



**SOCIAL INNOVATION
PORTFOLIO VIDAS**
A NEW MODEL OF COMMUNITY-BASED CARE

*Summary prepared for the international meeting of
National Competence Centres for Social Innovation*

**Social Innovation Portfolios in Practice:
Building Advocacy for Systemic Change**

Madrid, 4-5 May 2026



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This document is a summary of the Innovation Portfolio for a New Model of Community-Based Care (Secretariat of State for Social Rights, January 2026), prepared for the international meeting of national competence centres for social innovation Social Innovation Portfolios in Practice: Building Advocacy for Systemic Change (Madrid, 4-5 May 2026). The full document, including the complete conceptual framework, innovations, findings and profiles of the 19 pilot projects, is available at: **<https://plataformavidas.gob.es/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Cartera-Innovaciones-VIDAS.pdf>**

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Context and purpose

The transformation of care and support systems is one of the central challenges facing contemporary public policy. It is a complex, systemic challenge affecting multiple population groups, which demands progress towards person-centred, community-based models grounded in human rights. This shift is not merely normative or organisational: it is also cultural, insofar as it questions approaches that conflict with human rights and redefines how care, support and people's agency in their own life projects are understood.

In this context, social innovation is not an auxiliary instrument but a structural condition for transformation to be possible. Without innovation, systems tend to reproduce the very models they seek to replace. Innovation enables the exploration of new forms of person-centred support, the activation of new professional roles, the reorganisation of resources and the connection of people with their community environment. And when managed collectively around a shared mission, it generates cumulative knowledge that feeds back into public policy and enables scaling and transfer.

With this conviction, the Secretariat of State for Social Rights launched, under Component 22 of Spain's Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (RTRP), a strategic commitment to social innovation as a lever for systemic change. This commitment was realised through the funding of 19 pilot projects, developed between 2022 and 2024, coordinated through the VIDAS Platform as a shared space for experimentation, exchange and learning. Descriptive profiles of each of the 19 projects are included in the VIDAS Innovation Portfolio (January 2026). This approach is consistent with the logic of ESF+ 2021-2027, in particular its Policy Objective 4 on social inclusion and innovation, and with the European deinstitutionalisation agenda promoted by the European Commission under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, Art. 19) and the European Care Strategy.

From this process emerged the **Innovation Portfolio for a New Model of Community-Based Care** (January 2026). It is neither a catalogue of actions nor a comparison between projects: it is a strategic instrument that organises collectively produced knowledge, makes visible the relationships between innovations, and guides the improvement of public policies through a logic of transfer and cumulative learning. The portfolio approach, consistent with the frameworks promoted by organisations such as the OECD for addressing complex systemic challenges, enables the identification of which combinations of innovations contribute most consistently to model change, beyond the results of each individual project.

This document has been prepared in the framework of the BIRDS project and the European Commission's Community of Practice on Social Innovation and is addressed specifically to national competence centres for social innovation and to European institutions working on frameworks for mission-oriented social innovation. Its purpose is to share what has been learned as a contribution to mutual learning within the European network, not to present a finished model.



What is an innovation portfolio?

An innovation portfolio is neither an inventory of projects nor a comparison of results: it is an enabling architecture that connects initiatives and learning, makes visible the relationships between innovations and facilitates their combination, mutual reinforcement and incremental value generation. Its premise is that the impact of the whole can be greater than the sum of the results of each project individually, provided there is a shared mission that orients the whole without pre-defining closed solutions.

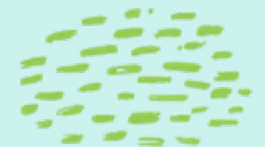
In the VIDAS Portfolio, that mission is to advance towards a new model of care and support that makes community living a real choice. This mission does not operate as a closed plan, but as a reference for interpreting the experimentation and learning that is generated along the way, preventing innovation from drifting into disconnected initiatives and facilitating the processes of transfer and scaling.

The process is articulated iteratively: mission, principles, challenges, innovations, categories and findings do not follow a linear sequence, but rather engage in continuous dialogue and readjustment based on practice. This recurrent movement makes it possible to build progressive consensus on what generates value, under what conditions and with what implications for model change. The Portfolio contains 95 innovations and 179 findings: the innovations reflect what has been tested; the findings distil what has been learned in the process: what works, under what conditions, with what limitations and what adjustments are required.

Its most relevant contribution to public policy does not lie in the individual results of each project, but in the type of strategic intelligence that can only be generated at portfolio level. Funding isolated projects produces results; managing a mission-oriented portfolio produces cumulative knowl-

edge about which combinations of innovations work, where the gaps in the system are, which structural barriers recur and what conditions make scaling and transfer possible. This knowledge, which no individual project can generate on its own, is what enables the strategic orientation of public policy design: not just evaluating what has been done, but making better-informed decisions about where to invest, which regulatory frameworks need adjustment, and which models have real conditions for adoption by public systems at greater scale.

Understood in this way, the Portfolio functions as a learning infrastructure that connects experimentation with decision-making: it attends to interdependencies, converts collective experience into transferable knowledge and sustains consistent progress towards model change.



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MISSION

INQUIRY

EXPERIMENTATION

TRANSFER

10 CHALLENGES

95 INNOVATIONS

179 FINDINGS

Scope and scale

The 19 pilot projects that make up the VIDAS Platform have mobilised broad and diverse participation.

> They have involved

143
civil society
organisations,

with total funding of

156
million euros

from Component 22
of the RTP.

> In terms of
direct reach,

41,194
people

have actively
participated in
the projects,

52%
of whom
are women

> The indirect reach –people in the
family and community environment
who have benefited– amounts to

259,957
people

> Awareness-raising
actions have reached

15,667,906
people

A descriptive profile of each of the 19 projects, including their objectives, methodologies and specific results, is included in the VIDAS Innovation Portfolio (January 2026).

Beyond participation figures, the Portfolio contains early evidence on results linked to model change:

> **1,015**
people

have initiated or completed transition processes from institutions to the community, and

387
community housing units

have been established.

> Rural reach accounts for

25.2%
of the total,

and people with high support needs represent

28%
of direct participants,

with complex support needs.



These figures are not merely indicators of scale: they are evidence that it is possible to build, within a bounded timeframe and with public funding, a social innovation ecosystem oriented towards deinstitutionalisation with broad territorial reach, diversity of profiles and concrete early results of community living. Within the European framework, these results represent a direct contribution to Spain's commitments under Article 19 of the CRPD, the right to live independently and be included in the community and to the objectives of the European Care Strategy (2022).

Guiding framework: principles and learning questions

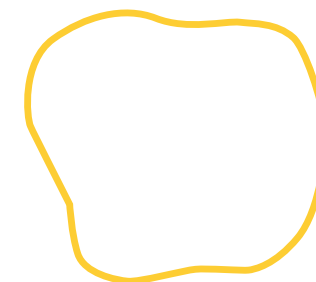
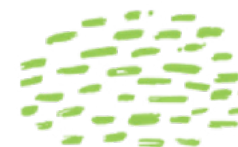
A mission-oriented innovation portfolio requires more than aligned projects: it needs a common framework that ensures distributed experimentation advances in the same direction and from shared values. In the VIDAS Platform, this framework was not defined in advance or imposed from above. It was built and agreed upon throughout the process itself, as projects experimented, compared results and identified shared elements beyond their individual particularities.

The result is a set of seven approaches:

- 1. Human rights**
- 2. Gender and intersectionality**
- 3. Independent living and autonomy**
- 4. Community-based approach**
- 5. Person-centred**
- 6. Comprehensiveness and mainstreaming**
- 7. Co-production**

These approaches do not operate as prescriptive norms but as shared practical references. Their function is twofold: they guide the decisions of each project in its specific context, and they ensure the coherence of the whole, making it possible for innovations developed by 143 different organisations across diverse territories and populations to be comparable, learnable and transferable.

This way of building the principles framework has direct methodological implications for the portfolio approach. In an innovation process distributed across multiple actors, shared principles are not a declaratory preamble: they are the cultural infrastructure that makes collective learning possible. Without this common framework, a portfolio becomes an aggregate of projects; with it, it becomes an innovation system capable of producing systemic transformation. The principles, in this sense, do not only orient the mission: they are guarantors of the quality and coherence of the entire innovation process, from inquiry to transfer.



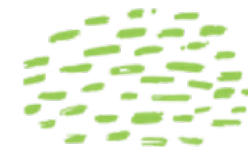
From this common framework of principles, the Portfolio formulates ten learning questions understood as the expression of complex social problems that do not admit closed or pre-known responses. Their design was also a progressive and collective process: starting from learning questions initially located in each project, contrast and exchange made it possible to identify recurring problems and shared axes of transformation. By way of illustration, **four of the ten learning questions:**

How can transition processes from institutions to the community be promoted in ways that centre people's will and preferences ?

How can cultural change be driven that overcomes approaches conflicting with human rights and consolidates a personalised, community-based model of care ?

How can new professional roles, competencies and ways of working be developed in line with the community-based and personalised support model, ensuring adequate organisational and working conditions for sustainability ?

How can alternatives for accessing and maintaining housing with the necessary support be diversified and expanded ?



The complete list of the ten challenges, as well as their relationship with the innovation categories, is included in the VIDAS Innovation Portfolio (January 2026). Their relationship with the categories is neither linear nor one-to-one: each category may respond to several learning questions, and each learning question may be addressed from several categories. It is precisely this density of relationships that gives the Portfolio its systemic character.

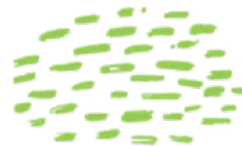
The 10 innovation categories



The 95 tested innovations are organised into 10 categories built from observed relationships between innovations, not as prior classifications. The Portfolio's connection map organises them into four systemic layers: an essential core (accompaniment and community activation), enabling conditions (co-production and participation), support resources (housing, community services and digital transformation) and a layer of organisational transformation (professional roles, residential centres and governance). No layer functions in isolation: systemic impact emerges from their interdependencies.

For each category, the following sections set out its domain of transformation, its key learning and the number of innovations and findings documented. Full detail: specific innovations, findings and sustainability orientations, is available in the

VIDAS Innovation Portfolio
(January 2026)



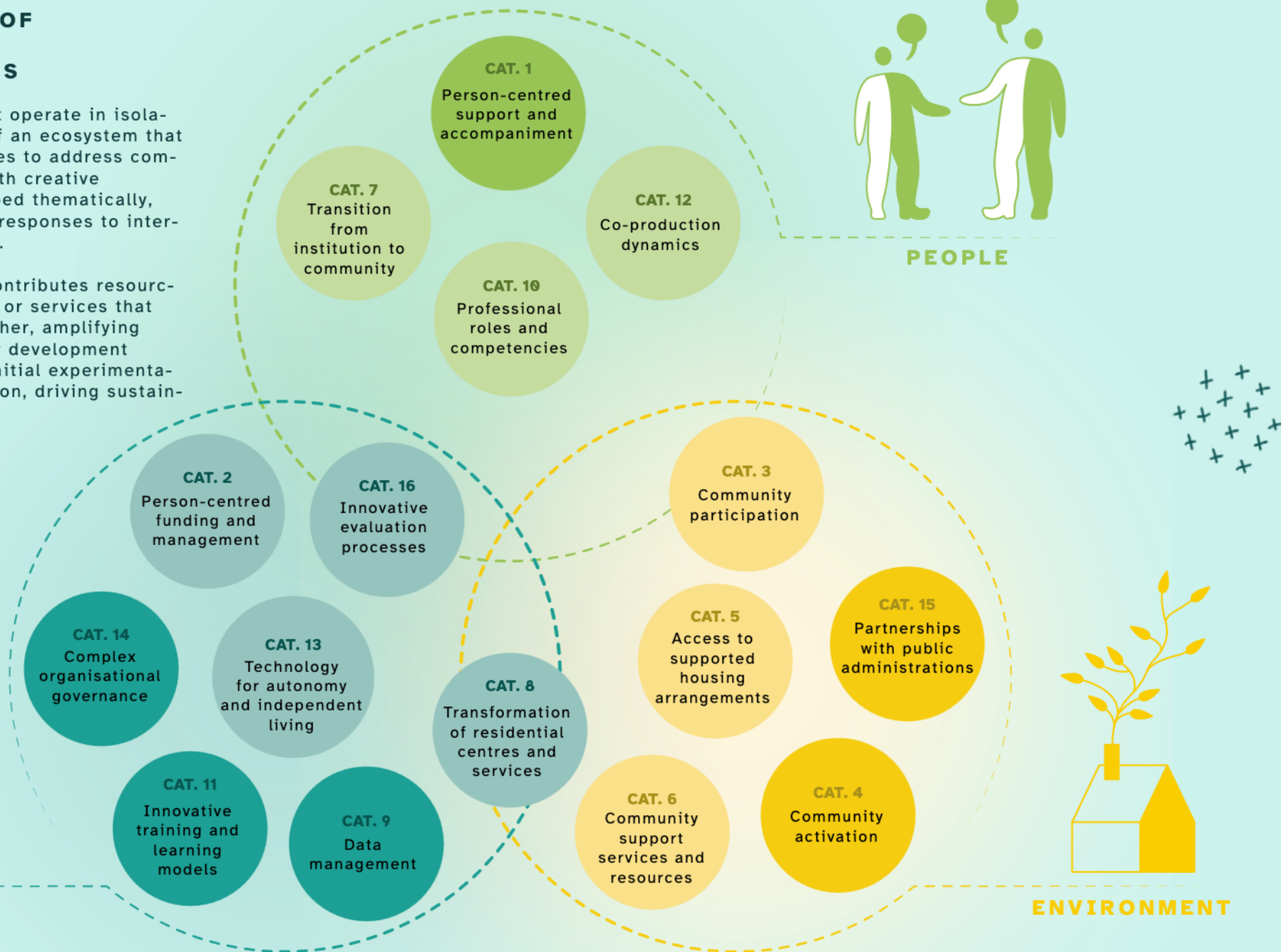
ECOSYSTEM OF CONNECTED INNOVATIONS

Innovations do not operate in isolation, but as part of an ecosystem that combines strategies to address complex challenges with creative approaches. Grouped thematically, they offer diverse responses to inter-related challenges.

Each innovation contributes resources, methodologies or services that reinforce one another, amplifying their impact. Their development progresses from initial experimentation to consolidation, driving sustainable change.



SUPPORT STRUCTURES



PEOPLE



ENVIRONMENT

The 10 innovation categories

Essential core

01 / Person-centred support and transitions

Support models adjusted to the will and rhythms of each person throughout their life course, including transitions from institutions and prevention of return. Key learning: accompanied and safe transitions not only provide a resource but expand rights, consolidate autonomy and produce sustainable exits from the system.



16 innovations · 33 findings

02 / Community activation and co-responsibility in care

Innovations that activate communities' capacity to identify needs, propose solutions and mobilise their own resources. Key learning: the sustainability of model change depends on the community assuming an active role —not merely a recipient role— in the care system.



8 innovations · 14 findings

Enabling conditions

03 / Co-production of services and support

Innovations that redistribute power in the design, delivery and evaluation of services between people with direct experience, professionals, administrations and the community. Key learning: when experiential knowledge is recognised as a legitimate source, responses are better adjusted and the legitimacy of public action is reinforced.



9 innovations · 12 findings

04 / Participation in the community

Innovations that create real conditions for all people to be present, contribute and influence community life, combining universal accessibility, relational support and cross-sector collaboration. Key learning: participation is not about accessing activities; it is about building connections and exercising rights in proximity settings.



5 innovations · 18 findings

Support resources



05 / Housing for community living

Innovations that guarantee access to and permanence in adequate housing as a right and a starting point, with separation between housing and support. Key learning: the complexity of support needs does not explain institutionalisation; the service model does.



7 innovations · 20 findings

06 / Community-based services and support

A new range of proximity services as a real alternative to institutional devices: intensive home care, rural socio-health services, foster care. Key learning: community services are not a reduced version of institutional ones, but a different model with greater capacity for adjustment.



6 innovations · 12 findings

07 / Digital transformation of care and support

Innovations that use technology and data to transform the care model, not as tools of control but as levers of autonomy. Key learning: digital transformation gains value when articulated with professional mediation and community networks.



14 innovations · 18 findings

Organisational transformation

08 / Professional roles and competency development

Innovations that redefine what professionals do and what competencies they need, generating new profiles —life plan facilitator, community connector, support manager. Key learning: without transformation of professional roles, other changes tend to revert.



19 innovations · 26 findings

09 / Transformation of residential centres and environments

Innovations that address the change needed to overcome institutional logic in existing centres, through transformation of practices, spaces and reconversion processes. Key learning: deinstitutionalisation requires sustained cultural and organisational transformation, not only architectural change.



5 innovations · 18 findings

10 / Complex organisational governance

Innovations that develop multi-level and multi-actor governance models connecting global strategy with territorial action. Key learning: complex social challenges require equally complex governance structures, flexible and capable of managing power dynamics between actors with different interests and capacities.



6 innovations · 10 findings

Systemic impact and orientations for public policy

Before analysing the systemic implications, it is worth grounding the argument in some of the most robust results the Portfolio has produced. In the area of person-centred support and transitions, 300 people with disabilities who completed transition processes from institutions to community housing showed significant improvements in emotional wellbeing, self-determination and social inclusion, changes not observed in the comparison group, confirming the transformative nature of the model. In the area of homelessness, the rapid rehousing model with personalised support enabled 76.2% of people in early-intervention programmes to achieve autonomous exits within 17 months; housing satisfaction improved by 1.8 net points relative to the control group. In the area of young people in situations of housing vulnerability, flexible housing models recorded a retention rate of 97.2% and a reduction in the experience of loneliness among women from 47.4% to 15.8% over seven months. These results, drawn from different areas and populations, point in the same direction: when person-centred support, housing and assistance are combined coherently, real and measurable changes occur in people's lives that traditional institutional systems do not produce.

The impact of the VIDAS Portfolio is not read project by project, but in the interdependencies between categories. The accumulated evidence suggests that sustainable deinstitutionalisation does not occur when an innovation works well in isolation, but when different layers of the system are activated in a combined and coordinated way: person-centred support and community activation as the core of the new model; co-production and participation as the conditions that make it possible; housing, community-based services and digital transformation as the resources that sustain it; and the transformation of professional roles, residential centres and governance as the organisational layer that makes it durable. This working hypothesis, which the available evidence suggests but does not close, is what orients the Portfolio's conclusions and has the greatest relevance for public policy: it is not sufficient to fund isolated innovations in each of these layers; they need to be activated in an articulated and sustained way over time.

The Portfolio also contributes a set of trends on the economics of model change that are particularly relevant for European financing and evaluation frameworks. The new model does not necessarily imply greater expenditure, but a transformation of economic logic: a shift from structural costs linked to pre-defined and rigid devices to modular costs linked to support, configurable and adjustable according to each person's needs and decisions over their life course. In the area of homelessness, community-based models with intensive support show costs similar to or lower than those of the traditional institutional network when avoided costs and greater residential stability are factored in. A significant portion of the value generated by community-based models, community network activation, strengthening of proximity bonds, prevention of crises, is not captured in current cost measurement systems, leading to a systematic underestimation of their efficiency and biasing investment decisions against model change.



The Portfolio also documents honestly the limits and barriers that slow scaling, because naming them is a condition for overcoming them. Three types of obstacles appear recurrently. The first is regulatory: rigid regulatory frameworks, technical regulations, procurement processes, housing legislation, designed for the institutional model that hinder or prevent the deployment of community-based solutions. The second is financial: budget frameworks structured around pre-defined devices, with evaluation cycles that prioritise immediate results and do not capture preventive and community value. The third is cultural and organisational: transformation can revert if not sustained with external accompaniment and facilitative leadership, and some community-based models have drifted towards more institutionalised forms in the absence of a supportive normative and cultural framework. These three types of barriers are systemic and interconnected: regulatory reform without cultural change does not produce real transformation, and cultural change without adjustment of financing frameworks is not sustained either. Naming them is not a sign of weakness in the process, it is the most useful evidence an innovation portfolio can offer to those who design policies.

From this evidence, the Portfolio formulates orientations for public policy along three axes. First, to reorient financing frameworks towards support-based rather than device-based models, allowing flexible combinations adjusted to people's needs and decisions. Second, to broaden economic evaluation approaches to incorporate the temporal dimension of support, avoided costs and the prevention of crisis situations or institutional return. Third, to recognise that the findings of an innovation portfolio do not automatically translate into public policy: they require an institutional architecture that connects experimentation with policy decision cycles, converts learning into financing criteria, regulatory frameworks and accreditation models, and maintains that connection continuously, not episodically.

There is also a dimension of transfer that no linear model captures and that the VIDAS experience illustrates clearly. The traditional transfer model operates sequentially: first knowledge is generated, then it is conveyed to decision-makers. This model has a well-documented structural limitation: innovation tends to remain contained within specialised projects or units without transforming the core practices of public systems. The portfolio approach, with the administration as an active agent, breaks that sequence. When administrations co-experiment, compare results and adapt models alongside organisations and people with direct experience, transfer does not occur at the end of the process but throughout it, continuously and even in intangible ways: in the shared language that is built, in the growing common understanding of challenges, in the progressive conviction about new models. The result is a transfer that emerges from the co-responsibility and social legitimacy built during the process—not from external prescription—, which transforms the relationships between institutions, organisations and communities and produces a current of transformation that the actors themselves sustain because they feel it as their own.



National competence centres for social innovation and the portfolio approach



Context note: The National Centre of Competences for Social Innovation (CECIS) is the national social innovation structure that Spain is establishing as a public sector inter-ministerial consortium. Its formal creation is subject to parliamentary authorisation. The BIRDS project (2024-2027), funded by the European Commission in consortium with France, Portugal and Sweden, acts as the experimentation and prototyping phase for the future CECIS. Spain participates in the European Commission's Community of Practice on Social Innovation (CoP), within whose framework this document is prepared.

National competence centres for social innovation are not homogeneous structures: each country configures them according to its institutional model, its ecosystem of actors and its strategic priorities. What we share here is Spain's experience and what we have learned about the role a centre can play when the challenges it addresses have a component of public mission and systemic complexity. This is not a proposal for a single model, but a reflection on why, for this type of challenge, the portfolio approach is not a methodological option but a foundational condition.

A competence centre that operates as an aggregator of good practices or as a project catalogue has limited value when facing challenges such as deinstitutionalisation, care or social inclusion. These challenges do not admit pre-determined solutions, require cultural, organisational and regulatory change, and involve multiple actors who must share co-responsibility over time.

To accompany such processes, a centre needs to operate with a mission-oriented portfolio logic: not managing isolated projects but articulating innovation ecosystems, sustaining collective learning and connecting distributed experimentation with public decision-making.

The experience of CECIS (conceived as an inter-ministerial consortium integrating capacities in social policy, science, technology and strategic knowledge) suggests that the role of the centre varies according to the phase of the innovation process, with evaluation as a transversal function running through all of them. In the inquiry phase, the centre has a role of listening and mapping: it identifies emerging challenges, articulates actors, makes visible what exists and signals gaps and opportunities that no individual project can detect on its own. In the experimentation phase, its role is articulation and accompaniment: it facilitates innovations deployed in differ-

ent contexts to share a common reference framework, engage in dialogue with each other and generate cross-learning. Evaluation is not a subsequent phase but an integrated practice throughout the process: not a closed technical exercise but a continuous learning system that makes it possible to identify what works, under what conditions and with what adjustments, converting accumulated experience into criteria to reorient both ongoing experimentation and policy design. In the transfer phase, the centre's role is the most strategic: it converts that evaluated and accumulated knowledge into orientations for public policy, identifies which models have conditions for scaling, and sustains the link between those who experiment and those who decide, including identifying which regulatory, programmatic or management frameworks need adjustment for innovations to become institutionalised.

But the role of the centre is not exhausted in facilitating innovation informing policies. There is an equally important direction that often remains invisible: the need for public policies to have permanent mechanisms to understand how their own implementation impacts the real lives of people and territories. Complex social challenges unfold in diverse, changing contexts traversed by cultural, relational and normative dynamics that no technical analysis can fully capture from a distance. Well-designed policies in technical terms may produce unforeseen effects, generate resistance or simply not work because they do not contemplate the diversity of perceptions, narratives and conditions in which they are implemented. A competence centre with a portfolio approach can fulfil an essential function here: sustaining processes of continuous and territorial listening that feed back into the design and adjustment of public policies.

This is not ex-post evaluation: it is a capacity for continuous feedback that transforms the relationship between those who formulate policies and those who live them, enabling iterative adjustment that no classic planning cycle can produce.

This role is only possible if the centre itself forms part of the innovation ecosystem as an active agent. In the Spanish model, the condition of inter-ministerial consortium is not an organisational detail: it is what enables the administration to be co-responsible for the process from within, for transfer to occur continuously and not as a final phase, and for the knowledge generated to have the legitimacy and institutional traction to genuinely influence public policies.

European competence centres find themselves at very different stages of development: some with consolidated institutional

mandates, others in the process of being established, others still exploring what organisational form makes sense in their context. What Spain shares here is not a finished model but an ongoing experience, with results that are encouraging and barriers that are not yet resolved. The value of the European NCC network is precisely this: that learning does not have to start from scratch in each country, and that the questions one centre cannot answer may be being explored by another. The VIDAS Portfolio is a contribution to that collective learning. What interests us most is not that others replicate what we have done, but that they help us better understand what we still do not know: how to sustain transformation beyond funding cycles, how to make regulatory frameworks evolve at the pace of innovation, and how to build learning architectures that survive political change. These are open questions that this network has the unique capacity to address collectively.



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*Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer
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Vías Innovadoras para
la Desinstitucionalización a través
de los Aprendizajes en Sociedad

