The Community Mediation Programme was carried out by MPDL in early 2014, with the aim of improving peaceful coexistence between the native and foreign population in Fuenlabrada, which is one of the largest municipalities in Madrid.

The programme aimed at promoting the necessary conditions for actual and effective multicultural coexistence, creating a social support network and generating processes to meet social needs, allowing minorities to participate in their adoptive community’s social and cultural life. The programme conceived of community mediation as a process that works with a preventive approach. The process requires time, the results are not immediately visible, and its results tend to be more medium and long term. The preventive approach implies going beyond the conflict revealed, and trying to have an impact on the causes that can lead to conflict in the future.

Intercultural community mediation aims to strengthen the communication channels between the different cultural groups and strengthen their relationship with the local authorities to prevent and normalise the resolution of conflicts from a positive point of view. It also tries to enhance the participation of the groups or ethnic minorities to advance the democratic construction of a more just and harmonious society.

Intercultural mediation is the basis of MPDL intervention and the best strategy to achieve co-responsibility among citizens and the promote citizen participation and coexistence, mutual understanding between foreign and native populations is also developed, since it provides meeting and sensitisation time and makes social resources more accessible to foreign people.
The Community Mediation Programme was carried out in 2014 by the MPDL, with the aim of improving the social cohesion of the population by the strengthening of the social fabric in the municipality of Fuenlabrada.

Fuenlabrada is a municipality in the southern area of the Community of Madrid, with the largest population not only in the community of Madrid, but also in Spain.

Fuenlabrada owes its population growth primarily to migration, first internal, from other provinces of Spain, mainly in the 70s, and then to international migration, mainly since 2000. It is also a municipality with a high unemployment rate, higher than the average in the autonomous community. Thirteen per cent of Fuenlabrada’s population is foreign. Fuenlabrada has the largest number and a wide variety of associations (more than 800 currently), and is notable for the high level of citizen participation in the construction of the city. However, cooperation between associations is at present very low, especially in the immigrant associations, which have focused on cultural and/or religious goals within their own community. They have done little to participate in the collective construction of the city. Fuenlabrada is a multicultural space where the collectives simply coexist, but are poorly connected between them.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME ARE:
1. To design and implement actions which encourage social cohesion between foreign and native populations in the Municipality through analysis.
2. Strengthen the associative fabric in the municipality.
3. Reduce the existing prejudices and stereotypes in the population through sensitisation, promoting equal treatment and combating discrimination.
4. Promote the participation of the migrant population in the resources and services offered by the Municipality.
5. Encourage networking among institutions, social agents and other social fabric so they actively participate.

The methodology used to reach these goals includes a global vision of Fuenlabrada reality, actions based on “inter-multidimensionality” (in other words the interdependence of actions, social actors and the context), coherence between purpose and action and the use of public spaces, resources and services.

VARIOUS PROCESSES HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS:
• A process of rapprochement between immigrants and the neighbourhood associations;
• The process of strengthening and promoting collaboration between the associations;
• A process of making neighbourhood festivals more intercultural;
• Processes to strengthen association networks;
• Processes to promote the integration of women from immigrant associations into the local council;
The intervention strategy is directed at the community level and makes use of community mediation as the main tool for developing a sense of co-responsibility among citizens and municipality actors, so that they can also solve conflicts typical of coexistence.

The aim of the mediation therefore is to eliminate visible and non-visible obstacles to equal and normal access to existing public resources, such as ignorance, prejudice, language or any other communication obstacles. Several activities have been developed, targeted at both minorities and at the professionals who work with them: sensitisation workshops, talks about cultural and communication tools for administrative workers, Spanish courses for immigrants, counselling…

THE PROGRAMME INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:
• Elaboration of analytical reports about the needs of the population by using qualitative and quantitative data as a design tool for future interventions;
• Intercultural community mediation – identification of conflict and mediation to resolve them. The programme addresses conflicts between the immigrant and native population related to social cohesion and tries to detect latent conflicts by identifying natural leaders, meeting points, the manner in which neighbours talk about immigration, etc. The participation of women is also analysed, in order to detect possible cases of isolation, linguistic difficulties, discrimination, etc.
• Participation and collaboration in community and intercultural activities arranged by the City-Hall and social organisations.
• Networking with institutions and social actors through participation and the creation of coor-
The Movement for Peace – MPDL - is a Development, Social Action and Humanitarian Aid organisation, created in 1983. The Movement for Peace is an NGO formed by people who work day by day to build peace. We understand that peace is a lot more than the absence of war, and so our aim is to work for world peace encouraging cooperation, solidarity and mutual understanding between persons and between peoples.

The MPDL was born in the heat of the enthusiasm shared in a pacifist demonstration held in Madrid on 15 November 1981 by a group of people that decided to form an Association in compliance with the 1964 law.

The MPDL is an independent, secular and progressive non-governmental organisation. The MPDL pursues a dual objective in its actions:

- To promote, spread, encourage and protect the universal principles of peace, disarmament, freedom and the coexistence of men and women and peoples, in the framework of internationally recognised Human Rights.
- To act against the inequality and injustice through development cooperation and social action.

The MPDL works to promote a new international order that would eliminate inequality, exclusion and poverty, whose existence in an increasingly globalised world generate violence and are incompatible with peace, both internally and internationally.

CONTACT
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FINAL REMARKS
After this year and a half of intervention the following results have been achieved:

- Legitimacy of the programme, a basic requirement for any mediation project;
- Positive assessment by the local Administration that decided to allocate funds to support a project which concluded last year;
- Positive assessment by the neighbourhood associations who are urging the local Administration to give continuity to the project;
- An increasing number of proposals for collaboration to develop activities from the associations;
- An increasing number of proposals for collaboration from the local administration. The increased presence of immigrant associations in the associative networks.
- An increase in the bilateral collaboration of associations.
- The creation of channels of communication between the local Administration and immigrant associations.
SOLIDAR, together with our national members and partners, has developed 17 case studies in 2015, presenting innovative, effective, sustainable and tailor made models to promote social inclusion, the social economy and quality job creation by adapting a social investment approach. In their daily work, SOLIDAR members and partners anticipate new or unmet needs of socio-economically vulnerable people and empower them to actively participate in society and to access the labour market. These case studies gather strong evidence of the social impact of the activities undertaken by our members and partners to help Member States making progress towards the achievement of the social and employment objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the implementation of the Social Investment Package.