

How to mobilize more than one milion people?

Submitted by F Pere Tarrés on Dm, 11/11/2014 - 09:18

The last three editions of “Onze de Setembre” (**Catalan National Day, on September 11th**) have been exceptional, with lots of people joining on the streets the events organized by the [ANC \(Assemblea Nacional Catalana\)](#). The demonstration of 2012 gathered up to **1’5 million people** under the slogan “[Catalonia, a new state in Europe](#)”. During the [Via Catalana \(Catalan Way\) “towards independence”](#), in 2013, **1’6 million citizens** stood hand in hand building up a human chain along 400 km. This year, **1’8 million people** drew a giant “V” in red and gold stripes on the streets of Barcelona under the slogan “[9N we will vote. 9N we will win](#)”, in reference to the participative process on November 9th.

Despite this success in terms of participation, the ANC stresses that **they haven’t mobilized anybody**, that it’s the people doing **self-mobilization**. The ANC, so they say, has just **channelled and organized** this will to mobilization.

Thus, what is really essential is the **existence of a social base**. Motivated, excited people **willing to mobilize**, to organize themselves, to get coordinated and to cooperate in order to **claim for something concrete** through a very specific message.

Nevertheless, it is not that easy to coordinate and mobilize such a large number of people during **3 consecutive years**. To do it successfully, there are some things to be taken into account. Here they are:

1. Networking

The ANC has **delegations** in most towns and cities around Catalonia. This allows a **more direct contact** to the land and a **close relationship** with the citizens. This is essential when it comes to coordinating actions and events, when organizing and motivating the people and giving the right instructions to all those willing to participate.

2. To start with a small aim and make it grow

The ANC stresses the necessity to focus the organizative action in **small contexts** and areas through its delegations and, once this is done, to link them and make it all grow. A good example was the **human chain** in 2013, where first of all they set up sections or mini-chains of 500 metres, which in the end where linked together to form the final chain along 400 km.

3. Clear information, available through digital platforms

It’s clear that the **use of the Internet** is central to these issues. First, to have a website that is **simple and direct**, easy to understand and available for everybody. A web where people interested in getting involved can surf easily ensures a good reception of the message. Second, the use of social networks is absolutely indispensable so as to get the key contents across to as much people as possible. This allows to establish a **direct, effective and multi-directional communication** that enhances debate and the resolution of doubts.

4. If you want to demonstrate, sign in!

Normally you don’t need to sign up when it comes to demonstrating. But in these cases, this has been central to ensure success in terms of participation. Logging-in at a website that allocates each participant in a concrete spot allows **counting** the attendants and knowing –as was the case of the giant “V” (2014) or the human chain (2013)– how to distribute and to place the people so that all sections get **equally covered** and to avoid people gathering in the same spots. This way, participants can check where are remaining gaps, so as to fill them.

5. The role of volunteering

As is the case of all great events, the **role of volunteering** is essential when coordinating the attendants taking part in it. And even more in this year's event, because the **7.000 volunteers** involved had to manage the logistics of the whole mobilization, to guarantee the coordination of more that one and a half milion people: to get there, to place the attendants in the right spot and to provide them with all the information required. In addition, they also had to **keep order** among the participants in each stretch and to try to avoid any kind of incident.

6. Financial support

The cost of organizing mobilizations like these is quite high, and it is essential to count on an appropriate support. In the case of the ANC, the **funding** is provided by the fees paid by its members, by donations and also through the takings derived from merchandising sales. But, most of all, it comes from the offer and **provision of services** of people willing to collaborate. For instance, the audiovisual broadcasting of the human chain in 2013 was carried out by specialized volunteers, and the **24 aircrafts** used to film it from the air had also been provided by **volunteers**.

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Resum:

What are the keys to coordinate such a large number of people? What needs to be taken into account to ensure success? Here we offer 6 keys to make it.

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URL d'origen: <https://xarxanet.org/especial/barcelona-ecv/how-mobilize-more-one-million-people>