

## TERRITORIAL EMPOWERMENT

The geographical sphere of action of the ÀGORA NORD DP was the area of l'Horta Nord, which lies to the north of the city of Valencia and is made up of 22 towns with a combined population of around 275,000 people. It adopted a twin-track approach involving **personal empowerment and local empowerment, or territorial empowerment**. In terms of the development of local empowerment, the fundamental goal of the project was to foster the development of indigenous local potential by driving cooperation processes which made it possible to generate environments that promoted social and labour market integration. From the DP's point of view, local empowerment and personal empowerment were interrelated and had to be developed in tandem. Personal development enables people to play an active role in decision-making in the society in which they live, and thus influence the development of their community. In the same way, the promotion of a fairer society in which everyone joins forces and coordinates actions to combat all forms of discrimination ensures that the people living in it have more opportunities to achieve a greater development of their personal potential.

The DP's approach entailed:

- The involvement of project professionals from mainstream employment and social services;
- The development of specific methodologies and instruments geared towards networking from a dual perspective:
  - Firstly, the need to generate synergies by maximising efforts, resources and experiences; and
  - Secondly, the implementation and coordination of all the components that make up the integration pathways;
- Permanent mentoring and monitoring of project users by a network of professionals involved in employment and social services and business development agencies.

The work of the DP has had major positive impacts on the area including:

- Setting up of an employment network made up of professionals from a variety of disciplines;
- Consolidation of themed forums stemming from the specialist working groups such as the 'Area Forum for Equality of Opportunity' and the 'Trade Associations Network';
- Introduction of a culture of permanent cooperation and coordination in the area through a network of professionals drawn from a range of municipal services who share a common working methodology.
- Major capacity to foster the transfer and implementation of best practice in the area, as the mayors of all the local towns signed the 2nd El Puig Institutional Declaration entitled 'Towards a socially responsible area' and committed their municipalities to "*working towards a model of area integration based on joint responsibility, consensus and constant dialogue between all the players involved so as to create a Socially Responsible Area which involves strategies, methodologies and professionals, optimises extant resources and generates enhanced living conditions for all of its inhabitants*".

Other developments included administrative procedures for building social clauses into public contracts and tendering procedures and online tools which enabled the coordinated management of social and labour market integration pathways.

DP in ECDB: <a href="#">ES-ES20040098</a>	DP Web Site: <a href="http://www.consorci.info/agora">http://www.consorci.info/agora</a>
Contact Person: José Antonio Navarro	E-mail: <a href="mailto:jnavarro@consorci.info">jnavarro@consorci.info</a>