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The Urban Lab of Europe !

The Mares de Madrid project Journal N° 3

Project led by the city of Madrid



**JOBS & SKILLS
IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY**



The MARES project

Since 2008, the economic crisis' impact in Madrid has produced several mutations. Social polarisation and spatial segregation dynamics have escalated, strengthening even more the income barrier between the north (exclusive urban services) and the south/ southeast (negative externalities concentration). The MARES project will initiate an urban and economic resilience strategy on employment through the social and solidarity economy in key industries to move forward a new model of productive matrix of the city.

Therefore, a comprehensive approach of actions will be deployed, based on four pillars:

Activating recovery processes, prototyping and co-designing disused public spaces.

Launching a competencies lab capable of promoting economic resilience strategies of civil society.

Fostering territorial economic innovation processes which generate a new economic fabric through social economy formulas and improve the competitiveness and sustainability of the existing productive schemes in the city.

Encouraging mechanisms for awareness raising, territorial economic revitalisation and cooperation among agents in order to articulate ecosystems allowing production diversification and more collective possibilities on employment and employability at local level.

The MARES project will launch in four city districts, Centro, Villaverde, Vallecas and Vicálvaro, four spaces called M.A.R.E.S. Every MAR will be specialised: M (mobility), A (food), R (recycling), E (energy) and S (social and care economy, common to the four MAR). These MARES will become a prototype of urban resilience on employment by encouraging social and solidarity economy on these strategic sectors. The project will generate economic activity and create stable jobs by deploying business models, principles and values of the social and solidarity economy. It will recover abandoned or disused common areas and make them available for the creation of new productive initiatives.

The content of this journal does not reflect the official opinion of the Urban Innovative Actions Initiative. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the journal lies entirely with the author.

Partnership:

- Ayuntamiento de Madrid
- Agencia para el Empleo de Madrid (AE)- Public Agency
- DINAMIA S. COOP. MAD (DN)- Private Company
- Grupo Cooperativo Tangente (TNG)- Private Company
- SIC ARQUITECTURA Y URBANISMO SLP (SIC)- Private Company
- Vivero de Iniciativas Ciudadanas (VIC)- NGO
- Todo por la Praxis (TxP)- NGO
- Fundación Acción contra el Hambre (ACH)- NGO
- NUEVO ESPACIO INDUSTRIAL MADRID, S.L.- ECOOO- Private Company

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1. Executive Summary

Mares de Madrid, after the opening of the first Mar, is now fully working at the development of the social and solidarity economic projects that it has supported since its beginning while finalizing the works on the other three Mar.

In this third issue of the journal we intend to give the sense of and to offer insights into:

- the contextual implementation of the broader city's administration strategic frameworks around the social and solidarity economy and spatial equalization across neighborhoods;
- the development stage of the involved economic projects with recent emerging trends such as the formation of mixed and secondary cooperatives;
- the incremental opening-up of public procurement opportunities and their role in supporting the projects and forging new alliances within the social economy;

- the workings of the newly open “Mar of Energy” with its challenges in terms of flexibility and adaptability of the space, its management and relationship with the local context

In the last section, the journal addresses four looming challenges and opportunities that revolve around the need of:

- 1) Envisioning and organizing the long-term sustainability of the policy;
- 2) Building a social market and doing it as rapidly as possible;
- 3) Aligning Mares de Madrid's economic projects with other forms of city government social economy's support and development; and
- 4) Articulating the local and the sectorial dimensions of the initiative and doing it in an effective way.

2. An evolving strategy context: supporting the social and solidarity economy while equalising spatial opportunities

Since its inception, Mares has been conceived as the most experimental initiative in the context of an overall strategic local policy overhaul aimed at developing the social and solidarity economy while pursuing at the same time spatial justice. As already briefly mentioned in Journal n.1, two strategies play a significant role in this regard: the strategy for the development of the social and solidarity economy (“Estrategia de Economía social y solidaria”) and the strategy of territorial equalisation (“Estrategia de reequilibrio territorial”).

Regarding the first aspect, the city has officially presented the strategy at the beginning of October following a participative process that has implied the involvement of actors in the social and solidarity economy both in the analysis of the sector’s needs and in the design of the actions that have been later included in the policy. The first component of the strategy process has been the analysis of the current conditions of the sector, analysis that has confirmed how even overall very marginal in quantitative terms – roughly 1% of the total workforce is currently employed in the SSE in Madrid – the social and solidarity economy currently employes almost 19.000 people with the largest concentration of initiatives being active in the “social third sector” (6.000). Considered this context, the critical strategic goal pursued by the city administration is the expansion of the social

and solidarity economy increasing its quantitative and qualitative relevance in the local economy.

To pursue such a goal the strategy has set four main objectives: the creation of territorial ecosystems for the development of the EES, the positioning of the EES at the center of local policy-making across the different sectors, the generation of knowledge and innovation for the development of the EES and the set-up of an integrated system for the support and strengthening of the EES.

Particularly relevant for “Mares de Madrid” is the second goal, that implies the formation of four “territorial development ecosystems” in the macro-areas of Almendra Central, Corona Sur-Suroeste, Corona Este y Corona Norte (the districts of the four “Mar” are all comprised in these areas). Functional to the formation of these four ecosystems is the opening of local hubs – defined “social and solidarity workshops” (Oficinas de la Economía social y solidaria) – that will ensure support to ESS actors by facilitating and channeling funding, by promoting outreach and organizing activities across neighborhoods, supporting the creation of sectorial clusters (as in the case of the “Mar”) and by setting-up collaborations for the exchange of knowledge and innovations in the field.

The newly created “EES Consulting Committee” (Consejo consultivo de la EES) – comprising the

DIAGNÓSTICO DE LA ESS EN LA CIUDAD DE MADRID

OBJETIVO

Analizar la situación de la ESS en la ciudad de Madrid, tomando en cuenta la perspectiva territorial, sectorial y jurídico-administrativa e integrando en el análisis a los/las distintos/as agentes implicados/as, de cara a establecer un diagnóstico de la situación y un marco de oportunidad para su desarrollo en la ciudad de Madrid.

FORO MUNICIPAL DE ESS

TEMAS TRATADOS EN EL FORO

Presentación de el "Diagnóstico de la ESS en la ciudad de Madrid".

Presentación del proceso de trabajo participativo de la estrategia.

Primera reunión de los grupos de trabajo estratégicos.

TRES REUNIONES DE GRUPOS DE TRABAJO ESTRATÉGICOS

TEMAS TRATADOS EN LAS REUNIONES

Validación de los objetivos estratégicos y del marco de oportunidad procedentes de la fase anterior de diagnóstico.

Elaboración de metas y escenarios esperados.

Elaboración de líneas de actuación y acciones para alcanzar las metas previstas.

Identificación y análisis de factores de freno y de impulso del plan para el diseño de una estrategia resiliente.

GRUPOS

1. Herramientas para el desarrollo del tejido productivo y para la financiación de la ESS.
2. ESS ligada al territorio.
3. ESS ligada a la gestión de los servicios públicos.
4. Desarrollo sectorial de la ESS.
5. Sensibilización e incidencia de la ESS.
6. Innovación y conocimiento en la ESS.

PARTICIPANTES

Expertos/as de ESS que forman parte de este ámbito en Madrid.



NÚMERO DE INSTITUCIONES Y ENTIDADES PARTICIPANTES:

78

PERSONAS EXPERTAS PARTICIPANTES:

118

GRUPO DE CONTRASTE

TEMAS TRATADOS EN LAS REUNIONES

Resiliencia del plan.

Identificación de factores de freno e impulso que pueden afectar a la implementación de la estrategia de ESS.

PARTICIPANTES

Personal de las entidades representativas de la ESS en Madrid.

Personal municipal del Ayuntamiento y de las diferentes áreas.

TRABAJO CON LAS ÁREAS MUNICIPALES

TEMAS TRATADOS EN LAS REUNIONES

Aportaciones de las áreas municipales a la estrategia.

Involucración de las áreas en la ejecución de las acciones de la estrategia

PROCESO PARTICIPATIVO EN MADRID DECIDE

OBJETIVO

Recoger la opinión y aportaciones de los y las ciudadanos/as de Madrid sobre la estrategia

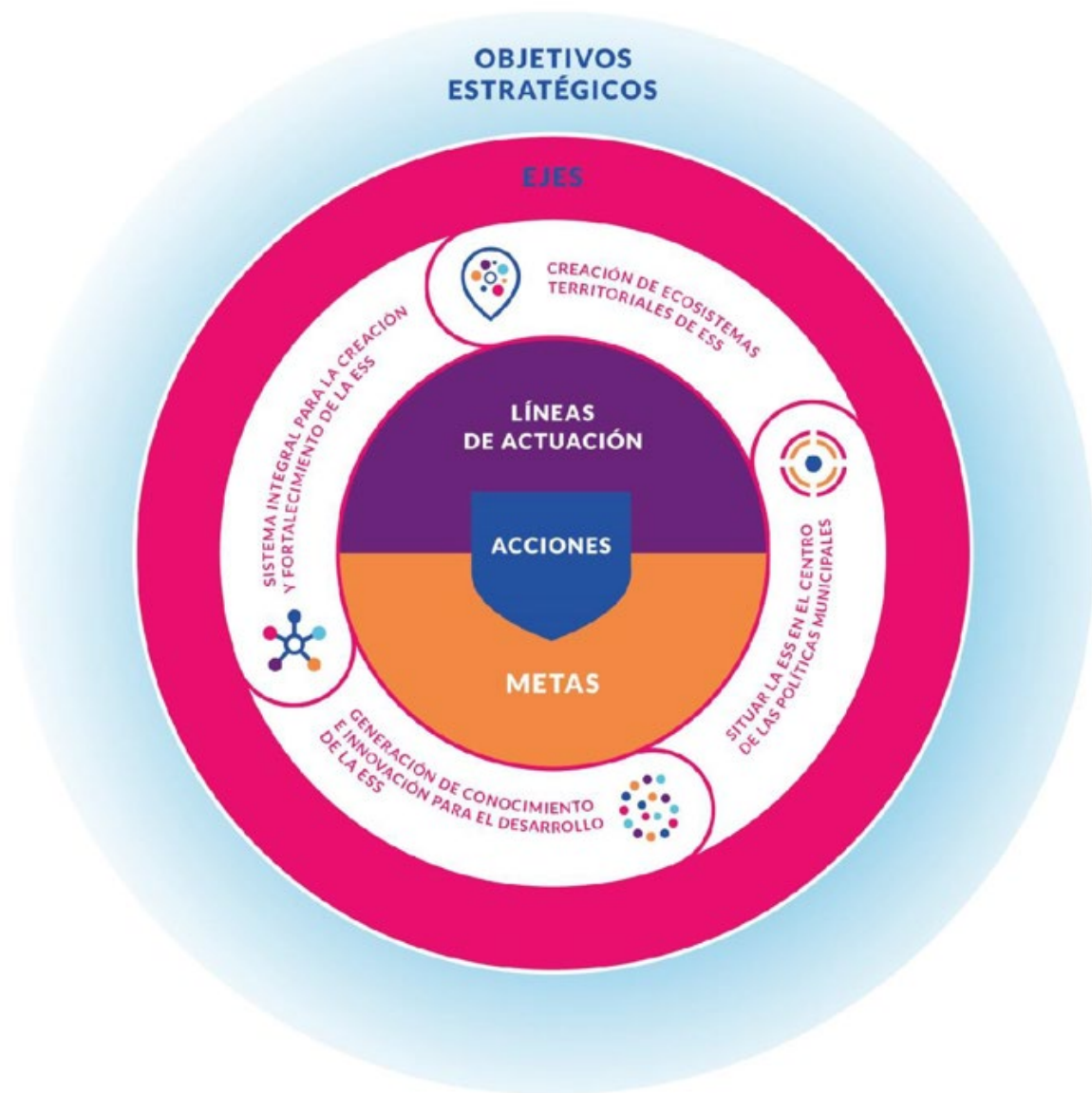


Fig. 1 and 2. The process and the four main objectives for the design of the “Strategy for the development of the Social and Solidarity Economy.”

main actors in the ESS – has played a vital role in the design of the strategy and will play a vital role also in its implementation and monitoring. Besides the launch of the Mares de Madrid initiative and the opening of some “Social and Solidarity Economy Workshops” across neighborhoods, the economic development sector of the administration – the office responsible of the strategy – has in fact launched two lines of funding, one reserved to associations

and the other reserved to the capitalization of cooperatives and of “labor societies” (Sociedad laboral). According to the strategy, the funding that will be allocated to the ensemble of these activities will amount to a little less than 6 million euros while new related initiatives in the fields of social innovation, sustainability and energy innovation – a focus that is shared by Mares de Madrid – have been funded with respectively 30 and 50 million Euros circa.

One more framework of reference is the decentralisation process that, launched in 2016, aims at redistributing powers and budgets to the 21 districts that make the territory of the City of Madrid. A qualifying aspect of such process has been the launch of a “fund of territorial equalization” (Fondo de Reequilibrio Territorial) that through the funding of initiatives in the areas of cultural and social activities, housing, employment and public infrastructures aims at redistributing public expenditure towards the city’s areas that are more exposed to social vulnerability. Historically in Madrid, the great territorial divide has been between a wealthy centre and north-west on one side and a deprived south and south-east on the other. A divide that also the Mares de Madrid initiative has intended to address by locating the four Mar in the neighbourhoods of Puente de Valleca, Vivalcaro, Villaverde and Centro that share – although with different measures, being the first three among the most “vulnerable” – widespread conditions of social vulnerability.

But how to define and measure social vulnerability across the urban space? To respond to such question the city has partnered with the local University of Carlos III of Madrid coming to the design of a composite vulnerability index based on five families of indicators: population, socio-economic status, economic activity, urban development and care needs.

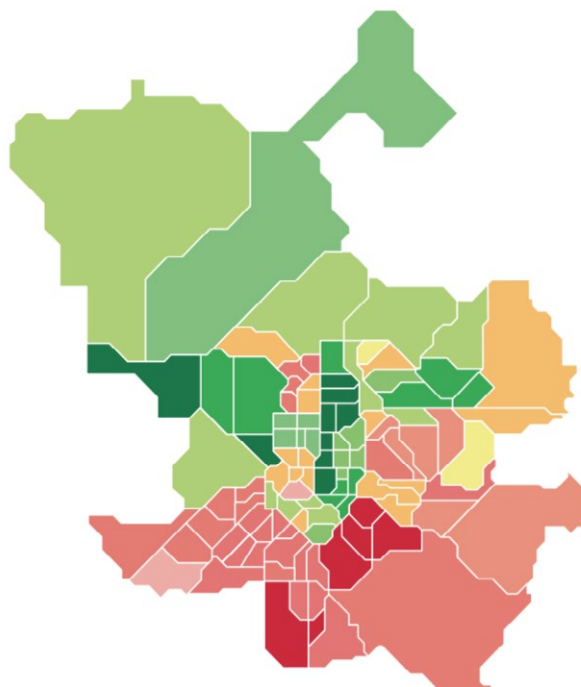
The performance of the 121 neighbourhoods (“barrios administrativos”) in respect of these indicators – that have a different weight – determine the score of the 21 districts regarding overall vulnerability and their position in a scale going from the most to the least vulnerable in the city. Based on this assessment and through the launch of several calls for projects at the district level – that comprises several neighbourhoods (“barrios”) and are governed by the so-called “juntas de districtos” - the city administration redistributes funding across the city favouring the most vulnerable areas. As far as its spatial redistributive effects, as an example, out of the roughly 30 million euros of the whole program, the district of Vallecas gets circa 2.600.000 euros of funding for a population of almost 230.000 inhabitants while the wealthy district of Retiro for a population of nearly 120.000 inhabitants gets instead a total of roughly 780.000 Euros.

Through this mechanism, more than 411 projects proposed by residents, organised groups and also public governance actors have been selected based on assessments shared by the city administration and the single district authorities. The role played by so-called “local fora” (foros locales) – consultive institutions that currently involve circa 5.000 residents organised at the neighbourhood level - in this process is also to be mentioned.

MAPA DE VULNERABILIDAD

DISTRITOS POR ORDEN DE VULNERABILIDAD

PUENTE DE VALLECAS
 VILLAVERDE
 USERA
 CARABANCHEL
 LATINA
 VILLA DE VALLECAS
 VICÁLVARO
 SAN BLAS-CANILLEJAS
 TETUÁN
 CENTRO
 MORATALAZ
 CIUDAD LINEAL
 ARGANZUELA
 HORTALEZA
 BARAJAS
 FUENCARRAL-EL PARDO
 CHAMBERÍ
 SALAMANCA
 MONCLOA-ARAVACA
 CHAMARTÍN
 RETIRO



DISTRIBUCIÓN FONDO PARA EL REEQUILIBRIO TERRITORIAL 2017

(A partir del índice de vulnerabilidad de barrios y distritos)

	DISTRITO	Vulnerabilidad	Población	Distribución Presupuesto Reequilibrio (teniendo en cuenta Población)	+ Equipos Actuación Distrital	+ Planes Integrales de Barrio	TOTAL DISTRITOS
1	13. Puente de Vallecas	6,9%	227.928	1.846.780,6 €	400.000	400.000	2.646.781
2	17. Villaverde	6,1%	142.661	961.239,3 €	400.000	200.000	1.561.239
3	12. Usera	6,0%	134.892	783.922,3 €	400.000	400.000	1.583.922
4	11. Carabanchel	6,0%	243.860	1.611.063,8 €	400.000	400.000	2.411.064
5	10. Latina	5,5%	234.414	1.429.724,6 €	400.000		1.829.725
6	18. Villa de Vallecas	5,3%	103.676	698.535,2 €	400.000	200.000	1.298.535
7	19. Vicálvaro	5,2%	69.864	422.910,0 €	400.000	200.000	1.022.910
8	20. San Blas	5,2%	154.534	759.932,4 €	400.000	400.000	1.559.932
9	06. Tetuán	5,0%	153.674	763.732,8 €	400.000	400.000	1.563.733
10	01. Centro	4,8%	132.307	628.895,7 €	400.000		1.028.896
11	14. Moratalaz	4,7%	94.475	382.875,2 €	400.000	200.000	982.875
12	15. Ciudad Lineal	4,6%	212.962	1.089.420,8 €	400.000		1.489.421
13	02. Arganzuela	4,2%	152.114	616.185,4 €	400.000	400.000	1.016.185
14	16. Hortaleza	4,1%	180.360	715.336,3 €	400.000	200.000	1.315.336
15	21. Barajas	4,0%	46.921	175.835,9 €	400.000		575.836
16	08. Fuencarral-El Pardo	4,0%	238.678	955.235,6 €	400.000	200.000	1.555.236
17	07. Chamberí	3,7%	137.593	454.226,1 €	400.000		854.226
18	04. Salamanca	3,7%	144.083	487.802,4 €	400.000		887.802
19	09. Moncloa-Aravaca	3,7%	117.146	368.963,2 €	400.000		768.963
20	05. Chamartín	3,6%	143.557	468.051,9 €	400.000		868.052
21	03. Retiro	3,6%	118.791	379.330,5 €	400.000		779.331
				16.000.000,0 €	8.400.000	3.200.000	27.600.000
							1.945.283
							29.545.283*

*El resto del presupuesto del Fondo de Reequilibrio Territorial corresponde a actuaciones plurianuales que continúan de 2016.

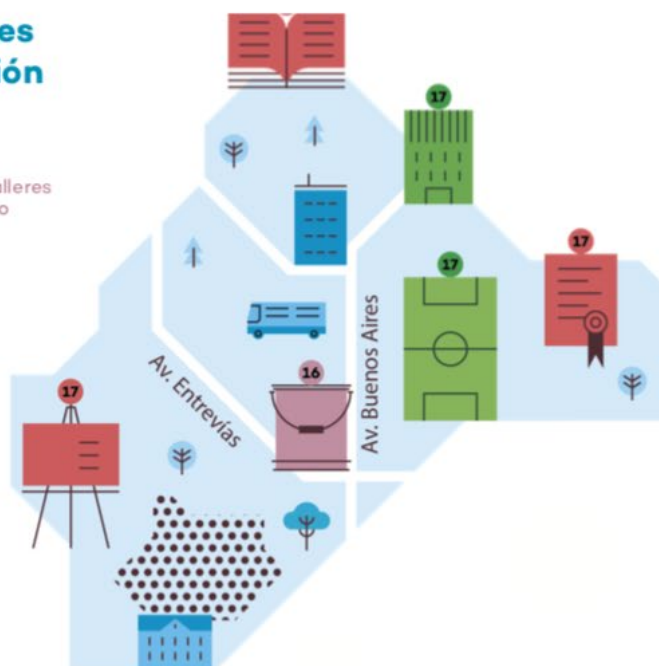
LEYENDA PARA MAPA POR DISTRITOS De acuerdo a orden de vulnerabilidad

- Actuaciones sociales
- Actuaciones de vivienda
- Actuaciones de empleo
- Actuaciones de mejora urbana
- 16 Actuaciones continuación de 2016
- 17 Actuaciones 2017
- (*) Pendiente de viabilidad

PUENTE DE VALLECAS

Actuaciones continuación de 2016

Vallecas Labora: talleres formación y empleo



Actuaciones 2017

Universidad Social de Verano

Planes Integrales de Barrio (PIBA) de Triángulo del Agua y El Pozo-Entrevías

Vallecas Incluye: programa de inserción laboral

Adecuación y mejora de inmuebles del distrito

Actuaciones en centros deportivos municipales e instalaciones deportivas básicas del distrito

Fig. 3,4,5 The spatialization and scale of the vulnerability index across the city and the initiatives supported by the fund in the district of Puente de Vallecas.

3. Economic projects are growing in number and complexity

In the meanwhile economic projects supported by Mares de Madrid at different stages of their development have become 240, 40 of which are to be considered fully “incubated” in the four spaces – three provisional and one definitive, the Mar of Energy and Care (see the following section) - currently available. Beyond the design of a complex monitoring system aimed at better managing and sharing all the related information, the initiative’s coalition of actors has recently conducted an internal evaluation whose outcomes have been positive but accompanied by a push to strengthen and accelerate the support to some of the economic projects that appear to be ready to go to the market. Among them, we can mention cooperatives working on energy retrofitting, in food distribution, consulting, home care, sustainable mobility and delivery services (see the already published “Zoom-In” for more information on some of these projects). Several of these projects are now finalising the last steps in the path of support offered by so-called specific services – among them, business-plan development and communication strategy – while reaching audiences that tend to go beyond the four neighbourhoods that are directly involved in the initiative. In this regard, an

opportunity to present themselves to the public and to test possible collaborations with other projects has been the first Mares Fair – held at the Mar of Energy at the beginning of October - that has hosted a range of projects’ presentations and other, related events.

A significant trend in recent months has been the development of projects envisioning the establishment of “secondary cooperatives” and “mixed cooperatives”. Mares de Madrid is supporting the formation of cooperatives that either combine the offer of different, specialised services and products within the same organisation or specialise in services to be offered to other actors in the EES economy. An excellent example of this trend is the Revive project that is presented more in length in the box below. At the same time, and particularly in reference with the areas of education and care, the effort has been to explore the possibility of forming cooperatives involving both users and providers of specific services that are now delivered by large scale, mainstream companies. Projects in these areas aim, as an example, to involve both parents and professionals in the formation of new cooperatives managing childcare services or home-care services for the elderly.

4. The opening-up of public procurement opportunities

Efforts to open up opportunities in the processes of public procurement have been intensifying in recent months. The areas of recycling, care and food appear to be the most promising in these regard with already one procurement process – involving the collection of used clothes – having integrated for the first time some social clauses aimed at privileging SSE companies. As previously mentioned in previous issues, the participation of newly founded cooperatives to these bids also implies the set-up of relationships with other SSE actors in operation in different regions of the country, especially regions such as the Basque Country, Navarra, Catalunya and the Balearic Islands where the social economy is particularly strong. These actors are involved in mentoring and exchange activities such as field trips and training opportunities but, in some instances, they can play a larger, more significant role. In the case of the used cloths' collection bid, the RECU Madrid initiative, currently active in the Mar de Reciclaje, has been supported by the Catalan company Solidanca in the design of their participation to the winning bid. The involvement of senior, already established companies appear strategic in both ensuring the quality of the services and the organisational growth of the local provider that – in this case in particular – is supposed to become fully self-reliant in three to four years. More procurement opportunities encompassing special clauses for social economy actors are supposed to be opened soon - more bids about the collection of used oils and technological waste should follow in 2019 – while larger opportunities in education, food and home

care are supposed to open up in the next years. In particular, the most significant procurement process in the city involves trash collection – managed by different large private companies – and is supposed to be put on a bid by 2020, at a time when the Mar of Recycling should be fully operating, and an ecosystem of cooperatives working on the topic should be in place. Overall, the city administration's long-term goal is to go far beyond the 0.7% of public procurement currently insured by so-called “insertion enterprises”, a goal made feasible both by the launch of the social and solidarity economy strategy (see the previous section), the further implementation of the Mares de Madrid Initiative and by changes in procurement national and EU regulations.

In the meanwhile, other exploratory initiatives that may be relevant in the opening of new procurement opportunities have been launched in the field of education. A so-called “learning community” (Comunidad de aprendizaje) is currently working on the issue of the quality of school meals, a line of work that in a system where each school – both public and private – decide for its own catering service could open-up promising opportunities for projects currently incubated at the Mar of Food. Similarly, the already mentioned mixed cooperative being set-up in the field of child-care is currently being granted pilot contracts for the management of related public facilities in four neighbourhoods in the city. Such contracts are “pilot contracts” that, if successful, may become a standard procurement procedure aimed at improving the

quality both of working conditions and of services offered. Overall, the more comprehensive policy rationale of all these efforts appear to be quite clear: to innovate ways in which certain services are conceived and managed, to diversify the field

of procurement actors away from the dominance of large, national if not multinational companies, to focus on the betterment of both working conditions and services' quality by establishing a new cooperative and democratic market.



Fig. 6 and 7. Economic projects' promoters discussing potential collaborations, presenting themselves at the first Mares Fair

The Revive initiative, an excellent example of a “secondary cooperative.”

The Revive initiative is an excellent example of the complexity of both the knowledge involved in many economic projects incubated by Mares and of the product innovation that they are trying to design. Revive’s focus is the bio-energetic transition of the built environment with a specific target on the retrofitting needs of homeowners and condominiums on the one hand and of public institutions on the other. The background of the project’s promoters ranges from architecture, economics, engineering, international cooperation and involve an interest for and support of ideas of socio-ecological transitions towards a more socially equitable and environmentally sustainable society. And the central purpose of this “project of projects” – as the promoters themselves call it, referring essentially to a “secondary cooperative” – is to offer consulting service combining auditing, project design, construction and credit in the field.

One of Revive’s key focuses is the “social” dimension of the design and management of retrofitting projects and their potentialities concerning setting-up a labour-intensive economy. The strategic goal is, in fact, the structuring of a neighbourhood-based system of small enterprises able to respond to the local demand for energy retrofitting while fighting unemployment. In this perspective, the active support of consumers’ awareness and sovereignty is essential in unleashing the economic and social potential that resides in this market, that has to be set-up in ways alternative to the ones promoted by the traditional corporate sector.

The project’s challenges are many: from identifying the conditions of adaptability of specific services to the wide diversity of social and technological conditions that can be observed on the terrain to the economic sustainability – for both providers and consumers – of specific retrofitting modes of intervention; from how to design a rapid but high-quality auditing and assessment tools able to give a sense of the investment needed for different consumers and situations to how to establish an engagement protocol able to move from a first contact to the finalization of projects, from how to build opportunity of higher scale interventions involving entire city blocks – in this case the city administration’s support may be critical - to how instead build also the capacity to produce single-apartments’ tailored interventions.

What has been and will be the role of Mares de Madrid in the shaping of this rather ambitious project? First, it has offered a platform for the professionals that are currently involved to meet and to make their ideas and practices converge towards a shared plan. Second, it has allowed the set-up of an organisation context – mainly through the “learning community” (Comunidad de aprendizaje) focusing on energy retrofitting – for the pooling of information, resources and practices already in place in Madrid. Third, it has allowed on one side to build some initial audience for its services at the neighbourhood level while providing the tools to set-up a business and communication strategy to reach a wider audience. Revive is already participating to project competitions and to some public procurement processes but the most significant challenge will be, as mentioned, the set-up of credible solutions for the broad and fragmented audience of urban dwellers, professional and small enterprises aiming at retrofitting their spaces while saving on ecological and economic resources.

5. How a Mar works: a look inside the daily life of the Mar of Energy

While works are continuing on the Food, Recycling and Mobility Mar, the Mar of Energy has been officially inaugurated in September 2018. Its dynamic and workings are proving to be a source of critical information for both the initiative as a whole and the management of the other Mar that will open in their final design during 2019. Four areas appear to be of particular interest: 1) the ways to use the space; 2) the decisional and participative mechanisms that preside over them; 3) the relationships with the local community and 4) the rules of engagements for both economic projects and learning communities.

First of all, the actual uses of the space and their management that—since the beginning—has been a relevant issue in the design and programming of the four Mar. The Mar is supposed to be a hybrid space combining functions, uses and populations that rarely cohabit under one single roof: it's a space of work for the ones involved in the economic projects that are there incubated, it's a space of collection of early information for the people who want to become involved in the initiative as a whole, it's a place for learning and training for the ones who attend educational and social events or are part of a "learning community" (Comunidad de aprendizaje), it's a place for organizing and animating the relationship between the initiative, the projects and the overall needs of the local community.

The project of the Mar of Energy – that has reclaimed a community center built in the 1980s (see previous issue of the Journal) - has been conceived since the beginning as a flexible space

organized on three levels with a more event-oriented area at the ground floor, a co-working area at the second and a work-meeting area at the third. In the co-working area, participants to the specific economic projects share an open space with no fixed places (besides boxes where to put belongings at the end of the day) while the single rooms located on the second floor have to be reserved in advance, except one that is always available for the activities of the incubated economic projects that may use them for internal meetings, meetings with clients and with other projects or with the Mares "specific services"). The many social events that happen at the Mar - from training session to workshops on relevant topics to other events promoted by local groups - take place instead in the larger room that is located at the ground floor. Despite the great demand of use, as of now, the space seems to be responding well to such contextual and potentially conflicting uses and according to the ones more closely involved in its management "a solution to problems of space has always been found, in a flexible manner". The furniture too is key in this flexibility and adaptability: since its original design, it has been conceived to be as much versatile and mobile as possible and, for example, this makes possible to use - under good weather conditions - also the public space just outside of the Mar that is seldom used by passers-by, being relatively secluded. In this sense, the furniture is also being "tested" in the perspective of the opening of the other Mar, where the same degree of spatial flexibility and intelligence will be required.

Second, the formal and informal management dimension of this complexity that, in the case of the Mar de Energia, is produced in a rather flexible way through the combination of some formal and informal institutions and mechanism that are based on the overall goal of building a sense of ownership and belonging among the regular users of the space. There is a coordination committee that meets monthly and is participated by the Mar coordinator, the members of the different working areas that integrate Mares de Madrid – the specific services, the agitation, communication – and by the participants to the economic projects that are incubated. Such a committee shares an agenda of the use of the space across time of the Mar while taking fundamental decisions about its planning and daily workings. At the same time, and regarding much more trivial day to day aspects, self-organisation is what contributes to the management of the place with users resolving issues and problems on a day to day basis also relying on a limited budget that is provided by the city administration.

Third, the rules of entry and of engagements that involve both the economic projects and the learning communities that are the most relevant organised actors regularly using the space of the Mar. To be incubated, economic projects need to have a certain degree of maturation that is assessed by the Mares coordination that at the same time propose a contract to the project that implies the use – in a flexible manner that we described – of the space. The incubation contract lasts one, renewable, year, a circumstance that is based on the guiding principle that the contractualized incubation of economic projects must be transitional to ensure the ability of the space to accommodate new projects. Projects have to be coherent with the thematic concentration of the Mar – in this case energy

and care, as care does not have its own specific Mar but will be present across the four Mar – but in the case of the Mar of Energy some projects are truly cross-sectoral.

One more aspect that is to be mentioned in this regard is the presence within the premises of a “social economy workshop” (Oficina de la Economía social) that, as specified in the first paragraph of this journal, supports other social economy projects in a non-sectorial manner and mostly through the channelling of incentives and other forms of support. Being the medium-term goal of the city to integrate more closely the four Mar and such Oficinas, collaborations are already underway at the Mar of Energy between the coordination and the three public servants that work at the Oficina.

Other key actors in the use of the space are the eight “learning communities” (Comunidades de aprendizaje) – touching not only on issues of energy and care but also on transversal organisational issues that are of interest for all projects.

Finally, the last issue is the role played by the Mar within the local community. The negotiation between the Mar as a “community place” open to all and a specialised place for the development and clustering of economic projects in the field of energy and care has to be daily negotiated in the attempt to find the best and most productive balance. This is done mostly asking the Mares de Madrid coordination to screen and select proposals of activities that continuously come from both within and outside the Mares network. The initial risk of the Mar of Energy was in fact “to die of too much success”: in fact its central location, the diversity of its population and the relevance of certain social groups especially interested in the values and goals of the project – mostly, “consumption aware” middle classes

and younger generations – exercised a positive pressure on the new centre. But these same characteristics make the neighbourhood a good starting point for the set-up of many of the projects that are incubated at the Mar, making “outreach” to the local population one of the key activities of the Mar as supported by the “agitation” team of the initiative. Some of this outreach happens also happens in the form of the establishment of structured relationships with local actors - trade associations, neighbourhood groups – and through the participation to local fora and organisations. An area of particular

engagement is the relationship with so-called “employment boards” (mesas de Empleo) with the aim of tightly integrating the activities of the Mar with the broader employment policies and institutions that are active at the local level. In the same vein, relationships with schools are proving to be very important in the sensibilization of the local population. All these activities converge in making the local community more aware of the goals and values of the whole initiative - and also in building a market for the products and services offered by its economic projects.

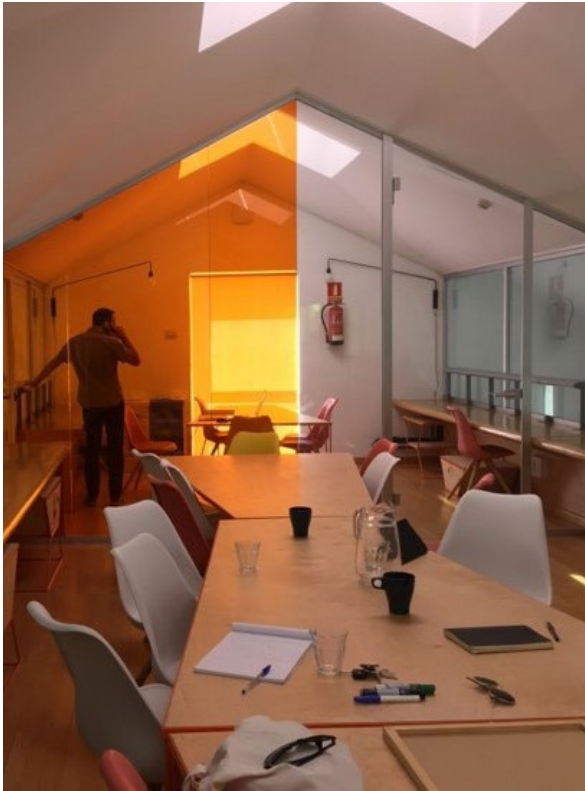


Fig. 8,9 Economic Projects’ boxes and the meeting rooms on the first floor.

6. Challenges

As the initiative makes progresses putting economic projects on the market and opening – by the next springtime – all four Mar some challenges make themselves evident.

The first and foremost concerns the organizational transition that initiative is experiencing. The inherited organization model and taxonomy of tools and actions is being challenged by the entry of the initiative in a new stage where the economic projects, the learning communities and the coordinating committees of the Mar are taking center-stage. To understand how to flexibly adapt to this new situation dropping the tools that are not more in line with it and inventing new-ones represents a relevant challenge for an initiative that has been characterized, since the very beginning, by a very high level of organizational complexity and sophistication.

The second concerns the mixing and balancing, in the dynamic of both the economic projects and the four Mar, different social groups and different kinds of social capital. Several of the projects currently incubated target consumption-aware social groups that are mostly concentrated among

the middle classes while including a workforce that is characterized by a very high human capital. Other projects, as we rapidly approach to the opening of the other Mar that are localized in working class neighborhoods, will have to prove their ability to be labour intensive, to include a workforce with a different human capital and to reach – always with a focus on the transition and democratization of consumption models – a socially diverse public.

The third concerns the integration of the four Mar – and in wider terms, of the Mares de Madrid initiative – in the wider policy and administrative framework of the city of Madrid once the UIA funds and support will be over. After October 2019, the four Mar will have to become ordinary tools of the broader “social and solidarity economy” policy framework of the city and no more experimental spaces linked to a provisional programme. If this is key for the survival and further expansion of the initiative, it will also be key to ensure at the same time that such “mainstreaming” be produced while retaining the flexibility, porosity and experimentalism that characterise both the spaces and the operations of the initiative.

Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) is an Initiative of the European Union that provides urban areas throughout Europe with resources to test new and unproven solutions to address urban challenges. Based on article 8 of ERDF, the Initiative has a total ERDF budget of EUR 372 million for 2014-2020.

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