

EQUILIBRIO BALANCE

ENTRE LA VIDA PERSONAL,
FAMILIAR Y PROFESIONAL
EN ESPAÑA Y NORUEGA



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).



Why reconciliation?

During the last decades, policies aiming to provide equal opportunities between women and men and to guarantee formal and effective gender equality have been noticeably intensified, both at European and national level. The reconciliation among personal, family and professional life is a need closely related to a new social, economic and labour reality in modern Europe. It can be seen as one of the key elements within the general framework of equal opportunities between women and men, and it should be tackled from a wide range of different approaches. In this context, a new project on Balance among personal, family and professional life in Spain and Norway has been launched, with the financial support of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism. This institutional initiative is led by the Spanish Women's Institute, with the close cooperation of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities.

What are the goals of the Project?

The main purpose of "Equilibrio entre la vida personal, familiar y profesional en España y Noruega / Balance among personal, family and professional life among Spain and Norway" is to deploy an action plan aiming to improve public policies at local level in order to achieve more and better reconciliation of these ambits.

- To prepare a Guide of Good Practices in the field of reconciliation among personal, family and professional life in local bodies from Spain and Norway as a result of deep reflection, debate and the study of successful experiences in both countries.
- To reinforce the planning capacity of local bodies through reconciliation strategic plans in ten Spanish municipalities, which will contain integral actions adapted to territorial particularities and special reconciliation needs.
- To present and disseminate the results of the project and to promote public awareness and sensitiveness towards reconciliation issues among organizations and institutions.

Why Spain and Norway?

The legislative progress made in Spain on the domains of gender equality, long-term care, family and reconciliation, are in need of a major boost in order to be fully developed and applied. Thus, on the one hand, Norway's wide experience in the design and implementation of actions aiming to achieve a right balance among different aspects of citizens' lives, especially those focusing on childcare, are a valuable reference for Spanish local bodies seeking and applying actions that, have proved to be effective for that purpose. On the other hand, the recent experience of Spain, based on the raising awareness about individual rights and innovative legal advancements, is also a valuable reference for Norwegian local bodies for the design of actions aiming to set universal services coverage.

Therefore, this can be seen as a unique opportunity to gather institutional endeavours among both countries and to exchange experiences about established legal provisions, measures and actions implemented at local level. This is not only to acquire knowledge and transfer mutual learning for a better social cohesion, but also to extend and consolidate bilateral relations between both countries, fostering at the same time the development of new approaches of intervention at local level.

Why does this project focus on local authorities?

The role of local bodies and enterprises in economic, social and territorial development is widely acknowledge both for its proximity to citizens and the capacity to understand social needs, hence contributing to generate better living conditions and equal opportunities for all. According to these criteria, this Project responds to the need to approach reconciliation among all aspects of life from a closer institutional perspective.






What activities will be performed?

The specific actions of the Project, the will run from January 2009 until April 2011, are organized in two phases.

Phase 1. TO PREPARE A GUIDE OF GOOD PRACTICES

The main targets of this phase are: to reflect, debate, exchange, understand and research on experiences and strategies in the domain of reconciliation among personal, family and professional life at local level, both in Spain and Norway, which could be transferable to similar environments.

In order to address these targets, the activities will take place under the following stages:

-  Public presentation and dissemination of the project, and methodological design for detecting good practices in the domain of reconciliation at local level.
-  Desk review on experiences by local bodies in Spain and Norway.
-  Field work actions in Spain and Norway, and a technical seminar for information collection and exchange (from technical and political perspectives) with representatives of public local bodies.
-  Debate, preparation and publication of the Guide of Good Practices on reconciliation in public local bodies in Spain and Norway.
-  Selection of Spanish local bodies that have shown a particular interest in participating in the second Phase of the experimental project.

Phase 2. TO DESIGN AND TEST RECONCILIATION PLANS AT LOCAL LEVEL

Main targets of this phase: to promote a solid commitment among ten Spanish local bodies towards reconciliation issues, to detect main needs and territorial resources in this field, and to propose and articulate solutions to these needs in order to balance the three ambits of life, which in turn will contribute quality of life in those territories where they are applied.

In order to meet these targets, the required activities will follow these steps:

-  Design of the pilot study to test reconciliation plans in ten Spanish local entities.
-  Selection of the ten Spanish local entities.
-  Seminar or introduction conference with the ten participant entities.
-  Technical visits to the ten local entities, in order to debate on needs, advantages, contents, etc. related to the launch of their respective reconciliation plans.
-  Permanent counselling to the participants in order to prepare an initial diagnosis and the preparation of the reconciliation plans, accordingly to their specific needs.
-  Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the plans successfully launched.
-  Closing seminar or conference for the presentation of results.
-  Results report.