bodies

General population of Pamplona.

Description

In these practical, hands-on task-sharing workshops, men are taught domestic skills traditionally performed by women while women are taught skills traditionally performed by men.

Each course is 40 hours long. During the workshops, men learn, among other tasks, cooking, cleaning, mending clothes and ironing, while women learn how to do plumbing, DIY, electrical jobs, etc.

Course places are requested by ringing the Council's information line (010) and places are allocated by means of a computer draw.

There is continuous evaluation through monitoring workshop attendance and a student survey at the end of the course which measures their satisfaction and gives them the opportunity to make suggestions.

Duration of the initiative: 2005 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: Concejalía de Igualdad, Ayuntamiento de Pamplona (Department of Equality, Pamplona Town Council).

Telephone: (+34) 948 42 05 49

Website: <http://www.pamplona.net>

DO YOU KNOW WHAT WORKLIFE BALANCE IS? BENEFIT FROM IT! PROGRAMME OF FLEXIBLE AND WORKLIFE BALANCED BUSINESSES

DRIVING BODY: SANTA MARTA DE TORMES TOWN COUNCIL

Province: **Salamanca**

Autonomous Community: **Castile and Leon**

Target groups and/or bodies

Small and medium-sized businesses in Santa Marta de Tormes.

Description

The initiative followed these steps:

1. An awareness-raising and information campaign about worklife balance aimed at local companies, including issues such as:
 - a. Using worklife balance to improve and enhance the competitiveness of businesses, while improving employees' quality of life.
 - b. Financial assistance, awards and tax benefits companies can benefit from if they adopt measures for worklife balance.
 - c. Measures to be implemented in organizations as set out in the Gender Equality Law.
2. A "Resource Guide for flexible and worklife balanced businesses". This is used to raise awareness and includes existing regulations, financial aid and subsidies to encourage balance between work and family life. The guide was achieved through:
 - a. Training given to a member of the Council in order to take on the role of "Officer for worklife balance and its implications in business."
 - b. A detailed study of resources for worklife balance already available in the council.
 - c. Detailed analysis of the benefits of worklife balance to employers and staff, and the disadvantages of not achieving worklife balance.
 - d. Developing the content and format of the Guide. Publication and diffusion through the press.
3. Delivery of the Guide to selected companies during a visit by the officer. Follow-up visits and counselling about measures for worklife balance.

Duration of the initiative: 2007 to the present day (2010).

Contact

Organisation: **Servicio de Conciliación de la Vida Laboral y Familiar, Concejalía de la Mujer, Ayuntamiento de Santa Marta de Tormes (Worklife Balance Service, Women's Department, Santa Marta de Tormes Town Council)**. Telephone: (+34) 923 13 10 20

E-mail: info@santamartadetormes.es

Website: <http://www.santamartadetormes.es>

GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES FOR PROMOTING WORK-LIFE BALANCE THROUGH LOCAL BODIES IN SPAIN AND NORWAY



www.balanceequilibrio.net
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