

Integral cooperatives network

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What they are about, where they come from and where they are going

On the centre pages of the self-management publication "¡Rebelaos!" (Go rebel!) which came into being on March 15, 2012, was the call to the first unrestricted meeting of integral cooperatives, to be held in Vinyols (Tarragona) in April of the same year. It was the starting point for a phase of mutual recognition among people involved in various processes of integral self-organization that had begun to appear in different areas, following the concerns about self-management which had surfaced in the months following May 15, 2011 (the day the Occupy movement started).

Thus we began to weave a network of revolutionary, disobedient, pro-self-management people, wanting to overcome the current system's limitations and to advance the construction of self-organizing processes outside the state and capitalist economic powers; a transition towards an assembly-based, self-organized society.

Integral cooperatives are therefore transition initiatives that start in and depart from the current heteronomous society, moving towards a new society based on the autonomy of individuals, people and human communities. They are disobedient, because they recognize the limits set by the current system, and develop a strategy to overcome them, in an organized manner, redistributing the greatest amount of resources from the current system, and consciously and collectively protecting themselves from its punitive action.

They are revolutionary because they advocate a radical transformation of modern society (from the root, from below, and for those below), and because the way to get from one point to another is by learning and visualizing where they are going. They also opt for the abolition of borders, and free cooperation between people beyond the limits set by the states and their central, federal and local governments. They are based on open assemblies and voluntary participation, since this will ensure the basis for a system of reflection, truly democratic deliberation and decision, based on rights and duties, in which everyone assumes responsibly, to build for the common cause. They are cooperative and self-managed because they grow and develop by themselves, in collaboration and cooperation with other initiatives of the same character, regardless of State subsidies and bribery from other commercial institutions.

People, projects and different self-organizing processes (network nodes) cooperate with each other, because the network is the most solid and robust organization system, ensuring mutual feedback on principles of interdependence and autonomy, maintaining nodes connected to the network through a set of common principles (network's communication protocol). In short, network-building the common self, and nurturing autonomy in an integrated manner and in all areas of life, that which allows us to continue living, something so simple although, at the same time, complex.

In this context the integral cooperative network is built, on the basis of integral revolution and experience from a growing number of self-organizing processes in this area. The potential is great but the weaknesses that arise through practise are greater; that is why they meet and share, in order to learn from each other, to travel the road together, plotting and planning along the way.

[III Encuentro Sin Fronteras de Cooperativas Integrales](#) from [Cooperativa Integral Catalana](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Third meeting without borders

Arriving from different towns, cities, bioregions and other corners of the country, about 180 people gathered on May 1st - 4th at KikeMur, a squatted social center in Zaragoza, which hosted the [Third unrestricted meeting of integral cooperatives](#).

The meeting brought together those who came to promote and who participated in previous meetings, and others to live the experience for the first time. There were those who came to watch and learn, but most actively involved in some integral cooperative, and came ready to share the progress and difficulties from each of the self-organization processes.

During each day's sessions there was time for sharing, connecting, learning, reflecting, debating, discussing, listening, understanding, laughing, and also the thrill of it, all aiming to coordinate strategies, to keep on building the path, to take back this energy to the different areas where came from in order to move forward.

Mutual support was essential in order to conduct the meeting, and each person contributed to the full extent of his/her abilities in order to make it happen: in the infrastructure, cooking, food, welcoming, economics, content development and preparation, space adaptation, supplies, hygiene and cleaning, documentation and collection of info, managing the assembly spaces, etc.

Moreover, it is worth noting the large numbers participating in the different themes, which wavered between 70 and 100 participants per session. Thanks to the workgroups it was possible to investigate more deeply into the proposed topics. Also, it was agreed to establish and promote the integral cooperative network on the basis of the call for integral revolution (1), as a line of strategy in order to move forward from the shared bases and principles.

From this former prison, for those who are not here because they cannot, for those deprived of their freedom, the clandestine, the imprisoned, the psychiatrized, those required to be what they are not, for all of them, here is our commitment to organize ourselves, in order to be a bit freer and to continue struggling until everyone is free.

Colleagues arriving from Sierra Norte (Albacete), Asturias, Barcelona, ??Bejar, El Bierzo,

Castelló, Catalunya, Donostia, Extremadura, Cáceres, Gasteiz, Granada, Ibiza, León, Lyon, Madrid, Mallorca, Murcia, Perpignan, La Rioja, Salamanca, Tarragona, Milaguas, Matarrana (Teruel), Tietar-Gredos, Toulouse, Valencia, Valladolid, Zaragoza, etc.

1.

Agreements manifesto: http://cuadernoscooperativos.titanpad.com/2Materiales_anexos

2.

Video (produced by CIC's Communication commission): <https://vimeo.com/94006435>

3.

<http://integrajkooperativoj.net/aniversario-rebelaos/>