



Culture and Tourism

Mini Case Study MADRID: Centro de Arte Alcobendas **Work Package 9**

*Ex post evaluation of Cohesion Policy programmes
2007-2013, focusing on the European Regional Development
Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF)*

Contract: 2014CE16BAT034



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy
Directorate B - Policy
Unit B.2 Evaluation and European Semester

Contact: Violeta Piculescu

E-mail: REGIO-B2-HEAD-OF-UNIT@ec.europa.eu

*European Commission
B-1049 Brussels*

Ex post evaluation of Cohesion Policy programmes 2007- 2013, focusing on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF)

Work Package 9: Culture and Tourism

Mini Case Study MADRID: Centro de Arte Alcobendas

Contract: 2014CE16BAT034

***Europe Direct is a service to help you find answers
to your questions about the European Union.***

Freephone number (*):

00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11

(*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

LEGAL NOTICE

This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2016

ISBN 978-92-79-58803-7

doi: 10.2776/243519

© European Union, 2016

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

Table of Contents

1. SYNTHESIS.....	9
2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	11
3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION.....	13
3.1 Project overall objectives and purposes	13
3.2 Project beneficiaries.....	14
3.3 Project activities.....	14
3.4 Main project outputs.....	14
4. POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT.....	15
5. IMPLEMENTATION.....	15
5.1 The process of project design and planning.....	15
5.2 Management, monitoring and evaluation system of the project.....	16
5.3 Governance arrangements of the project.....	16
5.4 Innovative elements and novel approaches to implementation	17
5.5 Key implementation obstacles and problem-solving practices.....	17
6. KEY RESULTS.....	17
7. SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSFERABILITY	18
7.1 Sustainability.....	18
7.2 Transferability	19
8. LESSONS LEARNT	20
REFERENCES.....	23

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) is undertaking an ex post evaluation of Cohesion Policy programmes financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF) during the period 2007-2013 in regions covered by the Convergence, Regional Competitiveness & Employment and European Territorial Cooperation objectives in the 28 member states.

The Consortium IRS-CSIL-CISET-BOP was selected to undertake the ex post evaluation on 'Culture and Tourism' (Work Package 9). An important element within the evaluation is a series of case study analyses of NUTS2 regions covering interventions co-financed by ERDF during the 2007-2013 programming period.

In addition to the full case studies (at a region's programme level), the evaluation also includes two mini case studies (focused on individual projects) for each regional case study. As with the regional programme case studies, mini case studies are based on desk-based research and semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the main participants involved in the chosen projects.

This report presents the results of the mini case study *Centre of Arts of Alcobendas*. This is the first of two mini case studies selected from among the many projects funded by the ROP Madrid.

The report begins with a brief synthesis of the project before moving on to a fuller description and the presentation of the results of the analysis undertaken. The report ends with a review of the main conclusions of the study, together with a series of lessons learnt for future policymaking.

The mini case study was based on desk-based research and on a programme of 5 number semi-structured interviews. The interviewees were identified as part of the wider ROP evaluation exercise of which the mini case studies are part and were selected as being key actors in the design and delivery of the project. They are:

Name of the person	Institution, position and role in the project	Contacts
María Aceituno Tanarro	Technical Coordinator of FEDER-URBAN of the Alcobendas Municipality	Tel. +34 91 659 76 00/2523 maceituno@aytoalcobendas.org
Angel Contreras	External Consultant for Technical assistance in European funds for Alcobendas Municipality	Tel. + 34-91445 27 96 angel.contreras@sicidominus.com
Belén Poole	Art Center Coordinator of Sociocultural patronage of the Municipality of Alcobendas	Tel. +34 916 597 600 ext.4821 bpole@aytoalcobendas.org
José Ramón Lorenzo	Technical Infrastructure Manager Socio-Cultural Patronage of Municipality of Alcobendas	Tel.+34 916 597 600 ext. jrlorenzo@aytoalcobendas.org
Yolanda Sanchis Sanchez	Director of the Socio Cultural Patronage of Municipality of Alcobendas	Tel +34 600 469 666 ysanchis@aytoalcobendas.org

1. Synthesis

The Centro de Arte Alcobendas (*Alcobendas Arts Centre*) project replaced the old Casa de la Cultura of the Municipality of Alcobendas in order to serve the cultural heritage of the Municipality and boost public access to contemporary culture.

The project entailed the creation of a centre for visual arts, music and literature in the Community of Madrid. The project involved constructing a nine floor building with a total area of 17,214 sqm. The centre offers art exhibitions, a programme of music, an audiovisual library and a network of cultural activities aimed at many audiences. It is also home to the Alcobendas Photography Collection.

The project was the construction of a multi-purpose municipal art centre involving, physical interventions to preserve and improve cultural heritage of the Municipality of Alcobendas combined with the purpose of improve public access to contemporary culture. The project was developed through a participatory planning process with the involvement of many local associations. On the other hand, it requires a substantial financial commitment and long term strategy of the Municipality for its management and operations as revenue are largely insufficient to cover operating costs.

The main beneficiaries of the project are:

- Residents of the Central District of the Municipality of Alcobendas where there are a lot of people with interests in cultural activities.
- Immigrant population of the municipality; the new Art Centre is considered an important venue for activities targeting social inclusion, social networking and online public services.
- Residents of the other districts in the Municipality interested in cultural activities scheduled at the Centre. It is easily reachable with public transport from every part of the Municipality.

The total ERDF financial resources allocated to the Project until December 2014 amounted to EUR 3,897,000 out of total budget of EUR 26 million.

The main achievements attained are:

- Improvement of the cultural infrastructure and offer of the Municipality of Alcobendas. The centre offers a modern, well-equipped space for many kind of exhibitions as well as a suitable permanent space for the prestigious Alcobendas Photography Collection. The Centre not only supports national and international contemporary artists, but also provides people with the opportunity for artistic creation through exhibitions, workshops, meetings, courses, conferences and other activities.
- Contribution to develop the identity of citizens of Alcobendas, who have perceived the high quality services provided by the Art Center, as expressed in many occasion as sector committees, districts roundtables and meetings.
- Improvement of the space addressed to activities having the purpose of social inclusion of immigrants and disadvantaged citizens.

2. Background information

Country: Spain

Region: The Community of Madrid

Full project title: Centre of Arts of Alcobendas

Duration of project: 2008-2010

Key words: Alcobendas, cultural heritage, Art Centre, flexible programme, multi-objectives intervention

Funding:

Total budget: EUR 26,000,000

ERDF contribution: EUR 3,867,953

National budget: EUR 0

Regional budget: EUR 22,132,047

Private contribution: EUR 0

ERDF Objective: Competitiveness

Website: <http://www.centrodeartealcobendas.org/es/presentacion>)

Motivation for selection

The project involved the construction of a multi-purpose municipal art centre involving, physical interventions to primarily preserve and improve the cultural heritage of the Municipality of Alcobendas combined with a secondary purpose of social inclusion of immigrants and disadvantaged citizens. The project is also representative of a participatory planning process with involvement of many local associations. On the other hand, it requires a substantial financial commitment and long term strategy of the Municipality for its management and operations as revenue are largely insufficient to cover operating costs.

3. Project description

The Art Centre of Alcobendas, designed by architects Fernando Parrilla Villafruela and Maria Isabel Muñoz Parrilla, is a contemporary building with nine floors and an area of 17,214 sqm¹. The building includes exhibition halls, media libraries, studios, classrooms, workshops, a 348 seat auditorium and an audiovisual room. Its construction was contracted in 2006 and it was inaugurated in 2010.

The new Art Centre of Alcobendas has been built on the area occupied by the former "House of Culture and Popular University" of the Municipality of Alcobendas whose facilities had become obsolete and were notoriously insufficient to meet the cultural needs of the Alcobendas' citizens. It was the centre of cultural and artistic activity of the Municipality. The new centre is fundamentally a replacement of the old centre and it repairs or remedies the shortcomings of the former building and adds other functions.

The activities of the Centro de Arte Alcobendas involve:

1. the programme of exhibitions;
2. a stable programme of music;
3. a full service of Audiovisual libraries;
4. a network of workshops aimed at both children and adults audiences;
5. the centre is also home to the Alcobendas Photography Collection.

The primary mission of Art Center of Alcobendas is to boost public access to contemporary culture and its didactic knowledge.

3.1 Project overall objectives and purposes

Given the aging infrastructure of the ancient Casa de la Cultura (*House of Culture*) of the Municipality and the lack of adequate space to develop the socio-cultural activities for citizens, the Municipality of Alcobendas proposed to build a new Cultural Centre. It was included in the 2nd Strategic Plan of the Municipality of Alcobendas 2005-2015 within the actions for the development and restructuring of the Central District of the Municipality, after meetings with neighbours associations, local institutions, entrepreneurs' organizations and young association. The Plan aimed at increasing the spaces for cultural activities to offer citizens facilities for cultural expression, to contribute to the education of the public through traditional and innovative channels and to encourage citizens to identify and share their cultural identity.

The Municipality wants to meet the demands of the most populous district of the city and assure more attention on socio-cultural issues from the most basic services, as the traditional library or meeting rooms, to more advanced services such as the audiovisual library, the auditorium, the training courses, the workshops and the exhibition halls.

Strategically, in order to transform the physiognomy of the neighbourhood and keep it dynamic, the Municipality decided to maintain the Art Centre in the same place

¹ www.centrodeartealcobendas.org

replacing the old building with a new and modern one.

3.2 Project beneficiaries

Considering the main beneficiaries of the project, they were:

- **Residents of the Central District of the Municipality of Alcobendas.** The new Art Center is located in the Central District. The Central District has a population of 44,789 residents of which 17% is under 20 years 63% are between 20 and 64 years and the remaining 20% is over 65. The Central District of Alcobendas has the highest proportion of immigrant population of the municipality with an immigration rate of 18.6% compared to an average of 11.18% in the whole city of Alcobendas. The Art Centre is also considered an important place for arranging activities aiming at social inclusion, social networking and online public services. It gives public access to the internet for searching information on public authority websites, downloading and sending official documents and forms, making telematic medical appointments, etc. The Art Centre has promoted many activities to help, improve and promote integration of both immigrants and people with social inclusion difficulties, through preventive and support programmes addressed to educate immigrants and disadvantaged families.
- **Residents of the other districts of Municipality of Alcobendas** interested in the various cultural activities that are scheduled at the Centre that is easily reachable with public transport from every part of the Municipality.

3.3 Project activities

In details, the activities implemented to carry out the overall Project include:

- The creation of a large audiovisual library divided in different spaces for kinds of activities and targets (adults, youth and children); in the library many activities promoting cultural programs are carried out such as reading, creative writing, educational workshops and literary competitions.
- The arrangement of a flexible and versatile space for exhibition to be suitable for housing photography collection as well as sculpture and pictures ones. During exhibitions, the Art Centre supports also the artists with innovative technologies for the transport, the exposure, the lighting effects and so on.
- The construction of a 348 seat auditorium with a regular programme of concerts of classical and contemporary music and with an intensive educational programme addressed to music schools of the Community of Madrid.

3.4 Main project outputs

The main project outputs are:

- Evidence of project completion;
- Factual annual increase of users attending Centre's services;
- Evidence of project contribution to preserve and publicize the Alcobendas Photography Collection;

- Holistic approach: spread of national and international contemporary artists, providing people with an opportunity for artistic creation through exhibitions, workshops, meetings, courses, conferences and other activities;
- Flexibility of the infrastructure: the project areas can be setup in different ways to respond to changes in the demand of cultural services.

4. Political and strategic context

Alcobendas is a municipality located roughly 13 kilometres north of Madrid. It includes a central urban zone, a recently built district known as Valdelasfuentes, La Moraleja and El Soto de la Moraleja residential zones and the Valdelatas nature reserve. A huge business park called Valdelacasa for high-tech firms is being built. Once a working class area, it has in more recent times become one of the more socially and economically affluent areas of the Madrid metropolitan area.

Over the last 10 years, Alcobendas has become a preferred location for many important multinational companies, which decided to locate their headquarters there. The cost of rental of locations in Alcobendas is currently on the rise as it has become the largest business and commercial district to the north of Madrid. The area has also become a meeting place for business people thanks to its proximity and convenient access to the Barajas Airport.

The Municipality had two important strengths in the field of cultural activities: on one hand it had an already existing cultural infrastructure not only in terms of buildings but also in terms high quality programme; on the other hand, the Municipality has an excellent environment (parks, sports facilities, tax benefits, Universities) that attract people to move on its residential areas.

Obviously, the economic crisis has had some impact on the Municipality. The public budget level has been revised but measures have been taken to minimize the effects on the expenditure directly addressed to cultural activities. In addition, compared with other Spanish municipalities, the reduction was very limited.

5. Implementation

5.1 The process of project design and planning

The Municipality of Alcobendas is characterized by a qualitative development, following a new concept of "urban sustainability". In the field of tourism and culture, the main commitments of local Authorities are: the conservation of the natural spaces, the recovery of the historical center of the City, the reduction of the natural resources consumption, the development of transportation systems not pollutants, the cultural education of the population and consolidation of the objective of sustainable growth in new urban developments. These commitments are completed by the aims at obtaining the maximum social participation; local Authorities periodically carry out citizen conferences, public meetings and stakeholders consultations.

The Municipality launched a public tender for the design contract for the construction

of the new Art Centre at the beginning of 2006 and the competition was won by Architect Fernando Parrilla. The Department of Municipal Works was the contracting authority on behalf of the Alcobendas City Council, in permanent coordination with the Socio-cultural Department appointed also as responsible for the overall managing activity of the new Art Centre.

Alcobendas Municipality decided to present the project to the call for ERDF support promoted by The Community of Madrid in June 2008 and the project was selected for EU funding. The total ERDF financial resources allocated to the Project until December 2014 amounted to 3,897,000 EUR. Total expenditure for the projects made until 31st December 2014 amounted to 3,814,266 EUR. The major part of the funding was public funds provided by the Municipality.

Table 5.1. ERDF Financial Resources

	Total Investment	ERDF funding	Expenditure until 31 December 2014	ERDF funding until 31 December 2014
Construction of the Art Centre of Alcobendas	26,000,000	3,897,000	26,000,000	3,814,266

Source: Ministerio de Hacienda y Administraciones Públicas

5.2 Management, monitoring and evaluation system of the project

As already mentioned, the approach chosen by the national/regional authorities to distribute the financial resources was based on population criteria, and not on competitive selection process, so that each municipality was entrusted a maximum ERDF amount based on their number of inhabitants. No specific and standardised project selection system was put in place neither at national nor at regional level.

The Municipality of Alcobendas set up a system to monitor the actions put in place by the management of the new Art Centre. This system consists of:

- **Reporting.** The Chairman of the Board has to convene quarterly the Steering Committee and it has also to met with the Council for Children and Adolescents and the Youth Council during informative and working forums to illustrate to representatives of the associations and groups of programs services and activities implemented.
- **Accountability.** The Chairman is accountable for the management of services and it refers to Education Committee on the first Monday of each month.
- **Indicators.** Data on the number of people visiting the Centre are collected by the monitoring system (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2).
- **Survey.** Every year the Social Cultural Department of city council carries out survey of perceived quality among users of Art Centre's services and programs.

No evaluations have been carried out so far or have been planned.

5.3 Governance arrangements of the project

The Municipality of Alcobendas proposed to build a new Cultural Centre including it within the 2nd Strategic Plan of the Municipality of Alcobendas 2005-2015 within the actions for the development and restructuring of the Central District of the Municipality, after having met neighbours associations, local institutions, entrepreneurs' organizations and young association.

The infrastructure project was financed mainly by Municipal funding primarily through agreements with the Community of Madrid and the Ministry. Cultural activities are funded by companies with which collaboration agreements are signed. There are also some public rates that apply to certain activities.

The Municipality have been entrusted the identification, management and implementation of the New Art Centre of Alcobendas. The national and regional authorities have been involved in formulating the strategic directives, the municipalities in putting them into practice.

5.4 Innovative elements and novel approaches to implementation

The Municipality of Alcobendas, for this project, has taken a new approach to ensure full exploitation of the project's potential. A participatory planning process with involvement of many local associations together with an effective strategic vision of public Authorities.

The main innovative element is that the project is not only seen as a physical interventions to preserve and improve cultural heritage of the Municipality, but it works to address the social inclusion of immigrants and disadvantaged citizens.

5.5 Key implementation obstacles and problem-solving practices

According to the people interviewed, the main key implementation obstacles occurred when the execution works started, indeed, they were strictly linked with constructions processes. These implementation obstacles did not prevent the project realization even if they have created some delay.

6. Key results

The project entailed the replacement of the ancient Casa de la Cultura to enable it to become a benchmark for visual arts, music and literature in the Community of Madrid, with a vocation for national and international projection. The project enabled the Municipality to have a stable programme of music, an innovative audiovisual library and a network of cultural activities aimed at different audiences both children and adults, both high income people and low income ones.

Over the last four years, the number of people visiting the Art Centre of Alcobendas has increased, from 5,396 visitors in 2011 to more than 40,000 in 2014. Unfortunately, neither the Patronage managing the Art Centre neither the Municipality of Alcobendas have made an analysis of the breakdown by income and by social group of the visitors.

Table 6.1. People visiting the Art Centre of Alcobendas

Indicators	2011	2012	2013	2014
People visiting the exhibition of the Art Centre	0	16,593	25,339	37,302
People attending the workshop about Culture inside the family	2,182	863	777	371 ²
People attending conference about visual arts	2,171	3,777	3,788	4,256

² The reduction is mainly linked to the decrease of workshops dedicated to these themes in 2014. Workshops about Culture inside the family will increase during 2015. In 2015, the new Strategic Plan, in fact, has posed as strategic goal the Education and Culture considering it as an engine of economic and social development of the city

Indicators	2011	2012	2013	2014
People attending tours	1,042	675	639	1,190
Total	5,395	21,908	30,543	42,048

Source: Memoria Anual Consejo de Rector of Socio Cultural Patronage of Municipality of Alcobendas

Table 6.2. Annual variation of People visiting the Art Centre of Alcobendas

District	2014	2013	2012	2011
Art Centre of Alcobendas	37.6%	39.4%	306%	n.c

Source: Memoria Anual Consejo de Rector of Socio Cultural Patronage of Municipality of Alcobendas

In 2014, there have been two surveys of perceived quality of the services, one relating to facilities and one to exhibitions. In the first, Art Centre has obtained an overall assessment of service 8.66 points on the scale of 1-10. The second survey provides the result that 56.7% of respondents have been exceeded their expectations in regards to the interest of the visited exhibitions; in addition, 29% of respondents considered the exhibitions visited as interesting as expected.

It is also worth mentioning the evidence of project contribution to preserve and publicize the Alcobendas Photography Collection. During 2014, despite it had a budget for the purchase of new photographs of EUR 20,000, continuing austerity policy 2013, 2012 and 2011, the Art Centre succeeded in buying 32 works, thanks to the increasing prestigious of the collection at national and international level and therefore its negotiating power.

While the location chosen for the Art Centre, has a strong symbolic meaning, the area surrounding the Art Centre, has few restaurants, bar or shops (i.e. selling books or souvenir related to exhibition made at the Art Centre), or other commercial activity. Therefore, the Project has not so many indirect beneficiaries, namely the 'non users' which indirectly benefit from the construction of a building designated to cultural activities.

7. Sustainability and transferability

7.1 Sustainability

In order to measure the economic sustainability of the Project, it is possible to calculate how much the Municipality has spent for every person visiting the centre and it is useful to compare this cost with an estimated "willing to Pay" of the Centre's visitors. This evaluation can be made both considering the overall investment and the operational expenditure paid by the Municipality since the opening of the Centre.

The table below shows the present value of total cost of the investment per user made for refurbishing and improving the ancient Casa de la Cultura of the Municipality of Alcobendas. In other words, it takes the significant capital cost of the building construction and the operational costs incurred for the management of the Centre since its opening in 2011, and it assumes that these costs will remain stable over ten years. The average cost, in net present value terms, per user is EUR 50; this value has to be compared with the users' willingness to pay for attending the Art Centre's activities.

Currently, the Socio Cultural Patronage, the institution managing the Art Centre of

Alcobendas, has not yet asked to the users how much they are disposed to pay in order to attend cultural activities and to keep the Art Centre of Alcobendas in operation. Anyway, we can use the value of € 15 that corresponds to the average ticket paid to visit important Museum and art exhibitions of Madrid (such as Museum of Prado, Museum of Reina Sofia, Museum of Thyssen-Bornemisza, etc.)

Considering the total investment, the average cost, in net present value terms, per user is € 50; it seems to be too high to justify the expenses made to build the Art Centre of Alcobandes. Considering only the annual operating costs occurred since Art Centre had opened and excluding the construction costs, the cost falls down to €20 that is more acceptable if compared with the mentioned average ticket paid. Despite the difficulties to measure the cost effectiveness of this Project, there could be some problem of project over sizing due to the demand overestimation. Maybe also a smaller project could be sufficient to attain valuable results in terms of preservation of Alcobendas' cultural heritage and of incentive to access to contemporary culture and its didactic knowledge

Table 7.1. Overall Expenditure for the Investment. EUR million and thousand units

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Costs	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.5
Users	0	0	0	0	5.4	22	30	43	60	84
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Costs	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Users	110	132	145	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: CSIL elaborations on official data

Table 7.2. Average cost, in net present value terms, per user (EUR/user) since 2007 projected until 2026

	Unit of measurement	Total Investments 2007/2026
NPV costs	Eur	€ 38,799,582
NPV users	Users	777,253
Avg cost per user	(EUR/user)	€ 50

Source: CSIL elaborations on official data

Table 7.3. Average cost, in net present value terms, per user (EUR/user) for Operating costs since the opening projected until 2026

	Unit of measurement	Operating costs since the opening projected until 2026
NPV costs	Eur	€ 17,788,007
NPV users	Users	888,456
Avg cost per user	(EUR/user)	€ 20

Source: CSIL elaborations on official data

7.2 Transferability

According to people interviewed the contextual conditions needed to ensure a similar successful implementation are basically the wealth and the long term commitments of the municipalities. Only wealthy, well-managed municipalities can provide funds necessary to finance projects and can underwrite long-term subsidies for financial sustainability.

An effective and flexible strategic planning is fundamental; continuous changes in society, new communication technologies, innovative training methods and sources of information changes so quickly nowadays, that, when a programme is designed has to be sufficiently open and flexible in its facilities that can adapt to changes not only year after year but also day after day, and it is valid also for infrastructural projects.

8. Lessons learnt

Conclusions

The project was the construction of a multi-purpose municipal art centre involving, physical interventions to improve the cultural heritage and offer of the Municipality of Alcobendas combined with the purpose of improve public access to contemporary culture.

No specific quantitative tools have been put in place by the Municipality to measure the social inclusion effects of the new Art Center of Alcobendas; one of the main expected results of the activities promoted by the Art Centre is to offer equal opportunities and to promote more and more initiatives targeted to the social groups most at risk of social exclusion due to digital illiteracy, but also towards immigrants, woman, the elderly, people with disabilities and children.

The education area of the Centre offers many educational programmes addressed to a wide range of audiences from children and family to young and adult, adapted according to the different exhibitions that take place throughout the year. Following the different issues faced with each exhibition, the activities aim at facilitating open dialogue with the works of art and create a change in attitude to be active viewers, reflective and critical, able to relate significantly with the works and fully enjoy the experience of art.

One of the key elements of success was the fact that the whole project was placed as a priority action within the 2nd Strategic Plan of the Municipality of Alcobendas 2005-2015. To put the project as a strategic action within Strategic Plan of the Municipality of Alcobendas has allowed the Municipality of Alcobendas to have better planning that led to effective project completion.

The project is also representative of an innovative participatory planning process with involvement of many local associations, even if it requires a substantial financial commitment and long term strategy of the Municipality for its management and operations. The Centre of Arts has contributed to the image of Alcobendas as a model city for both citizens and companies investing in the Municipality that sometimes even support and finance the activities performed by the Centre.

The Municipality of Alcobendas is committed to strongly supporting socio-cultural activities, offering educational programmes, providing sports equipments and leisure services with the aim of promote artistic quality and innovation and support emerging artists. In the new strategic Plan of the city, "Alcobendas Design 2020", activities related to Culture are considered fundamental to consolidate the quality of life of citizens and the engine of economic and social development of the city.

Although the citizens of Alcobendas have expressed in many occasion (sector committees, Districts roundtables and meetings) the high perceived quality of services offered by the Centre of Arts, currently, considering the number of visitors, it is hard to measure its cost effectiveness and there could be some problem of project oversizing due to the demand overestimation; maybe also a smaller project could have be satisfactory.

In addition, the Art Centre of Alcobendas, due to its location, has not so many indirect beneficiaries, namely the 'non users' which indirectly benefit from the project (e.g. owner of restaurants, bar, or any commercial activity which is located in the

surrounding area of the Art Centre, owner of shops selling for instance books, souvenir on the cultural heritage, etc.).

Finally it is worth underling the limited role of ERDF compared with the whole project (3.8 EUR million on the total amount of 26 EUR million); indeed the Regional Programme strategy adopted by the Community of Madrid to allocating funds to all municipalities (based on population) without a competitive selection process of the projects, leads to a wide freedom to municipalities and, in this case, a small contribution to a big project. As a matter of fact, the investment would have been made also in absence of ERDF funds. Planning and contracting were complete before application to the Madrid programme.

Lessons learnt

Key factors behind positive elements:

- The changes in society, communication technologies, training and information are so fast, that, when a plan is designed for an infrastructure, it has to be sufficiently open and flexible that its facilities can adapt to every requirement and to the changing needs of the population;
- Placing the project within the Strategic Plan of the Municipality of Alcobendas has allowed the Municipality of Alcobendas to have better planning and contributed to that led to effective results. (Within the new strategic plan "Design Alcobendas 2020" there is a strategic goal for Education and Culture, considered one of the most important engines of economic and social development of the city.)
- A high participation of citizens during the planning activities, who had for a long time asked for cultural activities and spaces.
- Holistic approach: the Centre of Arts not only supports national and international contemporary artists, but also provides people with opportunities for artistic creation through exhibitions, workshops, meetings, courses, conferences and other activities.
- Multidisciplinary concept focused on considering all forms of artistic expression in such as performing arts, cinema, music, design, architecture, sculpture and paintings.
- Commitment to Alcobendas historical heritage preservation: While the new building was not a material refurbishment of the old building of Casa de la Cultura the original functional and symbolic meanings were preserved; indeed, the new building eliminates the shortcomings of the former building and adds other functions.

Key factors behind negative elements:

- Possible project oversizing due to the demand overestimation; considering the current number of visitors, maybe also a smaller project would have been be satisfactory.
- In addition, the Art Centre of Alcobendas, due to its location, has not so many indirect beneficiaries, namely the 'non users' which indirectly benefit from the project.

- Limited ERDF role on the overall project. The project was already planned and contracted before the Madrid programme agreed to ERDF financing
- To date the project appears to have had a limited impact on the social inclusion of the immigrant population of the municipality.
- The Regional Programme strategy adopted by Community of Madrid to distribute a share of available funds to all municipalities (based on population) without a competitive selection process of the projects, led to an excessive fragmentation of the financial resources and diverse effects.
- Lack of net revenue generation. Municipality of Alcobendas finances almost all the activities and the operating expenses of the Centre. There are some activities generating revenues such as public and private conferences and there are also some public rates applied to certain activities, but they are largely insufficient to cover the operating costs.

References

- Memoria Anual Consejo de Rector of Socio Cultural Patronage of Municipality of Alcobendas
- Evaluación Final del Plan de Comunicación de los Programas Operativos FEDER y FSE de la Comunidad de Madrid"
- FOTOCASA.es
- Observatorio de la Cultura. Plan Estrategico Ciudad de Madrid (PECAM) 2012-2015
- Plan Disena Alcobendas
- Plan Estratégico de Turismo de la Ciudad de Madrid 2008-2011
- Plan Estratégico de Turismo de la Ciudad de Madrid 2012-2015
- Plan Estratégico Disena Alcobendas 2020

HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

Free publications:

- one copy:
via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>);
- more than one copy or posters/maps:
from the European Union's representations (http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm);
from the delegations in non-EU countries
(http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm);
by contacting the Europe Direct service (http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm)
or calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (*).

(*). The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>).

Priced subscriptions:

- via one of the sales agents of the Publications Office of the European Union
(http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_en.htm).

