



## Civil Collaborative Practice Emerges in Spain

By María Jose Anitua Trevijano | President, Collaborative Law Association in the Basque Country



I can't imagine a better starting for Collaborative Practice in our country. We wanted to introduce Collaborative Practice in civil disputes and so invited Paul Faxon, Susan Miller and Linda Cohan to provide an introductory training in Madrid. In order to help business leaders understand the model, we invited the CEO's of our clients to participate in the training.

Even in the best dreams, we would not have expected such a success and such a real learning experience. Though the audience was very large (with 90 participants), everyone was engaged. Many of the professionals asked questions and reflected about unique issues in our country. We really enjoy the training, and laughed a lot during the course. The fish bowl role play, with 2 Spanish lawyers participating, was the most exciting and interesting I have ever seen. Many participants came to me to say how grateful they were for such a great and wonderful training. Some of the CEO's who attended the training are no longer so skeptical and asked me to congratulate the trainers for this very high quality training.

Susan Miller shared that "we were very impressed with our Spanish colleagues' enthusiasm for CL and their ability to so quickly grasp the concepts, even with the language barrier. The participation of a number of CEO's in the training was also an indication of their willingness to adapt this process to industry and should be gratifying to civil practitioners around the globe." Paul Faxon added that "I have

no doubt that the new Spanish CL practitioners will take the guiding principles of CL and adapt them successfully to their own legal and cultural environment. We expect to be learning new and innovative applications of CL from our Spanish colleagues in the very near future."

I would like to highlight that this achievement has not been obtained easily or by chance. It has been possible thanks to the effort of many people among whom I would like to recognize is Helena Soletó and her team from the University Carlos III in Madrid. Thanks to the previous training received from University Carlos III, which is pioneer at a national level in the training of Collaborative Law, solid foundations had been laid for the development of Collaborative Law in our country.

Manuel Valin, the Director of Justice of the Basque Government, has been another key person in order to achieve the magnificent collaboration between the public and the private sectors, to develop Collaborative Practice in our country over the past year.

Just after last month's training, the Basque Parliament has agreed on a transactional amendment to develop Collaborative Practice: "The Basque Parliament recognizes the labor of private entities that work on Collaborative Law and asks the Basque Government to continue with the support and promotion of Collaborative Law carried out to date."

Manuel Valin connected us with Gotzon Bernaola of the Basque Innovation Agency, INNOBASQUE, which is responsible for social innovation. Gotzon Bernaola has been a faithful traveling companion whenever his agenda has allowed it. We jointly drafted a presentation explaining the basis of Collaborative Law, which has opened many doors in its dissemination.

Since we founded our Collaborative Practice association, ADCE, guiding ourselves by the international experiences, especially the French ones, we have received wonderful guidance from Talia Katz at International Academy of Collaborative Professionals. We have also received support from Nathalie Garnier-Raymond, from the French association AFDPC. Her help, sharing her experience in Collaborative Practice in Spanish has been very useful to our understanding of how CP works in the field of family law.

We now have a lot of work to do, but I am sure that it will be easier since we have been so well advised and know the mistake to avoid.

I would like to finish with words from Linda Cohan: “For me personally, this was truly a most amazing experience and I learned so much as well. Spaniards are wonderful people to collaborate with and be friends with. It is my hope that we are able to see that someday in the near future, Spaniards will be leaders in Collaborative Practice”.



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