

# **The value of public libraries in society:**

## **Barcelona Province Municipal Libraries Network (MLN) experience**

**Abridged version**

Department of Studies and Foresight  
Library Services Management Office



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Barcelona**

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# CONTENTS

Introduction .....	5
Description of the methodology used .....	6
The value of the MLN's libraries in society .....	12
Cultural domain .....	13
Social domain .....	18
Economic domain .....	25
Educational / informative domain .....	28
Conclusions: 10 points for enhancing the public library's value in society .....	32
References .....	35
Acknowledgements .....	36



# Introduction

The libraries included in the province of Barcelona's Municipal Libraries Network (MLN) form part of a project implemented jointly by the local councils in the province of Barcelona and Barcelona Provincial Council. Equal access, economic sustainability, efficiency, service quality and connectedness are the five dimensions used to measure the evolution of the management model and the provision of library services in the province. Furthermore, the decision to implement a proximity model has enabled libraries to evolve and improve their services in line with societal changes and reflect the citizen profile they serve, becoming effective arenas for culture, education, reading promotion and social cohesion.

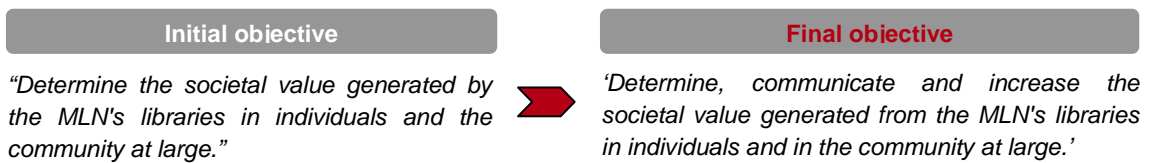
The MLN has a long track record in the collection and statistical analysis of data that has enabled it to develop a powerful information system for carrying out large-scale evaluation projects. However, no studies have been carried out to date to determine MLN libraries' societal value in their respective catchment areas. Aware of this need, the Library Services Management Office (LSMO) and Barcelona Provincial Council's Department of Studies and Foresight (currently the Planning and Evaluation Service) agreed to carry out a study to analyse the MLN's public value, that is, to determine this model's capability for generating collective value for citizens. This pioneering initiative in Spain has been possible thanks to the growing availability of statistical data, the proliferation of similar studies and the favourable context.

*'The value of the MLN's libraries in society'* is complemented by the study *'The return on investment of MLN libraries'* (Luria & Pintor, 2013). The latter study provides information on libraries' economic benefits by calculating their return on investment for the general public. In its conclusions, it calculates that for every euro of public money invested in MLN libraries, a direct benefit of €2.25 is generated (if the indirect benefits are also included, the return on investment is €4.25 for each euro invested). This result is comparable with other leading library networks in other countries.

# Description of the methodology used

In the present economic context, marked by budget restrictions and the emergence of new social needs, it is very important to obtain rigorous evidence for identifying and promoting the public services provided to citizens. In order to be able to respond to this need, Barcelona Provincial Council considered that part of the answer was to assess the social role played by MLN libraries in our society.

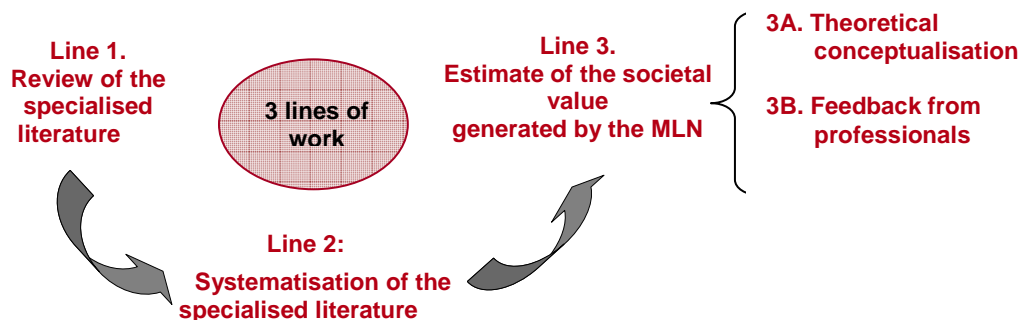
From this initial proposal, and given the difficulty in obtaining systematised information concerning certain intangible social benefits provided by the MLN, the project's objective underwent a process of refinement during the course of the study, as shown in Figure 1 below. Thus, for the first time, the methodological exercise performed provides a systematised and practical conceptual framework for all library services wishing to generate societal value in their local area and disseminate the value they are already producing.



**Figure 1. Evolution of the study's initial objective**

Source: Authors.

The methodology proposed has been developed by the authors as a continuation along the lines of work described by other authors (Huysmans & Oomes, 2012; Berryman, 2005). Its goal is to create, step by step, a shared methodology that is capable of providing an aggregate approach to the estimation of ‘societal value’. Accordingly, the figure below shows the analysis performed for each of the three separate and sequential lines of work that have structured this study:



**Figure 2. Working methodology of the study**

Source: Authors.

The process was organised in two phases:

- **Conceptual phase** (from April 2012 to May 2013)

During this phase, the specialised literature was reviewed and systematised in order to provide a preliminary appraisal of the societal value generated by the MLN (lines 1, 2 and 3A). This work was carried out by the LSMO together with the Department of Studies and Foresight, using internal resources based on the information available at that time.

- **Feedback phase** (from September 2013 to January 2014)

During this phase, the vision of the professionals working in the libraries and the territory was included in order to compare, validate and complement the work carried out during the conceptual phase (line 3B). Around thirty experts took part this phase, coordinated by the LSMO.

## **Line 1: Review of the specialised literature**

### **Contextualisation**

As indicated in the specialised literature, public libraries, as spaces open to the citizenry as a whole, with free, universal access, have become consolidated as key cultural, social and educational agents in modern society. In other words, by carrying out its functions in such diverse and fundamental spheres as a society's social, economic, cultural or educational life, the public library has become consolidated as a community agent with a real capacity to contribute to the social transformation of its environment, while not forgetting the complementary contributions made by other factors and interventions.

However, although it acknowledges the 'societal value'<sup>1</sup> generated by library services as a public good, the specialised literature also points out the complexity entailed in measuring this value, insofar as it is mostly associated with the creation of intangible social benefits. Accordingly, in the case of values that cannot be valued economically, their measurement or calculation necessarily implies addressing a large quantity of limitations related both to the study's intrinsic nature and to the difficulty in establishing robust causality relationships (Kelly et al., 2002).

In fact, even though it has been the subject of several research projects and studies, measuring societal value is still today a rare and heterogeneously performed practice (Berryman, 2005). Consequently, the lack of a shared methodology, key for maximising the quality of the analysis of societal value, has meant that most studies have approached this subject from a sectoral basis, using custom-developed methodologies.

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<sup>1</sup> Although we have chosen to talk in terms of 'value in society', the specialised literature also uses the terms 'societal value', 'social impact', 'social benefit' or 'social capital' to describe the social benefits generated by public libraries.

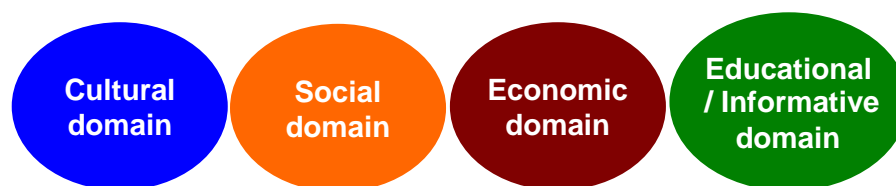
Thus, a number of library systems or services have used unpublished methodologies<sup>2</sup> to determine the societal value created by their library service (Debono, 2002) and have tended to focus on a particular social benefit, such as the role of the public library in fostering social inclusion (Canadian Urban Libraries Council, 2010). With some exceptions (Huysmans & Oomes, 2012; Berryman, 2005), very few studies have attempted to go further and provide an aggregate view of all the social benefits that public libraries can generate in their environment.

### Study of the specialised literature

Given the context stated above, this line of work has focused on analysing the most salient contributions made by international research, studies or reference frameworks to determining the social benefits generated by public libraries. Accordingly, more than one hundred sources of information that were considered relevant have been reviewed with the goal of accounting for the benefits generated by public libraries in their catchment area as a function of their degree of interrelation with it. This exercise, never performed before within the MLN, has sought specifically to identify the social benefits that public libraries could generate in their catchment area from a two-fold perspective:

- Benefits for the *individual*, basically in terms of the transformation of skills and knowledge.
- Benefits for the *community*, in terms of the transformation of the situation and relation dynamics prevailing in society.

The descriptive analysis has been structured as a double-entry matrix, that is, analysing the four social impact domains of the public library described in the literature from the individual/community perspective:



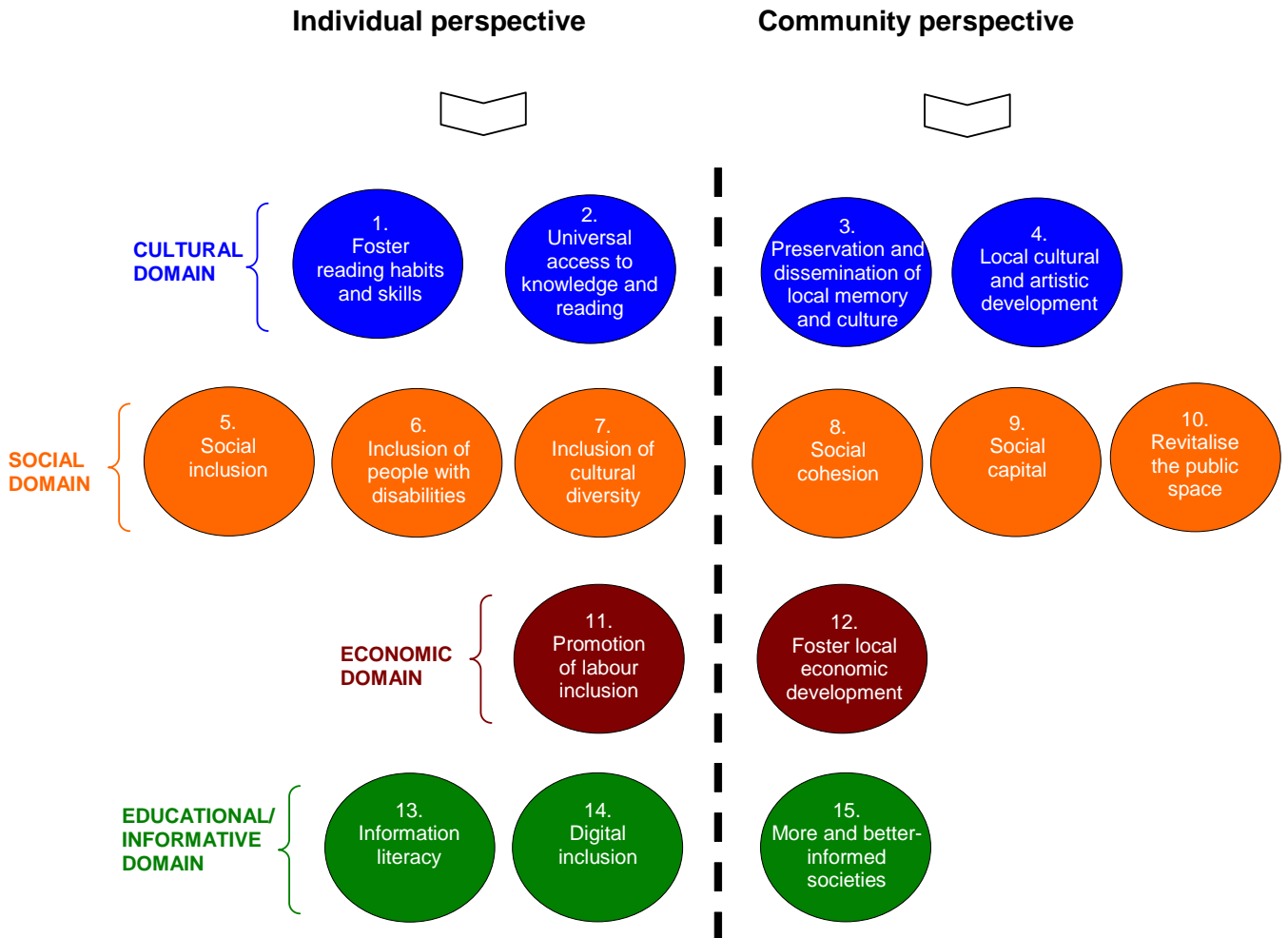
**Figure 3. Social impact domains of public libraries**

Source: Huysmans, F. and Oomes, M., 2012.  
Measuring the public library's societal value: a methodological research program.

<sup>2</sup> The social audit has been one of the most extensively used techniques. This method measures how the organisation has achieved the social objectives set for it by combining data on the community's profile with interviews and focus groups (Wavell et al., 2002).



This analysis of the literature has provided an aggregate snapshot of the potential social benefits that a public library can generate in its catchment area, as shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Estimate of the societal value generated by the public libraries: main social benefits identified** (from the review of the specialised literature)

Source: Authors.

Thus, for each of these benefits, a detailed analysis has been carried out of the main contributions made by the specialised literature. This analysis has provided a general understanding of just how much the public library, depending on how it is organised, operates and interacts with its catchment area, can play a vital role as local agent for transforming its users' skills and knowledge and the situation and social relation dynamics prevailing in its community.

## Line 2: Systematisation of the specialised literature

After identifying and characterising the various social benefits, the information collected has been prioritised. A systematisation table or matrix has been generated in which the information collected has been organised in six categories (domain; social benefit; actions and tools; services; benefits) for each of the 15 social benefits identified. In general, the prioritised information provides a sufficiently complete snapshot of each social benefit identified, being structured as a series of guidelines to be considered by any library service that wishes to address or disseminate its role as a community agent.

**Table 1. Information shown on the systematisation table for each of the 15 social benefits**

ESTIMATE OF THE SOCIETAL VALUE GENERATED BY PUBLIC LIBRARIES					
Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits

- **Domain** ⇒ Category identifying the impact produced by the social benefit. Four domains are identified: cultural, educational/informative, social and economic (F. Huysmans & M. Oomes, 2012).
- **Social benefit** ⇒ Category in which the 15 social benefits identified are ordered.
- **Conceptualisation** ⇒ Category briefly explaining the information collected in the first line of work related with: a) the origin of the 'concept' that gives structure to the social benefit, b) the link between the concept and the public library, and c) the track record and activities developed by the libraries and related to the benefit analysed.
- **Actions and tools** ⇒ Category listing the strategic context tools and actions performed by the public libraries and which have been found to contribute to generating the social benefit analysed.
- **Services** ⇒ Category listing the services offered by the public libraries and which have been found to contribute to generating the social benefit analysed.
- **Specific benefits** ⇒ Category containing the potential social transformations that are a direct or indirect consequence of the activity and work performed by the public library to obtain the social benefit analysed.

In addition to this information, another table has been generated for each of the above domains with the resources, the work team and the supporting agents with which the library must carry out its function with respect to the social benefits analysed.

As a result of this line of work, 19 systematisation tables have been generated: one for each of the 15 social benefits identified with the information defined in Table 1 and four more corresponding to each domain's resources, work team and supporting agents.

### **Line 3:**

## **Estimate of the societal value generated by MLN libraries**

### **Line 3A: Theoretical conceptualisation**

On the basis of the two previous lines of work and, in particular, the systematisation of the information collected and analysed, technical staff from the LSMO and the Department of Studies and Foresight performed a systematic search of the information available. Complementing this quantitative information, a search of specific good practices used by different library services, both within and outside of the MLN, and related to the various social benefits identified.

With the information compiled, an evaluative analysis has been performed of the societal function performed by MLN public libraries in their immediate catchment area. This work enables a preliminary consideration to be made of the contribution made by libraries to providing a series of social benefits in their communities and the factors that must be taken into account when generating value in each of these domains. This material, referenced to the MLN, provides a starting point for reflection by all stakeholders who wish to generate societal value through their libraries.

### **Line 3B: Feedback from professionals**

After completing the study's theoretical conceptualisation phase, the next phase was to obtain input from the professionals working in the libraries and the territory. Three work teams were formed, who reflected on and discussed the 15 domains identified in the study of libraries' societal value. The work teams' objectives were:

- Advise on the practical aspects of the actions currently carried out by MLN libraries and those that would have to be undertaken in the future in the domains analysed.
- Define the actions, resources and services that the libraries would have to offer in each of the domains analysed.
- Compare and validate the information obtained in the theoretical conceptualisation concerning the benefits that the libraries' activities bring to individuals and society as a whole.

Ten people were invited to form part of each of the groups, with the following professional profiles: four from MLN libraries who were working on projects in the domain analysed, two from the LSMO, one from a professional institution in the library sphere (the COBDC (Official Librarians' Association), or the UB's Faculty of Library and Information Science) one from the Catalan Government's Library Service, an outside specialist in the subject studied by the group and a municipal technical officer<sup>3</sup>. Lastly, each group included a coordinator and a rapporteur. In total, 33 professionals took part.

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<sup>3</sup> See the end of the document for a list of the people and organisations that have taken part in the process.

The discussions were both in-person and on-line. Three in-person workshops (one for each group) were organised to discuss the domains from the 'individual perspective'. Discussion of the domains from the 'community perspective' took place on-line during the weeks following the workshops.

The in-person meetings generated an interesting debate which complemented and enriched the content of the theoretical conceptualisation phase. Most of the reflections confirmed the framework and actions that had already been defined in the previous phase, validating and supporting the work done. Other items obtained from practice were added and information was provided on good practices in the domains studied. The involvement of different professional profiles and the diversity of local realities in which they work definitely contributed added value to the discussion. Moreover, because of their participation in the process, these professionals will take action on the spread of the study conclusions.

## **The value of MLN libraries in society**

This section contains the 19 systematisation tables generated by the study: one for each of the 15 social benefits identified and another four corresponding to resources, the work team and the supporting agents in each of the four domains (see Figure 4). In the complete document on this study, the summary tables included here are accompanied by explanatory texts that expand on the information contained in them and include good practices applied by MLN libraries.

# 1. Foster reading habits and skills.

Cultural domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CULTURAL</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Foster reading habits and skills</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Reading means understanding and interpreting a written message (Goldin, 2006). It is therefore a skill that must be acquired and developed.</li> <li>› Exercising this habit is a lifelong activity, it is a gateway to knowledge that will enrich the individual throughout his or her life.</li> <li>› Fostering this habit is a shared responsibility of society, since it depends on cooperation between public and private agents and the coordination of cultural, social and educational policies.</li> <li>› The IFLA/UNESCO manifesto (1994) acknowledges that nurturing this habit is one of libraries' 'key missions'.</li> <li>› Public libraries and reading promotion have been and are today an indissoluble tandem insofar as libraries offer universal, free access to reading to everyone, irrespective of their origin, age, etc.</li> <li>› Strengthening this habit among young people takes on particular significance as it is in this stage of life that the habit is formed (children) or it is most likely to be lost (teenagers).</li> <li>› In both Spanish and Catalan legislation, fostering reading habits and skills is perceived as a basic tool for developing individuals' personality and their socialisation.</li> <li>› The Catalan Government's National Reading Plan (December 2011) counsels part of the lines of work to be implemented to foster the reading habit through its public libraries.</li> <li>› As key agents in building reading habits and skills among the population, public libraries must work to define a specific, programmed reading dissemination and promotion policy that takes into account the heterogeneity of social groups and needs within a community. To a great extent, this success will be conditional upon their ability to provide enjoyment and meaning to the different social groups through their reading experience.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Create adequate conditions for supporting the creation/dissemination of innovative projects and successful experiences.</li> <li>› Develop a strategy for stimulating reading habits.</li> <li>› Include reading promotion policies in local and national policies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions that public libraries already perform or need to undertake:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Diagnosis of reading needs and habits by population segment and interest.</li> <li>› Target group segmentation.</li> <li>› User satisfaction/perception surveys.</li> <li>› Communication of actions aimed at fostering reading (also in other languages).</li> <li>› Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>› Tools for user participation and engagement, delimitation of activities (especially teenagers).</li> <li>› Participative acquisition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Activities targeting the general public to strengthen reading habits.</li> <li>› Activities to strengthen reading habits among young people.</li> <li>› Activities to strengthen reading habits among children.</li> <li>› Reading clubs and parallel actions.</li> <li>› Home reading service (reading support).</li> <li>› Exhibitions (attractive, well-designed, 2.0, exhibition collection).</li> <li>› Information/digital literacy</li> <li>› Services to schools (school visits centred on promoting reading, backpacks, book recommendations for young people in the secondary schools (off-site activity)).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The public library is an instrument—within a broader group of entities and initiatives—that facilitates and promotes a habit and a skill (reading), enabling individuals to develop as unique social beings.</li> <li>› It provides a means for effectively exercising the universal right to education and culture.</li> <li>› It develops reflection, analysis, effort or concentration skills in individuals that will be useful for the rest of their lives.</li> <li>› It guarantees individuals equal access to knowledge and increases a community's cultural and human capital.</li> <li>› It creates thoughtful, competent, critical readers who have opinions and contribute to society's progress, as active, integrated citizens.</li> <li>› It allows individuals to educate themselves (in a broad sense) and grow in ways other than those formally established.</li> <li>› It allows individuals to enjoy their free time, let their imagination roam, become more creative, etc.</li> <li>› It enables young people and children to feel more motivated, from a very young age, about acquiring knowledge and reading works that stimulate their imagination and creativity.</li> <li>› It is a key amenity for children and young people which will enrich their lives, diversify stimuli and enable them to contribute more intensely to the society they live in.</li> <li>› It encourages individuals to practice active ageing.</li> </ul>

## 2. Universal access to knowledge and reading.

Cultural domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>CULTURAL</b></p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Universal access to knowledge and reading</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Public libraries have a key role to play in guaranteeing access to knowledge and culture for all citizens. This role in democratizing access to information and culture is defined more precisely in the various impact domains of the public library addressed in the study.</li> <li>› Almost 30% of the world's population suffers from some degree of reading comprehension difficulty.</li> <li>› The 'easy reading' (ER) resources adapt texts and other resources to make them easier to understand and read (concrete, simple, direct use of language, content, illustrations, design or layout, etc.) so that they can be understood by a large part of the population, irrespective of their abilities.</li> <li>› Unlike countries such as Sweden, their implementation in Spain and Catalonia is recent (the ER Association was formed in 2003).</li> <li>› The potential beneficiaries of these resources are people with some kind of handicap (intellectual disability, senile dementia, deafness, autism, aphasia, etc.) and people with a temporarily limited reading sufficiency (immigrants, elderly, young people or children).</li> <li>› The public library has become one of the largest buyers of these resources, and at the same it has succeeded in attracting and recruiting as users social groups that until now had little contact with libraries and, in many cases, were excluded from them.</li> <li>› In 2010, the IFLA defined a series of guidelines concerning the deployment of ER in public libraries which, since then, have become the international reference framework for creating collections specifically targeting these social groups.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Diagnosis of reading needs and habits of the population with reading difficulties.</li> <li>› Strategy to foster reading habits among social groups who are disadvantaged or have reading difficulties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions that public libraries already perform or need to undertake:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>› User satisfaction/perception surveys.</li> <li>› Tools to enable participation of library users in defining library activities.</li> <li>› Staff trained in the use of ER resources and in interacting with different social groups.</li> <li>› Accessible opening times. Opening times matched to the population's 'needs'. Free time (weekends, evenings...).</li> <li>› Signage of ER resources matched to the abilities of their potential users.</li> <li>› Collection organised and promoted by 'lifestyles'.</li> <li>› Specific actions with immigrants + service support + parallel actions.</li> <li>› Proximity reading: hospitals, home reading.</li> <li>› Building of a network of volunteers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Advice to individuals and groups about how to use ER.</li> <li>› Loan/download platform of books, articles, music and access to universities' digital holdings.</li> <li>› Use of electronic book lending for the physically disabled (mobility problems).</li> <li>› Use of oral and audiovisual support resources for the illiterate.</li> <li>› Informal discussions about a subject or book to improve knowledge of the language, customs, culture, country...</li> <li>› ER activities open to all library users.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The public library is an instrument—within a broader group of entities and initiatives—that facilitates and promotes access to knowledge, enabling individuals to develop as unique social beings.</li> <li>› It democratizes access to information and literature, guaranteeing equal access for all citizens to information and works of literature.</li> <li>› It guarantees that everyone can benefit from the tools to grow as human beings, irrespective of their abilities and/or economic and social situation.</li> <li>› It becomes a vehicle for communication, information, education and leisure.</li> <li>› It contributes to social cohesion and inclusion.</li> <li>› It assists in improving knowledge and relations between people from different generations.</li> <li>› It increases the self-confidence of particularly vulnerable social groups or individuals.</li> <li>› It helps people who have some kind of handicap or reading difficulty to improve their self-expression skills.</li> <li>› It generates new documentation on local matters.</li> </ul>

### 3. Preservation and dissemination of local memory and culture.

Cultural domain / Community perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
CULTURAL	Preservation and dissemination of local memory and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› To know a community's memory is to know 'the body of facts, conditions, characteristics, processes and objects that appear and create an impact on a particular geographical area over time' (García Gómez, 2000).</li> <li>› According to this definition, recording and transmitting memory is a practice that is linked to the development of human groups into organised forms of civilisation.</li> <li>› The existence of memory and the need to preserve it and bear witness to it seeks to satisfy an essential societal demand of enormous cultural significance: for its socializing effect, for its effect in creating a collective identity, for its neutral role in preserving a community's ideological and cultural diversity, for its educational potential or for its contribution to research (García Gómez &amp; Díaz Grau, 2005).</li> <li>› Archives, libraries or museums have become the primary public guarantors of peoples' and cities' memory and history.</li> <li>› Both the IFLA (2002) and the American Library Association (2012) have defined rational criteria applicable to the organisation of local history collections in public libraries.</li> <li>› Accordingly, all public libraries, as depositories of the local memory, have the acknowledged duty to 'further the study, knowledge and understanding of all those aspects of a locality' (Michael Dewe, 1991). The library has become guarantor of the traditions, culture, democratic values and collective memory safeguarded in the written material it holds.</li> <li>› The public library performs an essential function in preserving collective memory, not only by preserving old, unique or rare documents but also by carrying out the same action on modern, widely held and common documents, whose value will change in the course of time, becoming old, unique or rare in the future.</li> <li>› The public library, as a place of education, research and restoration of local memory, offers an opportunity to intellectuals, students, scholars, specialists, researchers and citizens in general to know and understand a community's signs of identity.</li> <li>› The collection held by any library acts as a 'memory' of the past, preserving and providing access to materials related to the past, present and future of the history of the community which it serves and the people living in it. The local collection is what makes the library unique and it is the medium that enables full integration of the corresponding social sphere's cultural heritage, becoming a key resource for projecting a community's culture.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Existence of a diagnosis of interests and information needs concerning the community's local memory.</li> <li>› The library as a resource for giving structure to local sociocultural reality.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions that public libraries already perform or need to undertake:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Existence of a strategy for disseminating the local collection and the local memory.</li> <li>› Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>› Coordination of entities' bibliographical and audiovisual holdings.</li> <li>› Creation of a network devoted to disseminating and studying the local heritage.</li> <li>› Creation of experience sharing networks.</li> <li>› User satisfaction/perception surveys.</li> <li>› Tools to enable participation of library users in defining library activities.</li> <li>› Staff trained in the compilation, handling, upkeep and accessibility to the local collection's resources.</li> <li>› Clear and visible access policy to the local collection.</li> <li>› Digitisation of the local collection's resources.</li> <li>› Adapted cataloguing of the documents having a local subject matter.</li> <li>› Publication of reading guides on the local collection's resources.</li> <li>› History/local memory seminars.</li> <li>› Local historic memory.</li> <li>› Content generation.</li> <li>› Restoration of local holdings with collective contributions.</li> <li>› Dissemination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Digitisation.</li> <li>› Lectures/round tables on local memory or local topics.</li> <li>› Educational visits for groups to the local collection.</li> <li>› Local memory activities targeting children.</li> <li>› Activities targeting children on local history or traditions.</li> <li>› Exhibitions on subjects of local interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› It strengthens the link between past, present and future.</li> <li>› It guarantees access to information on the local memory, history, cultural heritage, customs, folklore, folk religion, gastronomy, etc.</li> <li>› It generates new documentation on local matters.</li> <li>› It helps preserve the community's tangible or intangible cultural heritage by bringing together, preserving and disseminating unique and sometimes hard-to-find documents.</li> <li>› It contributes to educating the community, responding to demands and concerns about local memory voiced by library users and the rest of the community.</li> <li>› It helps engage people in a common historic background that precedes them and which, through their action, may influence future generations.</li> <li>› It helps generate knowledge of a shared cultural history in the community's collective conscience. It provides arguments for decision making, objective, informed reflection and participation in common processes.</li> <li>› It helps give visibility to the ties that bind a society together, by linking citizens to their environment.</li> <li>› It cooperates in fostering cultural and social cohesion and inclusion.</li> <li>› It contributes to improving knowledge and relations between people from different generations.</li> <li>› It strengthens the community's cultural identity and acts as a stimulus to satisfy curiosity about the creation of a feeling of belonging to a group.</li> <li>› It shows the local memory's ideological, cultural, religious and social diversity without interposing any ideological filter.</li> </ul>



## 4. Local cultural and artistic development

Cultural domain / Community perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">CULTURAL</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Local cultural and artistic development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fostering artistic creativity in its many forms contributes directly to communication and expression between the individuals living in a community, while at the same time providing a channel for the manifestation of different opinions, sentiments and ideologies.</li> <li>➤ The IFLA/UNESCO guidelines for the development of the public library service (2001) state that 'an important role of the public library is to provide a focus for cultural and artistic development in the community'. Likewise, the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (1994) acknowledges the libraries' role in providing users with 'opportunities for personal creative development'.</li> <li>➤ In this sense, the library acts as an effective cultural and leisure centre for stimulating intellectual creativity and citizen participation in the creative process.</li> <li>➤ Public libraries act as multifunctional centres for the community's artistic development, particularly in more isolated areas. Thus, their functions include salvaging and preserving local cultural manifestations, enhancing their sociocultural value and providing channels for their expression.</li> <li>➤ At present, there are pioneering experiences, especially in the US, where some libraries have implemented new approaches to nurture their users' creativity while, at the same time, furthering their influence on and cooperation with the community. And, through 'maker spaces' located within the library, users can develop all sorts of content, share them and make them available to the community for consumption. These experiences have been found to be extremely effective in creatively bringing about change in the community. Being open, cooperative spaces for creation, research, experimentation and development in art, science and technology, the 'maker spaces' are supporting the development of a creation culture. Thus, informal learning is fostered through playing and exploring, with people learning from each other and exchanging tools and knowledge, while requiring little use of economic, material or technological resources.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Diagnosis of the local cultural and artistic situation.</li> <li>➤ Cross-sectional strategy for the integrated promotion of local culture and art by local stakeholders: Engage local cultural and artistic actors in the library's management: a group of advisers for programming dynamization activities, book purchases and other aspects such as the design of promotional materials.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions that public libraries already perform or need to undertake:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ User satisfaction/perception surveys. A good knowledge of users and the local cultural environment is essential.</li> <li>➤ Organisation of cultural events tailored to the population segments served.</li> <li>➤ Work on the role of the library as an intermediary between author and publisher (creation/dissemination).</li> <li>➤ Brokering activities between sponsors and creators.</li> <li>➤ Use of 2.0 and cloud computing tools in the actions aimed at facilitating artistic and cultural development.</li> <li>➤ Tools for library participation in defining activities.</li> <li>➤ Active user involvement and engagement in activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Activities related with free time.</li> <li>➤ Creative workshops: writing workshops, collaborative writing, self-publishing, illustration, booktrailers, photography, videos, screenplays, short films, entrepreneurship,...</li> <li>➤ Creative 'laboratories' and creative competitions.</li> <li>➤ Encounters/debates with local authors or artists.</li> <li>➤ Oral storytelling.</li> <li>➤ Story marathons; poetry recitals, concerts, forums, etc.</li> <li>➤ Exhibitions by local creators, writers and artists or users.</li> <li>➤ Creation competitions with the involvement of local artists, writers or opinion leaders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It supports and fosters local production of knowledge and gives it added value.</li> <li>➤ It generates knowledge about local creative and cultural entrepreneurship activities.</li> <li>➤ It stimulates the creation of new cultural products with a strong local identity.</li> <li>➤ It contributes to providing new or different views of the world around us, exploring and imagining new possibilities to help create the future.</li> <li>➤ It helps shape a plural, polyhedral, dynamic cultural identity for the community, favouring the development of increasingly cohesive societies.</li> <li>➤ It cooperates in promoting the community's artists and cultural manifestations.</li> <li>➤ It contributes to satisfying citizens' cultural and artistic aspirations.</li> <li>➤ It provides an opportunity to obtain enjoyment through play, creating a greater receptiveness to exploring and interacting with others.</li> <li>➤ It generates informal learning opportunities.</li> <li>➤ It enriches the library's services and facilities by actively presenting artistic initiatives on an ongoing basis and acting as a source of information on activities relating to local art.</li> <li>➤ It stimulates creation, participation, debate and development of the freedom of expression within a community.</li> </ul>



## Cultural domain: Resources, work team and cooperative agents.

Domain	Resources	Work team	Supporting agents	
CULTURAL	<p><b>Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Removal of architectural barriers.</li> <li>➤ Flexible spaces.</li> <li>➤ Class rooms.</li> <li>➤ Implementation of an induction loop (improves hearing for people with hearing aids) in the conference room.</li> <li>➤ Suitable facilities and materials for preserving the local collection.</li> </ul> <p><b>Holdings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A balanced collection that appeals to all types of reader.</li> <li>➤ Media adapted to different reading levels.</li> <li>➤ Particular care in selection and dissemination.</li> <li>➤ General and special reading resources (books, comics, magazines, audiobooks, other).</li> <li>➤ ER books adapted to different social groups and different ability levels.</li> <li>➤ Batches loaned to entities (e.g. primary schools, secondary schools, etc.).</li> <li>➤ Importance of accessibility (physical and virtual).</li> <li>➤ Digitisation of the local holdings.</li> <li>➤ Different themed exhibitions.</li> <li>➤ Access to works of art.</li> </ul> <p><b>Amenities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Architectural features whose goal is to create spaces and situations that facilitate interaction: lobbies as meeting and exchange points, leisure areas (bar, cafeteria, terraces...), meeting rooms for groups not connected with libraries, furniture and layout that lend themselves to the organisation of meetings.</li> <li>➤ Attractive children's areas.</li> <li>➤ Areas adapted for young readers.</li> <li>➤ Specific spaces (physical and virtual) that target primarily young people.</li> <li>➤ High visibility areas with easy access for ER resources.</li> <li>➤ Creation of a specific space for the local collection.</li> <li>➤ Optimisation of multimedia rooms.</li> <li>➤ 'Maker spaces' that provide spaces and tools for sharing lifelong learning interests, knowledge and local creation.</li> <li>➤ Spaces equipped with music processors and musical instruments for music creation. Record and disseminate demos and preserve them as local heritage.</li> <li>➤ Basic exhibition equipment: display cases, display units...</li> </ul>	<p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 2.0 websites and use of 2.0 tools to encourage reading.</li> <li>➤ Websites adapted to ER recommended language.</li> <li>➤ Website on local memory and history and the resources available.</li> <li>➤ Library portal with podcast, video capsules, digitised documents.</li> <li>➤ Hosting of local entity websites on the library website.</li> <li>➤ Have good digital repositories that are suitable for local uses.</li> <li>➤ Virtual spaces for disseminating the literary heritage (written spaces, Lletra UOC).</li> <li>➤ Virtual space for creating a reader community.</li> <li>➤ Virtual space as a communication and participation tool.</li> </ul> <p><b>Economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Partners.</li> <li>➤ Sponsors/patrons.</li> <li>➤ Specific budgets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Publication of reading material and reading guides</li> <li>➤ Reading areas.</li> <li>➤ Resource bank for promoting reading (evaluation data, templates, guidelines, etc.).</li> <li>➤ Flexible opening hours. Maximum opening hours.</li> <li>➤ Access or cooperative/in-house/outsourced production of electronic and learning resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Professional 'sensitive' to and knowledgeable of the local environment.</li> <li>➤ Training for library staff and partners.</li> <li>➤ Open to other career profiles: review and refocus career profiles in the libraries: social educators, cultural promoters,...</li> <li>➤ Dynamizing training specialists, not just teachers.</li> <li>➤ Engaged staff.</li> <li>➤ Knowledge on handling the receipt of large legacies. Advice for libraries (legal issues, covenants,...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Local associations and entities. Cooperation agreements. Work together to organise their administrative/historical documentation.</li> <li>➤ Public administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local historic archive. Regional archive.</li> <li>- Local entities that work with people at risk of digital divide.</li> <li>- Primary school/secondary school/adult education. Education/learning community</li> <li>- Language normalisation centres.</li> <li>- Hospitals.</li> <li>- Municipal theatres, museums.</li> <li>- Open centres where assisted study is provided.</li> <li>- Contact / cooperation with specific social groups (elderly, artists, youth, families, immigrants, handicapped people...).</li> <li>- Citizens who own private collections.</li> <li>- Technology developers.</li> <li>- Local communication media. E.g.: project work in cooperation with local communication media. Dissemination, publishing expertise.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Agents who also work in Reading Promotion.</li> <li>➤ Easy Reading Association.</li> <li>➤ Book agents: writers, publishers, bookshops.</li> <li>➤ Contact / cooperation with specific social groups (elderly, youth, families, artists...).</li> <li>➤ Supralocal agents (resource endowment and optimisation, standardised guidelines and tools).</li> <li>➤ International agents.</li> <li>➤ Institutional contacts and coordination.</li> <li>➤ Work groups/Networks.</li> <li>➤ Volunteers.</li> </ul>

## 5. Social inclusion.

### Social domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>Social inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The term 'poverty' has been progressively replaced in Western societies by the term 'exclusion', with the intention of going beyond the excessively economic view of the term. Even so, the purely economic aspect, the lack of resources, continues to be one of the key aspects in the unequal distribution of socially valued resources and which determine the degree of exclusion that an individual may suffer.</li> <li>› The EU conceives 'social exclusion' as a <i>process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from fully participating in society.</i></li> <li>› Social exclusion is a dynamic, heterogeneous, multidimensional phenomenon; it can affect different aspects of the individual's or group's personal, social, cultural or political life. Thus, certain profiles are more vulnerable to experiencing it as a result of the combination and/or accumulation of unfavourable factors: people with disabilities, racial minorities, the elderly, children and youth, unemployed people, women, etc.</li> <li>› The outcome of exclusion is discrimination, stigmatisation, social rejection or weakening of interpersonal ties in a community, leading to a progressive distancing from an initial situation of social integration.</li> <li>› Beyond welfare policies, combating these situations implies enacting policies aimed at addressing the problem from its roots or causes, acting on those factors that may account for the causes of this exclusion.</li> <li>› According to the IFLA (Manifiesto, 1994), as a local amenity, open to everyone and as a facilitator of interaction between people, the public library is an ideal service for fostering social inclusion processes and combating social inequality.</li> <li>› Through observation and subsequent action, libraries become spaces that can assist in the prevention, detection and correction of social exclusion and as a primary care centre, with the capability of modifying behaviours, preventing risks and initiating or complementing socialisation processes.</li> <li>› Thus, using the public library to combat exclusion seeks to counteract the lack of access to culture, information and the skills required to access and use the information, particularly by the more vulnerable social groups.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Diagnosis of social groups at risk of exclusion in the community.</li> <li>› Strategy for the social inclusion of risk groups.</li> <li>› Diagnosis of visual or difficult to perceive aspects of the library that may condition its use by certain risk groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions and tools that facilitate the library's role in fostering social inclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Provide training for the information and reception staff at the libraries on how to interact with risk groups from a greater awareness of their distinctive features and foster a greater level of social inclusion.</li> <li>› Engage users in the design of services and activities. Also in the selection and purchase of document collections.</li> <li>› User satisfaction/perception surveys.</li> <li>› Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that the public libraries offer or can offer to foster social inclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Personalised reception and information services for different social groups.</li> <li>› Citizen information service, with local resources and services aimed at solving day-to-day problems (e.g., information on local entities, exclusion issues, etc.).</li> <li>› Visits to explain the library and its resources.</li> <li>› Support for self-conducted learning and education in basic skills (information literacy, languages, job hunting...). ACTIC accreditation</li> <li>› Availability of diversified dynamizing activities targeting these social groups. Activities that create connectedness.</li> <li>› Services at schools, to reach families belonging to social groups at risk of exclusion.</li> <li>› Library extension services (prisons, hospitals, old people's homes).</li> <li>› Adapt opening hours to needs. Coordinate opening hours with municipal social services, pharmacies, health services,...</li> <li>› Study the possibility of opening on Saturday afternoons and/or Sunday mornings.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The public library in this domain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Guarantees equality between individuals, a vital factor for the economic and social development and advancement of any society.</li> <li>› Fosters cultural equality and the socialisation of individuals at risk of exclusion.</li> <li>› Provides a transformational tool for those more vulnerable social groups to minimise their condition and the impediments they are subject to.</li> <li>› Contributes to creating links, sentiments, ideas and joint experiences among different social groups in a community.</li> <li>› Contributes to the construction and development of the necessary social ties in any human community or society.</li> <li>› Contributes to forming inclusive and cohesive communities.</li> </ul>

## 6. Inclusion of people with disabilities.

Social domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
SOCIAL	Inclusion of people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Government of Catalonia defines 'disability' as the impossibility or difficulty experienced by the person who has a physical or mental impediment for carrying out his or her normal activities.</li> <li>➤ In this sense, people with some type of disability due to a permanent (congenital or otherwise) or temporary deficit in their physical, intellectual, mental or sensory abilities make up a heterogeneous group with very different needs, depending on their capabilities, who are at risk of exclusion due to possible difficulties accessing and becoming integrated in society.</li> <li>➤ The right of people with disabilities to participate, in equal conditions with the rest of the population and without discrimination, in the life of society is recognised in both national and international regulations (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006, United Nations). The right of access in equal conditions to culture and the development of individual and collective creative abilities is also specifically regulated.</li> <li>➤ Libraries' socialising and relational function make them key institutions for working towards the integration of people with some kind of disability.</li> <li>➤ Libraries must guarantee full accessibility to culture through actions that go beyond guaranteeing accessibility to library amenities or architectural aspects, offering resources and services aligned with these groups' needs.</li> <li>➤ Thus, guaranteeing full accessibility to library services to people with disabilities is understood, in its broadest sense, as a responsibility that encompasses the architects who design the building, furniture designers, book publishers, library staff or the Public Administration itself.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Diagnosis of social groups at risk of exclusion in the community.</li> <li>➤ Strategy for the social inclusion of risk groups.</li> <li>➤ Diagnosis of visual or difficult to perceive aspects of the library that may condition its use by certain risk groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions and tools that facilitate the library's role in fostering the inclusion of people with disabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Participation of users in the design of activities.</li> <li>➤ Training of staff in enhancing the social inclusion of risk groups.</li> <li>➤ Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>➤ Tools to enable participation of library users in defining library activities.</li> <li>➤ User satisfaction / perception surveys.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that public libraries offer or may offer to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Specialised reception and information service. Visits to the library adapted for people with disabilities.</li> <li>➤ Diversified activities targeting specific social groups. Accessible, adapted activities, with particular emphasis on those targeting children.</li> <li>➤ Easy reading clubs.</li> <li>➤ Reading aloud workshops segmented by age, encouraging cooperation between users.</li> <li>➤ Off-site lending service (hospitals, home,...).</li> <li>➤ Selective dissemination tailored to each special group.</li> <li>➤ Activities to create an understanding among the general public of the different disabilities and an awareness of the services provided.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The public library in this domain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Guarantees the right of access to information and culture without distinguishing between capabilities and disabilities.</li> <li>➤ Provides a transformational tool for people with some kind of disability to minimise their condition and the social impediments they are subject to.</li> <li>➤ Helps people with some kind of disability to live independently.</li> <li>➤ Contributes to developing individual and collective creative abilities.</li> <li>➤ Promotes these groups' active inclusion in political, social, economic, cultural and community activities.</li> <li>➤ Facilitates interaction and knowledge sharing among individuals living in a society.</li> <li>➤ Helps create more cohesive, inclusive and egalitarian societies.</li> </ul>

## 7. Inclusion of cultural diversity.

Social domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>Inclusion of cultural diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› 'Culture' is the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group. In addition to art and literature, it encompasses lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001, UNESCO).</li> <li>› 'Cultural diversity' refers to the harmonious coexistence and interaction of different cultures within the same society.</li> <li>› The current context of globalisation, increased migration, rapid communication and ready availability of transport has led to an increase in the cultural diversity of most contemporary societies. As a result, most governments, apart from making public resources and services available to new population segments, have designed recipes to respond to the increased complexity and diversification in the population's demands and needs.</li> <li>› In order to ensure the social cohesion of the people who live together in the community, it has become necessary to foster and preserve dialogue between the different realities existing in a society.</li> <li>› Thus, most governments have sought to create societies committed to respect for diversity and which advocate values based on human rights, non-discrimination, solidarity or respect for pluralism and equal opportunities as the foundation stones for peaceful coexistence in any society.</li> <li>› Cultural integration, admittance, equality or accommodation policies have sought to facilitate the active participation of immigrants in different spheres of society, improving the relationship between the people who live in a community.</li> <li>› As learning, cultural and information centres that are most approachable by the citizenry, public libraries have become multicultural libraries, undertaking directly to guarantee equal access to information and knowledge, particularly in communities with diverse interests and cultures.</li> <li>› The public library seeks to address the cultural diversity of its catchment area by offering resources targeting both the autochthonous communities and the ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities living in the community.</li> <li>› One of the biggest challenges currently faced in consolidating the inclusive function of the multicultural public library is to define innovative cultural outreach strategies that are also sensitive to diverging needs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Diagnosis of cultural diversity existing in the community.</li> <li>› Strategy for promoting cultural diversity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions and tools that facilitate the library's role in fostering the inclusion of cultural diversity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Selection, acquisition and cataloguing system adapted to the ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities in the community.</li> <li>› Information and dissemination to the community of the resources available for ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities.</li> <li>› Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>› Tools to enable participation of library users in defining library activities.</li> <li>› User satisfaction / perception surveys.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that the public libraries offer or can offer to foster cultural diversity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Services adapted to the needs of ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities (employment, legislation on immigration, social services, etc.).</li> <li>› Websites and networked databases that are accessible to linguistic minorities.</li> <li>› Organisation of cultural forums, events and dialogues. Activities aimed at explaining the traditions and customs of each country of origin.</li> <li>› Reading clubs and book presentations involving different cultures that provide a nexus and create cohesion.</li> <li>› Activities in foreign languages: intercultural children's activities.</li> <li>› Activities targeting adults to learn the receiving country's autochthonous languages and culture.</li> <li>› Activities related with language normalisation: informal debates, language partners, visits, collections...</li> <li>› Use of amenities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› It guarantees equal and fair access to culture and information.</li> <li>› It helps counteract the increased vulnerability of minority immigrant groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loss of cultural references.</li> <li>- Disappointment of initial expectations in the receiving society.</li> <li>- Lack of family ties.</li> <li>- Ignorance of the receiving culture.</li> <li>- Possible rejection by autochthonous population groups.</li> </ul> </li> <li>› It enables immigrant groups to keep in touch with what is going on in their countries of origin.</li> <li>› It makes it easier for the citizenry as a whole to develop an awareness of the existence of a cultural diversity, facilitating familiarisation, knowledge and interaction between cultures.</li> <li>› It contributes to providing a source of exchange, innovation, creativity and peaceful coexistence between peoples.</li> <li>› It helps assure peace and security at local, national and international level.</li> <li>› It forms more cohesive and inclusive societies.</li> <li>› It provides a means for forming a community cultural identity.</li> </ul>

## 8. Social cohesion.

Social domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
SOCIAL	Social cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The term 'social cohesion' is related to the degree of 'consensus' or the intensity of interaction or social convergence existing between the groups that make up a society. Social cohesion exists when there is a sense of belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition and legitimacy among the members that make up a community.</li> <li>› In an 'ideal' state, social cohesion would correspond to a situation without tension between opinions or social problems among the members of a society and where, consequently, there are no situations of social exclusion, poverty or violence.</li> <li>› According to the Spanish Economic and Social Council (2012), social cohesion is the ability of a social, economic and political system to a) foster citizens' social autonomy and participation, b) create networks and institutions that generate social capital and social inclusion, and c) contribute to the materialisation of social rights.</li> <li>› On the other hand, 'social fragmentation' would refer to the body of measures or practices that break with or question the 'social order' accepted by society and undermine the elements that allow social cohesion.</li> <li>› However, the dimensions of social cohesion are not static and are determined, to a considerable degree, by how the term is understood by each society. Within the EU, governments try to maintain social cohesion by reducing the income divide and guaranteeing greater access to employment, education and health services.</li> <li>› However, the current economic situation is putting significant strain on social cohesion, due to a steady increase in the socially excluded population, the emergence of new pockets of poverty and the progressive weakening of the traditional pillars of social cohesion in the West.</li> <li>› In order to address current challenges, it seems that a public response is necessary by each society to social transformations and emerging needs in order to counteract the emergence of new social conflicts that give rise to prejudices, discrimination, institutional inequalities in the access to public resources and apparent incompatibilities between cultures.</li> <li>› The public library becomes a key arena for guaranteeing community cohesion, by providing free, universal access to culture and allowing the necessary interaction to understand and facilitate the fit between social groups with different ages, backgrounds or resources.</li> <li>› The library is a key socialising agent for fostering intercultural dialogue. Being one of the few local agents able to develop a comprehensive vision of the community and the possible factors in its fragmentation, it holds a strategically important position in the endeavour to maintain social cohesion.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Diagnosis of the social fragmentation and social exclusion existing in the community.</li> <li>› Strategy and policies for social cohesion and inclusion, jointly with the municipal lines and taking into account civil society (right to education, access to information, equal access for everyone...).</li> <li>› Community workshops on social cohesion at municipal level.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions and tools that help libraries contribute to enhancing the community's social cohesion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Become an essential tool for local government with respect to: providing public services, fostering learning, stimulating social and economic growth and building the community.</li> <li>› Facilitate the population's employability (information and education about employment issues, connect citizens and companies, youth training programmes...).</li> <li>› Integration of the various social groups through the use of ICTs.</li> <li>› Active participation in the community's cultural events or festivities, organised by public and/or private entities.</li> <li>› Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>› Dissemination of the library's services using local communication media (press, radio...).</li> <li>› Tools to enable participation of library users in defining library activities.</li> <li>› Encourage volunteering.</li> <li>› User satisfaction/perception surveys. Surveys to identify population needs.</li> <li>› Avoid positive discrimination. Avoid giving the impression that the library is positioning itself in a specific population group or segment. Actions must be for the purpose of normalisation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that libraries offer or can offer to increase the community's social cohesion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Information and reference services for learning about the locality / municipality (work, housing...) and also on a more general level (society).</li> <li>› Guided tours of the library or specific services open to the general public, segmented by age.</li> <li>› Training courses / workshops: use of ICTs, youth orientation and training programmes, cooperation and education in education centres, language courses, job hunting, etc.</li> <li>› Intergenerational activities.</li> <li>› Multicultural activities based on experience and knowledge exchange between the users themselves: language partners, let's learn, let's talk, ICT partners...</li> <li>› Exhibitions on the subject of social cohesion.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The public library in this domain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Favours construction of a collective identity accepted by everyone.</li> <li>› Strengthens the sensation of belonging to the community.</li> <li>› Favours finding common ground, peaceful coexistence, sharing between people having different languages, cultures, ages, education, interests. Encourages knowledge exchange between different cultures or generations.</li> <li>› Contributes to guaranteeing social peace between the individuals who live in a society.</li> <li>› Assures the social inclusion of groups at risk of exclusion.</li> <li>› Contributes to guaranteeing fairness and equality between majority and minority social groups. Guarantees more equal access to education and information.</li> <li>› Contributes to creating safer and fairer societies.</li> <li>› Helps boost self-esteem through participation in and organisation of events.</li> <li>› Enables individualisation of people (their educational needs, leisure needs, etc.) with respect to the group.</li> </ul>



## 9. Social capital.

Social domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>Social capital</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The concept of social capital was originally related to the idea of 'associative art', the ability to establish social contacts between citizens based on norms of reciprocity and trust (Toqueville, 1835). The term was used for the first time in 1916 (Hanifan) to account for the importance of community involvement, created as a result of cooperation in networks and norms of reciprocity, in satisfying the individual's social needs. Nowadays, there is not a single valid conceptualisation of the term; Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam and Lin are some of the leading exponents of the different approaches that have been expounded.</li> <li>› According to Putnam's concept, one of the most widely accepted, social capital a) is created in the social networks or contacts formed between people or groups and without which societies could neither organise themselves nor function, b) it arises from four basic elements: civic engagement, reciprocity, trust and associativity, c) it generates a benefit both for those who are members of the network and for the individuals or groups that, while not being part of the network, have some type of relationship with it.</li> <li>› According to Putnam, there is a bonding social capital (based on homogeneous groups) and a bridging social capital (based on heterogeneous groups). The combination of the two may determine a society's degree of segmentation and the creation of a more or less equal society.</li> <li>› The library provides a suitable arena for people living in a community to interact and come together, facilitating the creation of new social networks that act as 'bridges' between different people who, if it were not for the library, would very likely never have known each other.</li> <li>› Likewise, by guaranteeing access to resources and personal help services to those individuals with less social capital, the library becomes a catalyst for social capital, providing instruments to overcome the deficit or lack of social ties or networks.</li> <li>› In times of crisis, the library becomes an extremely important community agent, counteracting the weakness of traditional social networks and a greater level of social fragmentation. It is particularly in this context where generating trust in the library service is essential for creating social capital in the community.</li> <li>› However, in spite of the extensive literature that analyses the social capital generated by public libraries, most studies do not clearly state what the mechanisms are (activities or actions) that enable this capital to be generated (Vårheim, 2008). Even so, in general terms, it is related to actions targeting interaction and connection between individuals.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Diagnosis of the local population and its features.</li> <li>› Strategy for generating social capital.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions that help libraries contribute to enhancing the community's social capital:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Become an information node for the entire community (e.g., creation of groups to analyse local problems and transmit civic qualities...).</li> <li>› Cooperate with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>› Increase users' involvement in the organisation, dynamization and promotion of stable cycles either organised by the library or in which the library plays some part: exhibitions, reading clubs, lectures...</li> <li>› Create the Friends of the Library association.</li> <li>› Encourage formation of a group of volunteers.</li> <li>› Perform surveys to ascertain the population's satisfaction with and perception of the library.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that libraries offer or can offer to increase the community's social capital:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Reading clubs and workshops.</li> <li>› Forums, lectures, exhibitions and other activities organised with users' input.</li> <li>› Provision of physical and/or virtual spaces within the library to organisations/individuals in the community so that they can make themselves known and grow.</li> <li>› Offer exchange facilities, basically of obsolete or low-use collections, but also skills, time,...</li> <li>› Provide educational support for students of all ages, in partnership with education centres (reading comprehension ...). and the population's continuing education.</li> <li>› IL activities. ACTIC certification.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The public library in this domain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Contributes to generating individual and community benefits in economic and material terms (wellbeing), social and cultural terms (social integration) and political and civic terms (social power and influence).</li> <li>› Contributes to social recognition and acceptance of the individual and a feeling of usefulness and personal appreciation.</li> <li>› Provides individuals with a space where they can give their opinion and exert influence; it recognises the right to a public voice.</li> <li>› Fosters improvement of the skills and social positioning of individuals with less social networks and ties.</li> <li>› Enables greater levels of community engagement and trust to be achieved among a community's members.</li> <li>› Generates those connections that bind people together in a community, strengthening community identity and social cohesion.</li> <li>› Favours the emergence of collective/community initiatives that may have a positive influence on local socioeconomic progress.</li> <li>› Generates trust and empathy between citizens, contributing to creating societies that are less exposed to suffering social pathologies such as crime, poverty, democratic instability or insecurity.</li> <li>› Helps improve the relationship between citizens and public services.</li> <li>› Fosters skill, resource and time sharing to contribute to the good of the community.</li> </ul>

## 10. Revitalise the public space.

Social domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
SOCIAL	Revitalise the public space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ According to Pietro Barcellona (1992), the 'public space' is the space where society, unequal and contradictory, can express its conflicts. Thus, beyond the legal norms regulating the public space, what gives it meaning, its essence, is the 'collective use' of the space as a result of a progressive appropriation by citizens.</li> <li>➤ It is in both open (streets, squares, parks, etc.) and enclosed (public infrastructures, community centres, cultural amenities, etc.) public spaces where society becomes visible and interacts, contributing to creating common habits and interests.</li> <li>➤ With their possibility of unrestricted access for everyone, the collective use that is made of them and the multipurpose nature of their use, public spaces are seen as suitable places for recreation, relating and interacting, for public and political demonstrations, for contacts between people, for community expression or for bringing to light social, economic and political injustice problems that are latent in the community.</li> <li>➤ A quality public space is, according to Jordi Borja (2001), that which directly a) facilitates the intensity and quality of the social relations between individuals, arising from the mingling of groups and conducts, b) has the ability to admit and blend groups and conducts, c) enhances the acquisition of shared community values (tolerance, solidarity, etc.), d) stimulates symbolic identification, expression and cultural integration.</li> <li>➤ Public urban planning policies concerning the management of the public space have a fundamental role to play in restoring balance in urban planning standards and as 'city builders' (green spaces, cultural amenities, roads, etc.).</li> <li>➤ The potential offered by cultural amenities as public spaces depends on the spatial relationship they form with their physical and social environment, with the urban fabric, on their openness and on the creation of transitional spaces toward citizen spaces.</li> <li>➤ In the specific case of libraries, the chosen location, the urban features, accessibility, the connection made with the surrounding public space, the delimitation made of its uses and its ability to integrate the needs of the different actors present in the community (neighbours, users, citizens) in its management will determine whether it will be possible to talk of a 'quality' public space.</li> <li>➤ Through 'place making', the library presents itself as a reference point for citizens within the community, reinventing its role with its environment. As a public space, the library also seeks to capitalise on a community's assets (such as inspiration and its potential) to create quality public spaces, outside of the amenity, that are able to promote people's health, happiness and wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Diagnosis of the existing public space and how the public library is placed within it.</li> <li>➤ Strategy for revitalising the public space.</li> <li>➤ The library's location is chosen for a specific purpose.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions and tools that enable libraries to contribute to revitalising the public space:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Plans for the signage and improvement of external connections.</li> <li>➤ Sharing physical space with museums, theatres and other cultural amenities.</li> <li>➤ Plan and manage the library as a sustainable amenity and organise visits to it with the goal of disseminating and promoting sustainability.</li> <li>➤ Promote the library as a forum for its territory: A meeting point for debate about the territory. Organisation of civic events.</li> <li>➤ Implement projects with the educational community to increase knowledge of the public space, presenting a vision encompassing the past, present and future.</li> <li>➤ Support for neighbourhood improvement efforts.</li> <li>➤ 'Place making' actions.</li> <li>➤ Acquire tools to engage users and citizens in defining the public space.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that public libraries offer or can offer to help revitalise the public space:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Activities to promote urban revitalisation and historic knowledge of local urban development.</li> <li>➤ Culture-related activities to promote the urban territory (literary, historic, urban design, nature itineraries).</li> <li>➤ The library as a service that extends beyond its physical walls, seeking proximity to citizens: market, primary care centre, swimming-pool, festivities...</li> </ul>	<p><b>The public library in this domain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Becomes integrated in the environment and a necessary interface with nearby public spaces.</li> <li>➤ Facilitates wealth redistribution and improved quality of life in the more neglected neighbourhoods.</li> <li>➤ Balances urban planning standards between communities.</li> <li>➤ Gives added vitality to urban life.</li> <li>➤ Facilitates the creation of large civic spaces.</li> <li>➤ Helps perform an integrative and redistributive function.</li> <li>➤ The library is a non-excluding space for citizen participation, receiving and advocating initiatives from civil society.</li> <li>➤ Enables cooperative 'city building' between individuals, social groups and governments.</li> <li>➤ Favours movement and exchange between different citizens.</li> <li>➤ Stimulates symbolic identification, expression and cultural integration.</li> <li>➤ Facilitates the intensity and quality of the social relations between individuals, arising from the mingling of groups and conducts.</li> <li>➤ Fosters the acquisition of shared community values (tolerance, solidarity, cohesion).</li> </ul>

## Social domain: Resources, work team and supporting agents.

Domain	Resources	Work team	Supporting agents
SOCIAL	<p><b>Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Spaces and ambiances that facilitate relations among the population, participation and experience exchange as needs dictate (differentiated areas, use of warm colours on the walls, large tables for meetings,...).</li> <li>› Accessible space and amenities, with no architectural barriers. Spaces that ensure mobility and ease of movement.</li> <li>› Rooms for more personalised treatment.</li> <li>› Rooms for activities.</li> <li>› Work rooms, IT rooms, attractive, comfortable, accessible spaces.</li> <li>› Appropriate signage in different languages. Signage and focus of the collection adapted to people with disabilities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Holdings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Heterogeneous collection in different languages, reflecting the population's diversity and responding to its needs. Collection that is representative of the plurality and diversity of society: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specific document collection for social groups at risk of exclusion.</li> <li>▪ Bibliographical holdings and documentary resources adapted to people with disabilities (aligned with diagnosis): collection for people with reading difficulties (easy reading), picture books and audiobooks.</li> <li>▪ Document collection targeting ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities and adapted to all ages. To learn Catalan-Spanish language and culture. In the mother tongue of the country of origin, so as not to lose traditions.</li> <li>▪ Document collections on other cultures in the dominant language, to help the people from here to learn about the population groups that also live in their community.</li> </ul> </li> <li>› Good organisation and signage of the holdings.</li> <li>› Collection exchanges: travelling batches, interlibrary loan.</li> <li>› CEPSE (Ministry of Culture's central lending facility) holdings, with 'easy reading' and large print books as a resource.</li> </ul> <p><b>Amenities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Amenities to facilitate use of resources: induction loop, JAWS, magnifying glasses,... technologies, and also physical amenities that guarantee accessibility.</li> <li>› Adapted information communication and transmission system.</li> <li>› Wi-Fi access around the library.</li> </ul> <p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Websites accessible to people with disabilities.</li> <li>› Website pages in the languages of the main language communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Staff whose professional profile is aligned with the inclusion of specific groups (social educators who are fluent in minority languages, etc.)</li> <li>› Staff originating from any of the ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities.</li> <li>› Staff able to speak any of the minority languages.</li> <li>› Staff interested in creating multicultural environments, ability to work with interprofessional teams, knowledge of languages and desire to serve the community).</li> <li>› Cooperation with other public and private agents who represent the community, possibility of recruiting them as volunteers to support the library.</li> <li>› Training needs of the staff who will interact with the public. Periods working in other libraries (stages).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Social services.</li> <li>› Citizen information services: 010, more specific population groups, elderly, youth... also employment services, entrepreneurship...</li> <li>› Neighbourhood associations, immigrant groups and families (reception).</li> <li>› Consulates and embassies.</li> <li>› Schools, special schools and other centres that provide care and education for people with disabilities, adult education centres, language schools.</li> <li>› Language normalisation consortium.</li> <li>› Primary care centres and hospitals.</li> <li>› Prisons and shelters.</li> <li>› Employment and entrepreneurship services.</li> <li>› Businesses and shops: relations with businesses, Chambers of Commerce, corporate social responsibility.</li> <li>› Museums, theatres and other cultural amenities.</li> <li>› Other libraries and library networks.</li> <li>› Volunteers.</li> <li>› Foundations.</li> <li>› Publishers.</li> <li>› Time bank organisation.</li> </ul>



## 11. Promotion of labour inclusion.

Economic domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ECONOMIC</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Promotion of labour inclusion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Although poverty as an aspect of exclusion can be complemented with many other aspects, such as discrimination, stigmatisation, social rejection or weak interpersonal ties, it is still a very important aspect of exclusion.</li> <li>› Although economic exclusion is usually related to the more marginalised segments of society (homeless, drug addicts, etc.), this situation can be suffered by a very significant part of the population who, as a result of the economic recession, changes in the economic sphere or in welfare policies, may find themselves exposed to a greater degree of vulnerability or precariousness due to an eviction process or because they cannot access certain resources (educated people, etc.).</li> <li>› The economic production sphere, that is, the work sphere, is one of the basic pillars supporting individuals' social inclusion. However, beyond the fact that the job market is one of the main sources of income for a large part of the population, it also performs a second vital social function, as it is one of the main means by which individuals gain a sense of meaning and identity, complementing family ties.</li> <li>› The degree and type of participation in the job market may determine the objective conditions of exclusion or inclusion of certain traditionally more vulnerable social groups (young people, people over 45, women, immigrants, people with disabilities, etc.), particularly in times of economic crisis such as the present, as a result of the increased precariousness, job turnover and loss of rights and social protection.</li> <li>› By being present in all communities and offering job hunting-related services and resources from this proximity, the public libraries have become key elements in guaranteeing the social inclusion and advancement of those individuals who are in a situation of increased vulnerability.</li> <li>› Libraries must face a new context with a greater diversity of vulnerability situations and a progressive increase in the number of unemployed people.</li> <li>› The experience acquired by public libraries in training in basic skills, digital literacy or learning support shows their power to create opportunities and provide support to unemployed people.</li> <li>› With the worldwide growth in unemployment, the public library has become a vital resource, particularly for more vulnerable unemployed people (those who have no financial resources, are not familiar with new technologies, do not have the necessary skills to use job-seeking channels, etc.).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› A diagnosis of the community's job market.</li> <li>› A municipal strategy for stimulating job growth in the community.</li> <li>› A local network of agents who provide support for the individual's social inclusion: libraries, local employment services, social services.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions that public libraries already perform or need to undertake:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Cooperate with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>› Make available the library's facilities and resources for the performance of activities related with the local employment service / local economic development.</li> <li>› Encourage participation of library users in the delimitation of activities.</li> <li>› Carry out user satisfaction / perception surveys. Questionnaires for detecting real needs and offering appropriate services and resources.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that public libraries offer or can offer to foster labour inclusion</b> (in alliance with institutions operating in the economic development and employment sector):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Activities to increase digital literacy (understand online employment resources, know how to use them, learn how to look for work on Internet, learn how to send job applications, etc.).</li> <li>› Skill-developing activities and ICT accreditation (ACTIC).</li> <li>› Job-hunting workshops: how to look for work, how to write a CV, preparing for a job interview, etc.</li> <li>› Activities aimed at fostering entrepreneurship.</li> <li>› Self-teaching services and online language learning resources.</li> <li>› Job offer information service.</li> <li>› Provision of areas in the library for co-working.</li> <li>› Personalised job hunting guidance and support sessions.</li> <li>› Meeting points for sharing entrepreneurship and self-employment projects. Knowledge and experience-sharing encounters.</li> <li>› Dissemination of profiles and needs in the community's job market and trends.</li> <li>› Communication campaigns providing job-related information focused on the territory (posters, mailing, social media, etc.).</li> </ul>	<p><b>The public library in this domain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Contributes to the social inclusion and advancement of unemployed people.</li> <li>› Helps boost unemployed people's confidence that they will be able to re-enter the job market.</li> <li>› Helps generate the feeling that creative and positive use is being made of the free time created by unemployment and which could otherwise be used for leisure.</li> <li>› Improves the personal skills and job-hunting abilities of unemployed people with a higher degree of vulnerability.</li> <li>› Familiarises unemployed people with the use of computers and enhances their skills and abilities in this area, helping consolidate the digital society.</li> <li>› Helps consolidate a fairer society.</li> <li>› Helps strengthen the local area's potential for economic development and reactivation.</li> </ul>

## 12. Foster local economic development.

Economic domain / Individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ECONOMIC</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Foster local economic development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Given the existence of multiple approaches, defining the relationship between economy and culture is no easy task. In Spain, the predominant approach considers that while culture is a sector having considerable economic significance, it cannot be treated like the rest because it has certain intangible social and human repercussions that are above purely monetary aspects.</li> <li>➤ Nowadays, no one seriously questions that culture plays an increasingly important role in the economic development of industrialised countries.</li> <li>➤ Even though classic economic theory scorned the link between culture and economy (Adam Smith considered that the culture-related professions contributed nothing to a country's wealth and represented par excellence the non-productive labour sector), in the '60s, the foundations of a new economic discipline were gradually laid down with culture as its main component: cultural economics, advocated by many economists (William Baumol, William Bowen, Gary Becker, George J. Stigler or the School of Choice).</li> <li>➤ Therefore, culture is recognised as a field particular suited to government intervention, not just because many of its products are public goods but also because it is an instrument for identifying or transforming places and because it is an essential ingredient of local and regional development strategies.</li> <li>➤ At present, as a result of the budget restrictions imposed on the culture sector in most of the countries in our region, the sector must rethink its offering if it is to survive the present unfavourable economic context while maintaining the quality of the services offered and the social and economic benefits produced with its action.</li> <li>➤ Public libraries have the capability to generate economic benefit for its users as a result of having received certain library services or the externalities generated by the service in their community. There is also a 'domino effect' produced by the services offered by the library to the individual and their social repercussion.</li> <li>➤ A number of studies, including that of the Florida public libraries (McClure, Fraser &amp; Nelson, 2002), have established, in economic terms, the value that public libraries have for users, companies and the community as a whole, through their direct or indirect impact on the local economy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A diagnosis of local economic development opportunities and needs.</li> <li>➤ A municipal strategy for local economic development.</li> <li>➤ Take part in the municipal strategy concerning the municipality's Agenda 21 and Programme 21.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions that public libraries already perform or need to undertake:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Cooperate with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>➤ Encourage actions to support formal and non-formal education and continuing learning (cross-sectional skills: IT, languages, etc.).</li> <li>➤ Aim the actions at specific social groups (youth, recent literates, disabled people, women, unemployed people, entrepreneurs,...).</li> <li>➤ Offer local cultural calendars that include activities organised by private entities.</li> <li>➤ Provide municipal co-working facilities.</li> <li>➤ Organise business plan competitions (the winner would be provided financial and/or material support by the local government).</li> <li>➤ Encourage participation of the library's users in the delimitation of activities.</li> <li>➤ Perform user satisfaction/perception surveys.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that public libraries offer or can offer to foster local economic development</b> (in alliance with institutions operating in the economic development and employment sector):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Literacy and IL services.</li> <li>➤ Training and career guidance services.</li> <li>➤ Home study support services.</li> <li>➤ Legal training or career guidance services in alliance with institutions operating in the economic development sector.</li> <li>➤ Documentary support for the courses of study offered in the location (vocational training, degrees, voluntary secondary, university studies...).</li> <li>➤ Services to small businesses or self-employed people.</li> <li>➤ Activities to inform about the services and products available in the territory to support the local economy and local entrepreneurship.</li> <li>➤ Presentation of local entrepreneurs' projects with the goal of: informing citizens about their products and finding possible partners.</li> <li>➤ Information service about local businesses.</li> <li>➤ Activities to develop synergies between similar groups (networking in the library with professional associations, universities, private entities, employment services, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><b>The public library in this domain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ May generate significant external economies in the community.</li> <li>➤ Contributes to energising local manufacturing companies, local businesses or facilitating the birth of new companies.</li> <li>➤ Helps improve residents' productivity by improving their skills and increasing the value of their work, with the possibility of improving their economy.</li> <li>➤ Enables a community's economic value to be increased as a result of the 'attraction' effect, by making it easier for new businesses to move to the community and favouring property appreciation or increased tourism.</li> <li>➤ Is a significant resource for generating income, wealth and employment in both the short and long term.</li> <li>➤ Fosters social wellbeing and the community's economic and cultural development. Helps reduce poverty or assure the survival of local producers.</li> <li>➤ Contributes to forming more cohesive and inclusive communities with more social capital.</li> <li>➤ Cooperates in promoting the community to the outside world, showing the region's tourist attractions, it may have an attraction effect that leads to increased spending in the territory.</li> <li>➤ Helps individual financial saving.</li> <li>➤ Stimulates citizens' active participation as a tool for societal change and participation in democratic life.</li> <li>➤ Fosters personal development and addresses the challenge of finding a job or entrepreneurship.</li> </ul>

## Economic domain: Resources, work team and supporting agents.

Domain	Resources	Work team	Supporting agents
ECONOMIC	<p><b>Spaces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Purposeful location of amenities.</li> <li>› Flexible physical spaces that facilitate experience and information exchange, becoming places for sharing and forming relationships based on common interests.</li> <li>› Multimedia spaces.</li> <li>› Multifunctional spaces.</li> </ul> <p><b>Holdings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Focus on job seeking and entrepreneurship.</li> <li>› Bibliographical holdings with study resources for improving employment.</li> <li>› Practical materials (physical or virtual) for job seeking: how to write a CV, pass an aptitude test, prepare for an interview, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Amenities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Computers for public use.</li> <li>› Office automation and other software that is useful for job hunting and entrepreneurship.</li> <li>› Technological tools for developing products (apps, websites...).</li> <li>› Tools for fostering creativity in seeking new career opportunities (new products / services, new companies / businesses,...).</li> <li>› Tools to help in discovering and promoting new sources of employment.</li> <li>› Good Wi-Fi and mains connections.</li> </ul> <p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Virtual space for finding local resources and career guidance.</li> <li>› Access to online training platforms.</li> <li>› Database with companies and entities related with the territory.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Purchase resources and materials from local companies.</li> <li>› Alternative sources of finance for activities and services to increase employment (fundraising).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Proactive staff who know about the subject and the services offered by local institutions.</li> <li>› Library staff trained in job finding and recruitment (at least one person in the team specialised in this).</li> <li>› Support from other profiles if required (on a per project basis) or continuing specialisation in the subject (cooperation with the local employment service).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Coordinated action with the local employment and economic development services.</li> <li>› SOC: Catalan Employment Service.</li> <li>› Cooperation with public/private agents specialised in self-employment and entrepreneurship.</li> <li>› Seedbeds for new projects/companies.</li> <li>› Business and manufacturing community: Chambers of Commerce, retail trade associations, private sector (SMEs).</li> <li>› Organisations that work with groups at risk of social exclusion.</li> <li>› Education centres: secondary schools, primary schools, university faculties, adult education centres, municipal ICT services.</li> <li>› Education centres/services to acquire skills and accreditations in the use of new technologies (ACTIC).</li> <li>› Youth information points.</li> </ul>

### 13. Information literacy (IL).

### Educational/informative domain / individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<b>EDUCATIONAL / INFORMATIVE</b>	<b>Information literacy (IL)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In the world we live in, the division between rich and poor often depends on the quantity and quality of the knowledge acquired and the manner in which it is translated into skills that can be used in the different spheres of a person's life. It is therefore in this context that the expression 'information literacy' or IL operates.</li> <li>➤ This paradigm has developed in parallel to the social, economic and technological changes that have affected the information world and is based on the idea that a person is information literate when he or she 'is able to recognise when he or she needs information and has the ability to find it, evaluate it and make effective use of it' (ALA, 1989).</li> <li>➤ The importance of IL rests on the idea of 'teaching to learn', on the ability to instil in the individual a minimum level of skill in information analysis, evaluation and use so that he or she can act autonomously in a growing context of information that is available and accessible in any format.</li> <li>➤ In 2005, the 'Alexandria Proclamation on Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning' recognised IL as a basic human right in the digital world. It also ascribed to it a new attribute linked to temporality, to the need to assure continuing learning during all stages of an individual's life.</li> <li>➤ Although the public library has taken on a very important educational role in certain countries (going beyond that of provider of information and becoming an agent for the development of the individual's empowerment and abilities), in others, the driving force for IL comes mostly from school libraries.</li> <li>➤ Although today, what we understand by IL—its definition and attributes—is widely accepted, there still remains some disagreement as to how it should be applied. In other words, as Owusu-Ansah (2003) points out, the absence of uniform lines of action and of opportunities to carry them out is one of the greatest challenges that IL must face.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Diagnosis of the status of IL in the community.</li> <li>➤ IL strategy tied to educational services and policies related with reading comprehension, literacy and training in the use of new technologies.</li> <li>➤ School visits plan.</li> <li>➤ Municipal reading plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions and tools that facilitate the library's role in fostering information literacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>➤ Adaptation of services and educational offering to different audiences and levels of need.</li> <li>➤ Empowerment of the library as a meeting space, facilitating knowledge exchange between people.</li> <li>➤ Personalised design of services for risk or more vulnerable groups that are outside of the formal system.</li> <li>➤ Preparation of self-learning materials: physical and virtual (apps, video tutorials, Mooc capsules)</li> <li>➤ Support for school libraries.</li> <li>➤ Regular promotion and dissemination in the communication media. Virtual learning communities.</li> <li>➤ Tools to enable participation of library users in defining library activities.</li> <li>➤ User satisfaction/perception surveys.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that the public libraries offer or can offer to foster digital literacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Activities supporting continuing education, lifelong learning and distance learning.</li> <li>➤ Activities to foster the necessary skills for autonomous, creative action. Fostering a critical outlook (e.g. press clubs).</li> <li>➤ Digital literacy activities.</li> <li>➤ Visits and traditional instruction in the use of the library and its resources.</li> <li>➤ 'A la carte' IL visits by education centres, associations and entities, and by specific population groups (possibility of doing the visits in different languages).</li> <li>➤ Personalised information search service. Tailored resource selection.</li> <li>➤ Service for selective information dissemination by subscription.</li> <li>➤ On-line tutorials and workshops.</li> <li>➤ Workshops for young people and parents on the use of the social media (usefulness, benefits, rules of behaviour, dangers, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It provides a means to counteract information saturation and overload.</li> <li>➤ It enables recognition of quality information.</li> <li>➤ It helps guarantee that everyone has access to effective opportunities for personal growth and full integration in a society's occupational and social life.</li> <li>➤ It helps individuals and institutions to address technological, economic and social challenges.</li> <li>➤ It contributes to individuals' lifelong learning, promoting social progress and helping develop the information culture.</li> <li>➤ It improves the ability of different generations to adapt to changes in the knowledge society.</li> <li>➤ It boosts libraries' learning generation capacity and their appeal.</li> <li>➤ It helps form more informed, empowered and inclusive societies.</li> <li>➤ It contributes indirectly to full use of a country's human capital and intellectual energy.</li> </ul>

## 14. Digital inclusion.

### Educational/informative domain / individual perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
EDUCATIONAL / INFORMATIVE	Digital inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The term 'Digital divide' has been used from two outlooks: a) to describe the socioeconomic gap between those communities that have access to ICTs and those that do not, and b) to account for the difference in the level of use of ICTs (Internet, computers) that may exist between people born in the digital age and those born before the 1960s.</li> <li>› The essence of digital exclusion is linked to inequality in access to or use of information, to a type of social exclusion that discriminates between those people who cannot access digital resources to improve their quality of life and those who can.</li> <li>› A number of studies have shown that, in recent years, the digital divide has increased in most societies, including developed countries where this divide should be virtually non-existent.</li> <li>› In the case of the US, a recent study has shown that it still has a long way to go before it fulfils the basic premises regarding the digital resources required to guarantee access to information for the entire population: access to ICTs at an affordable price, availability of an ICT device in the home, availability of mobile ICT devices, use of broadband.</li> <li>› In the case of the EU, almost 30% of the population has never used Internet, which means that just under 150 million inhabitants, most of them aged between 65 and 74, with few resources, unemployed or with little education, do not access Internet and, consequently, do not have access to the online information available. In the case of Spain, this percentage is about 52.7%.</li> <li>› Given this context, the Digital Agenda for Europe (2010) is looking for commercial and technical solutions able to effectively guarantee the digital inclusion of the continent's entire population and, particularly, of the more disadvantaged social groups.</li> <li>› In this sense, the free, unimpeded access to digital resources offered by public libraries and the services and activities targeting their users' information literacy are resources with a level of usefulness that is hard to match by others that may exist in a community.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Diagnosis of the situation as regards digital divide in the community.</li> <li>› Strategy for counteracting the digital divide with a municipal digital literacy plan: access to ICTs and training at different levels for different population groups and segments (particularly those most affected by the digital divide).</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions and tools that facilitate the library's role in fostering digital inclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Cooperate with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>› Have an active digital community and powerful profiles in the different social media.</li> <li>› Create educational content: ICT capsules that are accessible online.</li> <li>› Have the latest electronic devices so that the public can see them and try them.</li> <li>› Tools to enable participation of library users in defining library activities.</li> <li>› User satisfaction/perception surveys.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that the public libraries offer or can offer to foster digital inclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Activities to create awareness and promote use of ICTs</li> <li>› Lending service for portable devices and e-books.</li> <li>› Access to digitised holdings: Trencadís, Google books, etc.</li> <li>› Digital literacy activities (to consolidate knowledge and digital skills).</li> <li>› Training in the critical use of social media (personal data protection).</li> <li>› Training in the use of ICTs: group sessions but also individual tutorials.</li> <li>› Training and support in accessing and using online public services: making a doctor's appointment, filing income tax returns, asking for an appointment to renew the Identity Card, etc.</li> <li>› Training in the day-to-day use of technological equipment: mobile phone, digital camera, DVD or Blu-Ray players, tablets, e-books, etc.</li> <li>› E-skill programmes.</li> <li>› Accreditation in digital skills (ACTIC) and provision of instruments for evaluating the level of learning.</li> <li>› Support for answering ICT queries on the spot (creation and use of social media profiles, e-mail, buying online, etc).</li> <li>› Promote 'ICT clubs' and intergenerational encounters to share knowledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› It reduces the digital impediments that some citizens suffer due to economic or skill problems.</li> <li>› It guarantees fair and equal access to information on any medium and to information resources.</li> <li>› It improves the skills and knowledge of the more vulnerable groups in the digital age.</li> <li>› It helps more vulnerable people to participate on equal terms in the digital society.</li> <li>› It helps consolidate a more just, fairer and more equal society.</li> <li>› It helps reduce the generation gap in knowledge and skills.</li> </ul>



## 15. More and better informed societies.

## Educational/informative domain / community perspective.

Domain	Social benefit	Conceptualisation	Actions and tools	Services	Benefits
<b>EDUCATIONAL / INFORMATIVE</b>	<b>More and better informed societies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The 'information society' is that in which information is used intensely in economic, social, cultural and political life and is distinguished by the importance attached to information (Bangemann Report).</li> <li>➤ Information plays a key role as a raw material for guaranteeing people's economic growth, wellbeing, social cohesion and full self-realisation. In fact, the Council of Europe considers that no country will be fully democratic until it has ensured that every inhabitant has equal access to information.</li> <li>➤ Information policies must act to support the social advantages that the information society may produce for citizens and must seek to overcome the risks. Thus, the availability of public information and free access to basic information services are seen as necessities.</li> <li>➤ As Sharma pointed out, 'libraries are indispensable for society', as 'they educate, inform and make an individual into a better citizen'. The Community Information Centers, which appeared in public libraries in the English-speaking world in the 1970s, advocate viewing the library as an information service for the community, understood in a broad sense, which not only includes local information but any kind of information that is practical and useful for the citizen, irrespective of his or her background.</li> <li>➤ In the case of Spain, although library professionals are aware that the library is the community's information centre par excellence and that they are in a privileged position to offer all manner of information, in government spheres a more traditional idea of the public library predominates and often specific information centres inside or outside of the library are created, such as Youth Information Points, Citizens' Information Centres, or Consumer Advice Offices.</li> <li>➤ The prevailing trend worldwide is to put libraries at the core of local information policies. They must answer individuals' information needs to enable them to carry out activities of daily life or exercise citizen rights and to foster the community's social and economic development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic context tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Municipal plan for the information society.</li> <li>➤ Municipal transparent communication policy.</li> <li>➤ Diagnosis of the information required by the community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions and tools that help the library in its role to assist in creating more and better informed societies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The library's involvement in the local information communication strategy (which includes library, archive, youth information service, CAO...).</li> <li>➤ Cooperation with public and private agents in the territory.</li> <li>➤ The libraries' involvement in projects concerning the development of the so-called smart cities.</li> <li>➤ User satisfaction/perception surveys and studies.</li> <li>➤ Tools to enable participation of library users in defining library activities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services that public libraries offer or can offer to foster more and better informed societies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Virtual information services (use of ICTs and Internet: the MLN virtual library and its resources).</li> <li>➤ Municipal information services that include routine information: enrolments, educational offering, cultural activities, public transport, taxes, grants and subsidies (including 2.0 tools and apps).</li> <li>➤ Alert services and information on specific subjects by subscription.</li> <li>➤ Immigrant reception service to foster social inclusion.</li> <li>➤ IL literacy services to improve information skills and encourage a critical outlook by citizens.</li> <li>➤ Research programmes and competitions on local history.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It provides information to satisfy the community's information needs.</li> <li>➤ It facilitates and promotes general access to universal knowledge.</li> <li>➤ It facilitates 'outside' access to knowledge about local issues.</li> <li>➤ It effectively and efficiently provides useful, practical and contextualised information to citizens.</li> <li>➤ It improves coordination and avoids duplications in the information provided to citizens.</li> <li>➤ It guarantees equal access to information.</li> <li>➤ It improves efficiency in the provision of services.</li> <li>➤ It contributes to consolidating the knowledge societies.</li> <li>➤ It helps advance towards an increasingly virtual and innovative service provision model.</li> <li>➤ It helps include risk groups.</li> <li>➤ It contributes to exerting a positive effect on democracy and participation in local affairs.</li> </ul>

## Educational / informative domain: Resources, work team and supporting agents.

Domain	Resources	Work team	Supporting agents
EDUCATIONAL / INFORMATIVE	<p><b>Spaces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Education / multimedia spaces.</li> <li>➤ Clear and useful signage.</li> </ul> <p><b>Holdings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Self-learning resources (languages, etc.) and adult education resources.</li> <li>➤ Accreditation and skill evaluation guides.</li> <li>➤ Local information: on history, companies, personages, places of tourist and/or cultural interest, etc.</li> <li>➤ Information on transport services, roads, emergency services, etc.</li> <li>➤ Statistical, meteorological data, etc.</li> <li>➤ Activity agendas.</li> <li>➤ Digital content: capacity to create it and make it accessible.</li> </ul> <p><b>Amenities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Free access to ICT resources: computers, software, Internet and others.</li> <li>➤ Tablets and e-books.</li> <li>➤ Good Wi-Fi connection.</li> </ul> <p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Citizen portals: Virtual Library, Genius, Aladí.</li> <li>➤ Online IL resources.</li> <li>➤ Digital resources.</li> <li>➤ Links to the local press and local search engines.</li> <li>➤ Links to useful institutions.</li> <li>➤ Other useful links or information for the community and its social groups (housing, employment, health, legal issues, etc.).</li> <li>➤ Presence in the social media: blogs, twitter, facebook, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Tools for measuring individual progress in digital literacy.</li> <li>➤ Tools for processing digital documentation.</li> <li>➤ ComunitatXBM as a platform for disseminating information and promoting improvement dynamics among library professionals with the aim of improving the service provided to the citizen.</li> <li>➤ Volunteers to provide support in the performance of actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Staff with educational aptitudes, motivation and social awareness.</li> <li>➤ Specialised digital managers.</li> <li>➤ Continuing education for the staff.</li> <li>➤ Staff trained in IL.</li> <li>➤ Staff trained in e-skills.</li> <li>➤ Staff trained in diversity.</li> <li>➤ Legal and IT support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Formal and non-formal, public and private education centres: primary schools, secondary schools, universities, adult education centres (and their libraries).</li> <li>➤ Distance learning and self-learning sector (Mooc platform).</li> <li>➤ Municipal portals.</li> <li>➤ ACTIC certifying centres.</li> <li>➤ Other access points to ICTs: puntxarxa, telecentres,...</li> <li>➤ ICT schools and/or education centres (public and private).</li> <li>➤ Professionals specialised in ICT and multimedia: community manager, etc.</li> <li>➤ Technology companies: electronics/IT shops and firms.</li> <li>➤ Local employment services for certifications and improving the CV.</li> <li>➤ Teaching resources centres.</li> <li>➤ Parent-teachers association, for education for the parents.</li> <li>➤ Services and entities, by population segment: elderly, youth, disabled, immigrants and other segments at risk of social exclusion.</li> <li>➤ Associations and associative and volunteer networks.</li> <li>➤ Other libraries for working cooperatively in the development of products and tools.</li> <li>➤ Participation in European research projects.</li> <li>➤ The private sector for sponsorships.</li> </ul>

## Conclusions:

### 10 strategic points for enhancing the public library's value in society.

The work performed shows that MLN libraries contribute with their resources, services, activities and alliances to generating, to a greater or lesser degree, the social benefits identified in the study. It also clearly shows that there is room for improvement and the study explains in detail what and how.

The project proves, once again, that there are a series of cross-sectional, strategic elements that every public library should take into consideration to increase its value in society. The list below gives those that the professionals considered most important and which were mentioned in the discussions by all of the work groups:

#### **Proximity and engagement**

**Proximity as a strategic value**

**1**

By definition, the public library is a local amenity. This enables a higher level of engagement with the immediate social reality compared with other services and it must learn how to leverage this to drive and participate actively in the cultural, social, educational and economic development of the community it serves. The public library has the responsibility to contribute to social wellbeing and society's quality of life. Each library will be different and will offer a range of services adapted to its local context.

#### **Accessibility and equality**

**A library for everyone**

**2**

Equal access is one of the libraries' distinctive features. As a public service open to everyone, the library must be able to reach and provide an offering that is suitable for everyone, devoting particular attention to those people who have difficulties in gaining access to this service. Accessibility has a direct impact on the building, the collection, the facilities, the opening hours and the service offering. In addition to accessibility to culture and knowledge, the library plays a significant role in introducing citizens to the latest technological progress.



## **Connectedness**

**Identity, dialogue  
and social cohesion**

**3**

The public library as a cultural reference for the territory and a public space for the community has an important role to play in fostering social cohesion. As such, it must support activities that nurture the values of dialogue, independent thinking and identification with the territory. For this to happen, it must be included in municipal strategies related directly or indirectly with the library area's of action (social cohesion, reading, literacy, etc.)

## **Evolution, adaptation and innovation**

**New needs,  
new ways of  
working, new ways  
of  
operating**

**4**

It is absolutely necessary to adapt to new social realities and needs to assure the libraries' sustainability. Creativity and innovation should be encouraged as tools for addressing the difficult economic context. Libraries must evolve in pace with societal changes and reflect the citizen profile they serve, becoming veritable arenas for social cohesion. The library must adapt to its environment and this requires replacing the idea of 'offering services' to 'matching services' to the needs of actual and prospective users. Each citizen must be able to find in the library the resources that answer his or her needs, which will change as his or her circumstances change.

## **Cooperation**

**Together we do it  
better**

**5**

Cooperation in the local sphere with other public services, private companies, citizen organisations and between the libraries themselves is fundamental. Cooperating, coordinating actions, strategies, knowledge and spaces with agents who are working in the same direction is essential if the scope of the benefits generated is to be increased. Cooperation will contribute directly to improving the effectiveness of the actions performed for the benefit of society.

## **Participation**

**Engage the citizen**

**6**

A library is a key member of the community in which it operates, a meeting point for different groups and a hub for the community's cultural life. The library must foster the value of citizenry and engage citizens in the actions carried out by the library: detect needs, design services, support the performance of activities by volunteers and evaluate services. Crowdfunding and sponsorship actions by private individuals and the local business fabric should also be considered.

**The work team**  
**The foundation for success**

**7**

The work team is the foundation for the successful creation of a more social library: their training, commitment and ability to generate synergies with the community are fundamental factors. The staff's creativity and ability to innovate is an essential value for any library. The staff must be interdisciplinary, versatile and flexible. Cooperation with specialists from other local agents to achieve common goals is fundamental.

**Planning and evaluation**

**Think before acting**

**8**

The library must engage in new areas of action but must not lose sight of what its basic functions are and distinguish between those that are intrinsic to its purpose and those that correspond to other services. The actions performed must be consistent with the library's nature and be included in its annual plan. They must also be evaluated within a context of continuous improvement.

**Communication**

**Reach people**

**9**

The library's services must reach the audiences they target. Although the percentage is progressively falling, a proportion of citizens are still unaware—or have a distorted idea—of what the library can offer them. Communication and promotion actions targeting specific population segments are still needed.

**Efficiency, quality and sustainability**

**Adjust the offer to real needs**

**10**

In a socioeconomic context in which the library's social role is increasingly important, efficiency, quality and sustainability must continue to be the keywords for the library's services and activities. For this to be possible, the offering must be adjusted to real needs with a strategy that includes the points above.

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