

JUNTOS  
EN LA MISMA  
DIRECCIÓN

# Tenerife Intercultural



Fundación General  
Universidad de La Laguna



Universidad  
de La Laguna



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**Carlos Alonso**  
President of Cabildo de Tenerife

This past 28th of November 2017 was a very important day for Tenerife. In Lisbon we signed the admission of the island to the renewed Association of Intercultural Cities, that will manage its namesake network (RECI) from now on, of which we have been an extensively active member since 2012.

Renewal of Tenerife's commitment with the favorable management of its growing cultural diversity in aiming to strengthen one of the main pillars in the islands development process: Social coexistence.

Commitment and investment in the configuration of a strategy which allows us to recognize and optimize our multiculturality , together with many other world territories which move forward in this same direction, aware, as Lisbon's Mayor pointed out that same day, that the future in an international stage which is increasingly interconnected, will

be in the hands of open and inclusive cities. And Tenerife is a territory with a wide and rich migration experience and drawn to blend in the best possible way all of its diversity and contributions.

In Lisbon, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the European Council's Intercultural Cities program in which we are integrated, we have also been able to confirm that our proposal and experience in collaborative work is the most advanced in managing diversity with an intercultural perspective. Thus, what has been being built in Tenerife in a participatory manner, under the motto *Together in the same direction*, is the result of the huge and generous contribution of a large number of people and organizations over a long period of time.

From Lisbon to Tenerife, for it is here we managed to convince the people in charge of the European Council that our experience deserves to be shared on site. It is for that reason that we are hosting a new Intercultural Cities Thematic Seminar together with a new meeting of RECI, dedicated specifically to reflect on how to make more inclusive democracies by strengthening social coexistence through community involvement. Because our proposal develops in those same lines, also with a strategic approach, hoping it is always inspiring, both in the island and abroad.



Ivana D'alessandro

Project Manager, Intercultural Cities Programme of the Council of Europe

“A positive image of diversity the driving force behind the creation of more innovative, fair and sustainable societies”

#### **Why is the Council of Europe committed to cultural diversity as an engine of development?**

The Council of Europe is the guardian of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law on the continent. Ensuring equality in diversity is a precondition for granting effective access to rights and responsibilities to every citizen in today's diverse and multicultural societies. Equality in diversity is also a key ingredient for the active participation of all in shaping inclusive societies and vibrant democracies. Diversity is at the very foundation of Europe. We believe that a positive management of diversity is a driver for more creative, innovative, fair and sustainable societies.

#### **What the 'Intercultural Cities' initiative brings?**

Intercultural Cities is first and foremost a network and a coalition of courageous leaders and local administrations that see the potential of diversity, uphold European core values, care for the well-being of their residents and are as forward looking as to understand that the narrative of fear and hatred that feeds populism and nurtures identity politics is not what will make Europe a better place to live in. These leaders have been able to work across political

divides and to make of living together in diversity a shared priority. The network has grown exponentially in the past two years and has a current membership of 123 cities, taking in five continents. The greater the diversity of the cities involved, the more the model is enriched by new examples and practices. The 'Intercultural Cities' programme also offers a comprehensive methodology and a range of analytical and assessment tools, including the Intercultural Cities Index, that municipalities can use to evaluate the success of their integration strategies. Also, the programme provides occasions for meeting and exchange, through its study visits and thematic seminars like the one on participation taking place in Tenerife.

#### **How do you value the work of cultural diversity management that takes place in Tenerife?**

Tenerife is surely one of our main laboratories for practice and policy innovation. The Island has a long history of migration, intended as both emigration and immigration, and its own identity is a plural one. The mixing of a variety of cultures has a clear influence also on its food, music, urban development, traditions and habits.

The initiative *Together in the same direction* is certainly the most outstanding example of an integrated approach to diversity management. It has several strengths among which I would certainly highlight the participatory process, a strong focus on diversity as a key factor for socio-economic development, and the partnership with the local University which brings in a valuable scientific component in terms of methodological approach.

#### **What do you think the example of Tenerife can bring to other territories and what can Tenerife incorporate in the good practices that are carried out in other places?**

I guess I would better answer this question after the ICC thematic event in Tenerife! Still, ICC thematic events have always a positive impact on all participants as they renew the enthusiasm of policy makers, stimulate creativity, and open up the road to new practices. The field visits to Tenerife's main hotspots of diversity will probably be the most inspiring part of the event for the foreigners, and the discussions that arise in those situations have always unexpected (positive) results. This event will be the occasion for Tenerife to show that coexistence and well-being in diverse societies is not only possible but desirable; at the same time Tenerife will be able to learn from very good practices about political participation and representation ranging from Australia to Italy, passing through Iceland and Switzerland, to quote only some.

Jaume Lanaspá  
President of Intercultural Cities Spanish Network



“Tenerife innovates so all citizens can feel they are taking part in the construction of an intercultural island”

#### **How would you rate the steps RECI has taken this recent years?**

RECI began in 2011 and in this years it has come a long way. First, by adding new cities and territories with different political views to our commitment to interculturality. That means working to promote equality in rights, obligations and opportunities; acknowledge diversity and promote interaction and participation in societies which are more and more diverse. Secondly, it has allowed for exploring opportunities to improve interaction and communication between politicians and the main actors within civil society. And third, it has encouraged networking, both in Spain and with other European cities supported by European Council.

#### **What does belonging to RECI contribute to a certain territory?**

RECI's goal is to have different cities that run intercultural programs in the Spanish territory work together to exchange experiences and discuss design and action strategies. Belonging to RECI means to actively take part in the flux of shared knowledge and experience. It also means to be part of a network with European connections in which research applied to the evaluation and design of public political agendas and actions is strongly encouraged, thus improving legal and political influence: it promotes transversality in the managing of diversity and favors participation.

#### **What part does Tenerife play in this network?**

Each city and territory contributes its specificity to the network. Tenerife is a "good partner" who participates, suggests, questions and shares experiences and knowledge. If we had to highlight some specificity I would point out three. The excellent relationship between the Cabildo and the University of La Laguna, which allows us to talk about applied knowledge in a way it enriches public practices; the ongoing search for ways in which to favor participation of all citizenry, something on which Tenerife is innovating in by constantly searching for new ways and ideas to get citizens involved in the construction of an intercultural island, and the spontaneity and coherence with which it handles the managing of diversity over time.

#### **What can other territories learn from Tenerife and vice versa?**

That constant search for participatory spaces results in a creative ability which is very invigorating. Tenerife can contribute many experiences, practices and instruments to other cities belonging to RECI and the "Intercultural Cities" project, and can also learn how to handle its diversity in more complex environments in terms of mobility and diversity. Also, and this is a challenge for all the RECI and Intercultural Cities territories, we have to advance in the assessment of participatory actions that are taking place, so we can better explain to our politicians and citizenry the value of working from the intercultural perspective.



*Together in the same direction* has, amongst its goals gathered in its strategic plan which was made in a participatory manner with the collaboration of people from its network, to increase the knowledge of Tenerife's population about the benefits of cultural diversity and intercultural coexistence; encourage connections between people from different cultures and to boost the abilities the population has for intercultural dialogue.

*Together in the same direction* was born in 2009 as a project to work with the migrant associations that existed in Tenerife, hoping to contribute to their participation and empowerment. As years went by, this initiative has evolved into a public strategy, built from the bottom up, to wage Tenerife's cultural diversity with the participation and support of all people, independently of their culture or place of birth.

The goal that all the people that participate in this initiative share, is to achieve that the diversity of cultures, religions and origins that exist in Tenerife is valued positively, as an element of growth and enrichment, thus contributing in this way to coexistence and social connection, and that all individuals are recognized and valued in their community, regardless of where they were born.

### Awa Diop Pathe

“*Together in the same direction* has provided that feeling that we are all equal, it has contributed a lot to Tenerife's society and Tenerife's society has answered accordingly”



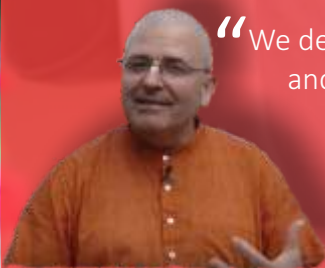
# Intercultural relations

The Interreligious Prayer for Peace, Respect and Coexistence is a meeting held since 2013 in El Fraile district (Arona) where several religious communities and spiritualities present in the island of Tenerife, together with people who don't necessarily belong to a particular creed meet to show representations of their faith and pray together for mutual respect, showing that understanding and reconciliation between people with different cultures is not only possible, but the way forward towards coexisting in a multicultural and diverse society.

At this meeting, representatives and followers from religions such as Muslims, Christians, Hindu, Hare Krishna, Baha'i or Buddhists, amongst others, together with people who don't belong to any creed, not only share information about their faith and showcase dances, prayers and other cultural displays, but also read a joint manifesto, previously assembled by people from different creeds which appeals to the need for getting to know and respect people from other religions and cultures to build a better society with everyone's support. This event, and everything that comes with it, has facilitated the creation of the "Interreligious dialogue group" which organizes other activities such as informative talks, exhibitions or interreligious dialogue debates.

Patita Pavana

“We demonstrate that diversity is a blessing and from it we can extract many values. Religions contribute very important values to society and are not a cause for division, but one for unity and fraternity.”



# Above time schedules structures

## Flexibility

Flexibility in developing the work methodologies that are being used and flexibility applied to the community process and tasks with workshops are the key of the strategy in *Together in the same direction*. Adapting to people's pace and the dynamics that the participatory process demand, prevents us from leaving anyone behind in that collective construction process.

Roxana Resnikowski de Ortiz

“Caring for people is the heart of *Together in the same direction*. The people are before the objectives”

## Care for people and relationships

To put people and interpersonal relationships above time schedules, structures and methodologies constitutes one of the key aspects of *Together in the same direction*, an initiative that is based in close relations with people who take part in this initiative and that tries to empower people so it is them who, through their taking part in different workgroups and collective activities, decide and build the objectives they want to work on, the activities that can be put forward to reach them and collaborate by adding their ideas, contributions, efforts and hopes to design and organize work meetings, community gatherings, lessons and workshops, participatory dynamics and ,any activities in which commitment, shared work , creativity, fun and a good atmosphere are ever present ingredients needed for social transformation.

# modules, and methodologies

## Different work methodologies

The technical team in *Together in the same direction* applies different work and facilitation methods in their tasks with participatory work groups that work within this strategy. The logical framework, which allows to set a structure to a work plan, bearing in mind important aspects such as the analysis of the groups concerned or the problems they face; the appreciative research applied to working with groups, that allows us to find out what the group resources are, our strengths and to dream of the goals we want to achieve; or dialogue methodology, which focuses on active listening and dialogue to gather everybody's contributions and reach a consensus. They are tools that can be combined and applied at different times during the process of designing and executing group plans, that point participants towards the goals they want to achieve together. All of it allows for applying a participatory model.

## Horizontality

Horizontality is one of the most important values behind the *Together in the same direction* initiative, as it entails putting people up front on the community process, sharing the limelight with the other two actors in the participatory social construction: Public administrations and the technical branch of this administrations and other social entities. This horizontality has allowed that *Together in the same direction*, its goals and activities, are built "from the bottom up" with great prominence from the citizenry.

Soukeina N'diaye

“*Together in the same direction* is a relationship between culture and equity. It is horizontal diversity.”





# Work groups



Work groups are the foundation and support of *Together in the same direction*, as they attract participants to the network, contribute daily content to the strategy and generate different and creative activities that make the project live on and progress. Work groups focus on different scopes of action, but share the common goal of contributing to widen the knowledge of the benefits of cultural diversity, habilities for intercultural dialogue within the population and the relationships between people from diferent cultures, all of them general goals set by the Strategic Plan of *Together in the same direction*.

At this time, within the strategy there are four groups focused on specific topics (Gender Violence group, Co-development group, Social Participation group and Interreligious Dialogue group), another two which target topics that have to do with cultural diversity in specific age groups (Amiguitos y Amiguitas Children Participatory group and Young People for Diversity group) and two other groups which work in interculturality and community participation in specific territories (Taco for Everyone group in san Cristóbal de la Laguna and Citizen Participatory group in El Fraile, Arona). *Together in the same direction* has, in addition, an "operational" group focused on communicating issues and who supports the work of the community debates in El Toscal Longuera (Los Realejos).

This groups are open to the free and voluntary participation of anyone who is interested, have open meetings and offer flexibility and tools so that people can participate at whichever time and way they are able and wish to, and stay informed about the process at times when they can't participate through tools such as meeting reports; taking part in meetings through video conferences and rejoin the group when circumstances allow.



Workgroups have a work pattern based on regular meetings, trying to change meeting places and try different island areas to reach the whole population, where the aim is to build and design together the work plan that sets the way to go for a certain period of time, setting the target group at which the work is aimed at, the goals and necessary activities to achieve them.

On those work meetings, besides the participant's input, which is the foundation of that collaborative construction, the facilitating person has an important role, that is part of the *Together in the same direction* technical team who are in charge of organizational tasks such as preparing meetings, finding meeting places or writing meeting reports for example, but who also try to "facilitate" the collective design using tools as active listening, validating all the proposals, opinions and feelings or validation of an agreement, combining methodologies as Logical Framework Focus or Appreciative Research.

Once decided on that plan of group action, the group must organize its times, its capabilities, its meetings, its work to carry out the activities they have decided on doing, which often are useful to get people to know their work and join the group.

From the work by some groups, some activities have consolidated themselves as pillars of the strategy as: Interreligious prayer for Peace, Respect and Coexistence, Social Participatory Schools or Community Gatherings as "PARTYcipating: Taco for all" and documents such as "Guide to the keys to Social Participation in Diversity", a "Guide to basic orientation on Gender Violence" or the next edition of "Guide for the reception of people who come to live in Tenerife" resulting from a long process brought forward by the Participatory Child group Amiguitos y Amiguitas.



# Group construction

## Shared



Group construction of common and shared goals for everyone is another of the motors behind this initiative. From the making of a Strategic Plan for *Together in the same direction* to the creation of a Strategic Framework for Coexistence and Diversity in Tenerife, and the plans of all the workgroups within the strategy, social participation is always the backbone of the whole process, trying to reach agreements and trying that every participant's point of view is presented in the final result.

The step from individual ideas to collective ones, through dynamic and creative meetings where all contributions are gathered, constitutes the key aspect in the strategy for diversity management.

Montserrat Conde

“A healthy and committed society is built through everyone's contribution. In work groups we look for agreements and consensus where all people are represented”



# ction objectives



The "Mesa Insular para la convivencia intercultural de Tenerife" (Island's Round Table for the intercultural coexistence in Tenerife) is the event that once a year gathers all the entities and people who make up what is known as "Red Juntos" (Together Network). This place has served from its beginnings to draw the lines to be followed as strategy and fix common goals, subjects on which to improve and take action in the short term and as a platform to share the work done by different workgroups, with different themes but goals which are often coincidental or supplementary.

Team work and the search for common goals has also been the backbone of processes like the making of the "Strategic Framework for the Coexistence of Diversity in Tenerife", or the "Guide for the reception of people who want to live in Tenerife". Both processes have relied on the participation and involvement of many people and social groups to put together documents that guide work towards diversity management in the island, in the first case, and an Informative Guide that can support those people who have just arrived to Tenerife in the second. In both processes it's been possible to involve on a common goal entities and representatives from various social, economical and cultural fields, who have put together their efforts and contributions to create a resulting body of work that is more characteristic of Tenerife's society.



Boubacar Diawara

“ Work Groups generate coexistence, a shared wealth, they allow mutual learning and makes us grow.”



# Soci



Emilio Gonzalez

“Before, it was people who adapted to their neighborhoods, now it’s our neighborhoods which have to adapt to their citizens”

In addition to the work groups which function within *Together in the same direction*, and the general activities that bring people and collectives who form the "Together network" together, the strategy has tools and products aimed at participation that have gone beyond the original initiative as is the case for the "Guide to Key Items for Participation in Diversity", a document brought together collaboratively by many people linked to the Social Participation Group and that during several years work visiting participatory experiences gathered a series of key items and instruments that help promote, boost and sustain over time community processes. This key items have served as a methodological base and given content to the Social Participation School that has already visited some 13 municipalities in the island, with an educational format that combines the presentation of referential experiences in the field of participation, the search of those keys to success and good practice and training for those attending so they can incorporate new tools to revitalize participation processes.

Community participation associated to the district and territory is also present through citizen participation groups that have been working for years in the districts of El Fraile (Arona) and Taco (San Cristóbal de La Laguna), and also with the support of the "Mesa Comunitaria de el Toscal Longuera" (Los Realejos).

# Initial Participation Community



Participation has always been one of the main key issues that sustain and give meaning to the *Together in the same direction* strategy. During its beginnings, around 2009, this initiative strived to give voice and empower migrant person associations that existed in Tenerife island. Individual reunions with each of these entities and collective meetings by areas, allowed us to give shape to the initial project, generate trust in it, and set the foundations for a work and participation network that has been the core that has sustained this strategy through the years with the progressive addition of new people, collectives and administrations.

Work with migrant people was opened later to other entities, associations and groups from the integration society and, finally, to all of Tenerife citizenry to shape an initiative that, now, still has in citizen participation its reason for living, a participation understood as voluntary, free and varied in its ways, as people can contribute in different ways, face to face, virtually or from a distance, and in their own time, because we understand that ways of helping are also diverse and equally valuable, so no one is left behind and can rejoin its participation when they can without feeling left out of the process.



Intercultural Open Space is a participatory work dynamic whose goal is to give visibility and look for collaboration to make social initiatives, which intend to better their environment, come true. From the beginning of the process, with an artistic and creative presentation of ideas, this meeting offers a space so that proposals are known and synergies and collaborations are found to bring them forward through dialogue spaces in which people can move freely, enter, exit sit and contribute or simply nose around.

Amiguitos y Amiguitas Participation group is another example in which fun and creativity are elements which help us encourage participation. This child participation experience has shown that the little ones also have a lot to contribute and that, in a fun way so they always want to come back, have developed many "missions" to help others with food, school equipment or book collection programs for the poor and needy, helping take care of animals and the environment or pushing forward the elaboration of the "Guide for the reception of people who come to live in Tenerife", where they have succeeded in involving many collectives and people from various artistic fields so that the welcome to those people who arrive in the island is a warm, fun, close and very creative one.

# Creativity

Social innovation

Transformation

# Fun



Creativity applied to work meetings and in general and open activities has been a constant feature in the trajectory of *Together in the same direction*, looking to motivate participation through art, games and fun, always designing meetings with active and participatory dynamics so that people can meet, interact and contribute in an original and innovative manner.

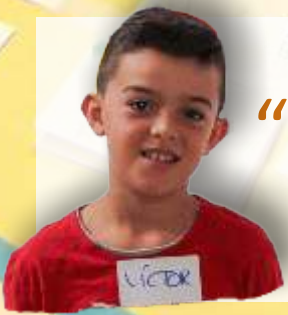
Searching for this constant innovation an activity such as "Intercultural Open Space" was born, focused on pushing forward social ideas through a work dynamic, also Island round tables for diversity and coexistence are made, as the "World Café" or dynamics such as a treasure hunt or getting to know the work from other groups using a passport to move through the space.

They are only a few examples, but in each and every one of the work group meetings, the facilitation team plans and designs the meeting through dynamics where creativity, graphic material and games and fun are present to help achieve the goal intended in every group session.

Groups such as "Young people for diversity" and "Child Participation" have proved that participation and implication are easier to achieve when people are having fun and that, moreover, social transformation has to go hand to hand with art, creativity and social innovation.

Víctor Panizo Rodríguez

“In the 'Amiguitos y Amiguitas' group we not only have fun camping and 'adventuring', but we also have fun helping other people”



## Efraín Medina

Counselor of Commerce, Employment, Industry and Socioeconomic development at Tenerife's Cabildo

“Our key aspect is to work with a strategic vision and to put people at the center of things”

### What has bet on working on cultural diversity management contributed to Tenerife island?

Happiness. Allow me to explain myself: we are firm advocates for diversity, diversities in the broadest sense, which improves us as an island, and that is why we need to face its management from a modern and inclusive perspective, this being essential to bet on an intercultural approach which is based on setting up relationships between communities and cultures.

### Why has the Cabildo involved itself so decidedly on this task?

Because doing so, Tenerife wins. And this bet is being backed from its beginnings by the European Council who, through its 'Intercultural Cities' program has been overseeing and reorienting our work to optimize all that we were doing properly, like generating contexts that would facilitate community participation to boost social coexistence processes.

Which moments do you feel show that the work being done is worthwhile?

Every day. Aware that, for a few years now, every day somewhere in Tenerife, or even in several places, we are contributing to making social cohesion and coexistence stronger. With a group reunion, training, participatory school, a technical meeting, a round table or debate, a workshop at an education center, the implementation of a European project and with many other ways and ideas we have been developing at *Together in the same direction*.

### Is the visit to Tenerife by many representatives from other territories that work in the same field a matter of pride and sign of a job well done?

Of course. And recognition to a job that spans two decades of permanent work side by side with the University and many other organizations and entities, which we have succeeded in putting together as a broad network and mutual understanding to face the coexistence challenges

### What actions do you consider most relevant?

To work with a strategic vision and to put people at the center of things. More than specific issues, which are many, the essential aspect in my view is that we have succeeded in forming a truly global strategy, that allows us to have a short, medium and long term view, with a transforming aspiration, to contribute to the improvement of our social reality in an enduring fashion.



## Francisco García

Vice-Rector for Relations with the Society at University of La Laguna

“Interculturality is demonstrating that it contributes to progress and social progress”

### Why has the University of La Laguna joined the effort to work on cultural diversity management?

The University of La Laguna intends, and it's in our view succeeding for some time now, to side with society in facing its main challenges, addressing those issues which are essential to delve into its developing process. Managing cultural diversity poses an enormous challenge in any territory which has intensified its multicultural character, as is the case in the island of Tenerife, reflecting even on our University, who has deepened its internationalization in these last years. The design

and bringing to live together with Tenerife's Cabildo of an Immigration Observatory has allowed us to carry out an unprecedented task, combining scientific long term research with the specific implementation of its results.

### What does the University contribute to this task?

The University has been contributing its multiple resources and capabilities to develop a high standard scientific research of a interdisciplinary nature, particularly linked to the more relevant issues of scientific, institutional or even social interest at each time, trying that the results are not only kept within academic circuits, but also used by the different actors that interact in our closest action framework. Also, it has put its General Foundation to the service of the projects and the Observatory, a structure which is enabling to manage the resources being used, both human and material, with the autonomy and flexibility required to achieve the agreed goals.

### You always mention interculturality as a factor for development, is there a long way to go until society can embrace this message?

There will always be things to do, as societies advance and challenges they must face will be various and exacting, but the work we are developing, together with many other actors, is yielding results. Interculturality is demonstrating that it contributes to progress and social progress, by way of supporting the consolidation of coexistence frameworks which include all people; and I think we are gradually interiorizing that message due to collective work and meetings.

## ...epilog

Coinciding with the organization of the international "Thematic Seminar" on the 'International Cities' program in Tenerife about "Coexistence in inclusive Democracies: How can the intercultural approach promote participation in diverse cultures", and the elaboration of this document, that has intended to capture the essence of our work concerning the promotion of social coexistence and positive managing of cultural diversity in Tenerife, in the context of the island's taking part in RECI and "Intercultural Cities", we find the publication of "Recommendation of the Ministry Committee of European Union members (Rec (2018) 4, adopted the 21st of march) "about citizen participation in local public life". Its interesting text and the proposals it lays out, emphasizes the importance of guaranteeing the effective participation of citizens in public social life, if we want to build inclusive communities, stable and prosper, since, satisfied citizens are those who feel their rights are respected and their voices heard, their compromise strengthening the legitimacy of local authorities and improve the efficacy and efficiency of decision making.

It is a true challenge in the current context, to find new formulas to interact with the citizenry, provide to their needs and promote participation in social life. And Tenerife is advancing on those lines, within the framework of a society that has changed through time, due to, amongst other factors, international migrations and their incidence on the growing diversification of its demographical structure. Social coexistence has then become a challenge and, at the same time, a strategic goal, that involves more and more people and organizations that combine their resources and experience, participating and building in a collaborative fashion, to find new

ways of managing a diversity that nurtures all aspects of our reality, most of all when inclusive communities are formed that try to obtain the best out of people. *Together in the same direction* has become, at the same time, in our strategy and shared motto, true laboratory in order to promote citizen participation in public social life with very specific goals, since we participate, above all, to achieve a better social atmosphere in which to develop and progress sharing our achievements.

### Vicente Zapata

Academic director at Tenerife's Immigration Observatory

### Julio Ramallo

Technical coordinator at Tenerife's Immigration Observatory

### María Fonte

Coordinator of *Juntos En la misma dirección*

