

4th World Homeshare Congress  
Melbourne, Australia – 5th and 6th  
November



[www.solidarios.org.es](http://www.solidarios.org.es)

# Convive

**A SUCCESSFUL CROSS-GENERATIONAL EXPERIENCE  
WITH IMPORTANT CHALLENGES**

commitment transformation citizenship social justice cooperation participation  
planning active ageing respect participation reflection community coherence  
flexibility innovation service project empathy authenticity adoption attitude  
action research values counterculture responsibility communication awareness

'Convive' is a cross-generational program based on the interaction between elderly people who live alone at their homes and University students.



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## Quick facts about Convive

'Convive' belongs to Solidarios, a non-profit organization dedicated to social volunteering, social programs and awareness in issues related to social justice and solidarity.

'Convive' was Created in 1995

Around 2.000 'matches' between elderly people and university students have been made since then.

### **'Matches' in recent years:**

2013: 62

2014: 75

2015 (until now): 70

Average duration of matches: Two academic years

90% of householders and 83% of students are female

Average age of elderly people who participate is 82.

The program has a clear intercultural profile since 56% of students are foreign

All of the elderly people who participate lived alone prior to the 'match'

## Program costs

The annual cost of the program is 30.000 euros for every 75 'matches'. 20.000 are obtained from public funds, specifically from the section in Madrid's local government dedicated to the elderly; another 10.000 euros are obtained from private donors and from companies that sponsor the program.



## Homeshare in Spain

We tried to create a national network in 2013; we got in touch with 20 programs in different cities around the country.

Fourteen programs in 17 different cities are currently working within the network: Madrid, Catalonia (Barcelona, Gerona, Lérida and Tarragona), Bilbao, Almería, Valladolid, Salamanca, Elche, León, Burgos, Sevilla (2), Granada, Málaga and Murcia.



The first homeshare programs in Spain were created in Sevilla and Granada in 1992. Most of the programs were created between 1995 and 2000.

The two largest programs in terms of number of 'matches' in 2014 were the one in Catalonia, with 114 'matches' in 4 cities and the one in Madrid, with 75.

A university and a local government participate in all of them. The program is managed by a non-profit organization only in Madrid and Barcelona, with participation of universities and the local government.

All of them follow the same management model: they are free; neither the elderly people nor the students pay for the maintenance of the program; the matches involve people who are 60-65 years old and older and university students; all of them sustained by public funds, except for the ones in Barcelona and Madrid, which obtain private funds too.



None of them work as a self-sustained social Enterprise.

All together, they have made possible 364 'matches' in 2014. Except for Madrid and Barcelona, the programs manage between 10 and 20 matches each year.

Only Madrid, Barcelona and Valladolid belong to Homeshare International.

## Principles, values and benefits of the program

'Convive' promotes and experience of mutual benefit, of shared experiences and learning and of an opening to new relationships on both sides.

While the student goes through his academic experience, he or she provides with company and human support. Even if he or she can collaborate and provide one-time support for the elderly person, the program is really oriented towards the creation of two-way relationships, mutual support and company instead of caregiving, domestic and personal services for the elderly person.



## The program is directed to:

Elderly people willing to share their home with university students who fulfill the following characteristics:

- 65 + Years old
- Living alone
- With adequate health conditions for living in an autonomous and independent way
- With the necessary sensitivity, empathy and motivation for living and interacting with a youngster.
- With a house under good and hygienic conditions for living and with a room for the student to live.

Students who are going to spend at least one academic year in Madrid and who are enrolled in one of the universities participating in the program.



The program is coordinated by SOLIDARIOS para el Desarrollo since 1995 with the recent collaboration of Madrid's local government.



Seven universities participate as well: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Universidad Carlos III, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos and Universidad Pontificia de Comillas.

The success of the program is based on:

- The continuous presence of a coordinator who responds to enquiries both from elderly people and from university students.
- Personal interviews prior to the matching process in order to bring together compatible people.
- The support of Madrid's local government, which channels cases of elderly people living alone at their homes to the organization.
- The increasing participation of universities, who offer students with the possibility of this homesharing experience through Solidarios.
- A proactive communication strategy through the web page, campaigns, press releases when appropriate and a monthly newsletter.





WE WORK AGAINST  
EXCLUSION FOR A WORLD  
WHERE EVERYONE FITS



### Pending challenges for the program

- Being able to show, in an empirical way, the benefits that this program brings to the elderly and to the student. Research through alliances with specific faculties and schools could be a way to explore.
- To materialize a national network that brings together similar programs around the country in order to share good practices, research and other valuable information for the improvement of these initiatives.
- Reduce dependence on public funding by creating a mixed social enterprise model.



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