



## **European Commons Assembly: Madrid**

Following the first meeting of European Commons Assembly (ECA) in Brussels in November 2016, ECA will hold another assembly in Madrid from October 25-27, 2017.

This 2016 3-day meeting, with participation of over 100 activists from 21 countries across Europe, featured different sessions on commons and democracy and a 3-hour session on sharing examples and commons policy proposals in the European Parliament.

In Madrid, we continue to build the ECA as a trans-local European coalition for solidarity in commoning. We will focus on thematics relating to the urban commons through visits, workshops, and activities with local groups in Madrid, and feature joint programming with the Transeuropa Festival.

### **Why Madrid?**

Many bottom-up commons initiatives are grappling with how to interact with the political sphere in cities like Madrid, where there is an important degree of sympathy with grassroots citizen initiatives. Madrid is a city where the discourse around the commons is present on the ground, and where the local government has been run for 2 years by Ahora Madrid (just as 5 other large cities across Spain that are led by political majorities with strong citizen platform influence and input). Debates about new forms of city governance and local alternatives to centralized policy making are being considered in Madrid and by transnational citizen networks like the Commons Assembly.

Madrid is a logical place to meet for reflecting on both motivating and disappointing experiences between the commons and local politics. It also allows us to open up the Assembly to a wider participation, through collaboration with Transeuropa Festival that will be taking place at the same time in Madrid. Transeuropa is a political, cultural and artistic event that will examine Europe as a territory of experimentation for commons and commoning. It will be cross-sectorial, including a wide range of actors from civil society to city government, from journalists to artists and urban gardeners to scientists.

### **Programming**

The Assembly will focus on the urban commons, with parts of the program corresponding to different themes that have sprouted as the working groups of the ECA. Some of the themes are urban commons, solidarity economy, platform economy, knowledge commons, internet infrastructure, and territorial commons. Programming will be open and operate via two main processes: Experience the alternative, and sharing & production of knowledge.

#### *Experiencing the alternative*

To truly understand and then engage in a practice, it's often crucial to first experience it yourself. Temporary artistic and political constructions like Occupy, self-organised music and art festivals, urban agriculture, co-housing, energy cooperatives, M15, or Nuit Debout offer this experiential view and can be of immense value for that reason. In Madrid, there are countless social and ecological initiatives practicing the commons, and we aim to develop accessible activities with many of them as

part of the Assembly program. Of course, it will also be possible for other initiatives from around Europe to host activities as a way to share skills and practices.

### *Sharing & producing knowledge*

In parallel, as commoners we must ensure that we continue to build and share the commons. Processes, workshops, and actions should initiate 'Production', leading to documented and shareable findings, developments, ideas and practices. This allows us to augment the toolbox of the ECA and continue as a translocal platform for knowledge, which can share practices, projects, and proposals relevant in the city context. By building and sharing this knowledge, we can continue to develop political proposals and collaboration with social movements and activists through time.

### **Partners**

Media Lab Prado is a prime partner and physical host for activities, and their Laboratorio de Procomun has been very active on commons workshops and hackathons, facilitating the development and spread of commons ideas and practice.

Others (so far) include:

Fundacion de las Communes

Goteo

Traficante de Suenos

Intermediae

Campo de Cebada

Ahora Madrid

### **Open call**

We invite commoners, collectives, and organisations that engage in self-organised community practices, collaborative sharing, or co-creation that contributes to the well-being of communities in the urban environment, to please come and share their skills and let others experience their practices in actions or workshops. If you have:

- A specific experience, place, or commoning practice to present (either on the ground in Madrid or from elsewhere in Europe)
- A proposal for a (knowledge) production-based workshop on a particular commons theme
- Or any other relevant idea for content

Please send a note on the concept to [contact@europeancommonsassembly.eu](mailto:contact@europeancommonsassembly.eu) so we can co-produce the program for the European Commons Assembly in Madrid together.

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