



International Association of

Educating Cities

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EDUCATING CITIES
FOR A BETTER WORLD



experience

Tampere presents: "Adopt a monument"

Tampere is the third-largest city in Finland and has a population of 231,853 inhabitants. It's the country's largest inland city and a major urban, economic and cultural centre. The city is home to two hundred lakes and ponds, with 24% of its area being water. Tampere is a hub for cutting-edge technology, research and business and has been an industrial pioneer in Finland since the eighteenth century.

Our environment is full of places, buildings, constructions, etc. that have hardly been studied or have been forgotten about, resulting in this historical and cultural heritage not being listed and conserved as such. However, they are part of our history.

In order to encourage citizens to actively engage in the "adoption" of these forgotten yet culturally and historically significant monuments, Tampere launched a project known as "Adopt a monument" in 2008, run by the Vapriikki Museum. The aim is to take care of these monuments or landmarks, make them visible and, in some cases, give them a new lease of life.

The "adopters" are responsible for the care of archaeological sites, historical constructions and little-known buildings such as windmills, train stops, pavilions, chapels, kiosks, bridges, hills, burial mounds, historic or prehistoric fortifications, etc. in need of maintenance works because they are derelict or unused.

To take part in the experience, the volunteers receive basic training to carry out their tasks. Their work as such involves researching the history of the monuments, creating action plans and carrying out maintenance (cutting back vegetation, painting surfaces, repairing windows, cleaning roofs and gutters, removing

waste, etc.). They can also act as local cultural guides; organise visits, workshops or presentations; collect scientific data about the adopted site; or design information panels for the promotion of cultural heritage. However, tasks requiring specialised skills are carried out by professionals (archaeologists, restorers, expert curators, etc.). Volunteers can be individuals, communities, associations, companies or public entities, such as a school.

The enthusiasm of everyone involved in the initiative, together with the know-how of the professionals, has resulted in a highly effective experience that has had a great impact. So far, approximately 40 sites or monuments have been "adopted", with more than 3,000 thousand participants involved in the project. 22 towns in the Tampere Region have signed up to the initiative, which has also been extended to other Finnish cities.

Presented by: City of Tampere

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An initiative to foster volunteer work in order to upkeep, conserve and promote local heritage.

editorial

Commitment to the principles of the Charter of Educating Cities is a holistic political choice, far from pro-party interpretations, to the extent that it entails commitment to a city model governed by inclusion, equal opportunities, social justice, participatory democracy, cross-cultural coexistence, intergenerational dialogue, the promotion of a healthy and environmentally-friendly lifestyle, the planning of an accessible and interconnected city, cooperation and peace, among other aspects. All these principles are aligned with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Almost thirty years after it was first drafted, the Charter has culminated in procedures which at different paces and with different scopes have delivered outstanding results in each city.

This is exactly why the Executive Committee of the International Association of Educating

Cities (IAEC) thought it would be useful to provide guidelines for the application of the Charter. Hence, the publication of **"From reading the Charter to constructing an Educating City"**, a methodological guide to be tailored to each city, depending on its course, characteristics and context.

The idea of this tool is for member cities to renew or reaffirm their commitment to making headway in the construction of an Educating City and consolidating their advances in order to prioritise education on the municipal agenda. What's more, it sets out to encourage new cities to embark upon this fascinating process of constructing an Educating City, either at the initiative of their leaders or encouraged by the community.

The guide suggests two ways to approach the municipal government: the internal route, which underlines the need for true coordination and exchange between the

various municipal departments and services, i.e. the famous idea of cross-institutional cooperation; and the external route, which consists of genuine engagement and teamwork between the city council and citizens. Only by talking with people, sharing problems, visions and ambitions, and creating empathies will we construct an Educating City based on the values of social inclusion and cohesion, which the Charter fosters.

We recommend using the guide as a starting point, from which each city can map out its own course, and not as an ending point or closed purpose in itself.

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did you know that...

★ The **2019 International Day of the Educating City** will be taking place on 30 November under the slogan **'Improving the City by Listening'**. Check out our website to see proposals for the event or to get inspired by browsing the activities carried out by other cities at previous editions: www.edcities.org/international-day-2019/

★ The **2020 Educating Cities Award** will honour three innovative experiences under the umbrella of **'Inclusion and democratisation of culture'**. Cities that meet the requirements can submit their projects up to **2 December 2019**.

★ Would your city like to host the **IAEC International Congress scheduled for 2022?** Do you have a proposal that could be of interest to member cities? Send us your applications to host the event by **3 February!** On the IAEC website you'll find the requirements and criteria to become a candidate.



★ The 2nd Meeting of Educating and Smart Cities recently took place, organised by the University of Passo Fundo (**Brazil**) with

support from the city councils of Soledad and Marau. The months of April and May 2019 also saw **National Congresses** being held by the territorial networks of **Argentina** (Godoy Cruz: Sustainable cities and communities), **Mexico** (León-Guanajuato: The Educating City, creating spaces for peace) and **Portugal** (Lagoa do Algarve : Creating (in) the city).



★ The member cities of the **Asia-Pacific region** will be meeting in Dangjin (South Korea) in October under the slogan 'Sustainable city and education'. Meanwhile, the **Northern European Working Group** will be convening in Brussels to continue analysing education as a means of social inclusion. What's more, the next meeting of the **Portuguese Network** will be taking place in Pombal at the start of November, while the **Spanish** cities will be getting together in Seville in March 2020 for their 15th meeting under the slogan 'Cities that feel, breathe and embrace'.

★ The IAEC is taking part in the R&D project **'Children and engagement. Analysis and proposals for an active and inclusive**

citizenship in Spanish cities', led by the University of Barcelona with the support of the National Distance Education University of Madrid, the University of Seville and the University of La Coruña. The key goal of this research project is to make headway in the idea of children's engagement in the city and their inclusion as active citizens.

★ The IAEC has carried out a review of the projects available in our **Experience Databank**, which will now provide better search results. Take a look at the initiatives of member cities on: www.edcities.org/en/bank-experiences/

★ The IAEC partnered with the UCLG in the drafting of the third edition of the **Local and Regional Governments Report, Towards the Localisation of the SDGs**, specifically in **SDG 4**, which was presented on 15 July in New York at the **United Nations High-Level Political Forum**. The report includes a wide range of initiatives carried out by more than thirty IAEC cities to illustrate that local governments are key innovation hubs in formal, non-formal and informal education.



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interview

Dr Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo Mayor of Mexico City



The current government programme uses the slogan “City of innovation and rights”. Why is this?

Innovating means that creativity and knowledge can be combined. In that sense, we foster the use of advances in knowledge, technology, arts, etc., within the city to improve the quality of life of citizens. What’s more, innovation also means the recognition of the historical wealth that we have inherited. We want to innovate in the environmental and social field, dealing with problems through the use of creative solutions.

Meanwhile, it’s essential to rebuild a social culture that fosters respect for the rights of each and every one of the individuals living in the city. This underlines the importance of the dignity that we deserve as human beings and citizens, and which guarantees the best possible living conditions, as well as opportunities for personal and social development. Therefore, we’re working to ensure the right to education for everybody, access to quality public services, decent housing, mobility, freedom of expression and key welfare indicators for all individuals. We’re striving to guarantee the rights of children and teenagers, people with disabilities, senior citizens, indigenous peoples and communities, women and the LGBTQIA community.

As the elected Mayor of Mexico City, gender equality policies have an important weight in your government strategy. How are you going to reduce these inequalities found in society and in the government?

Being the first woman elected to the Mexico City government is a commitment to the defence of women’s human rights, the fight against misogyny and all forms of gender violence, and the creation of an inclusive city. This is essential to reduce inequalities and provide development opportunities for everyone.

Mexico City is at the forefront of the promotion of women’s rights and the recognition of diverse families. We will also continue working hard on the eradication of gender violence, justice in the event of femicides, educational programmes for the prevention of teenage pregnancy, and the financial independence and empowerment of women in today’s society.

That’s why we hope to overhaul the current Women’s Secretariat to give greater status and scope to its actions, along with improving access to resources and operational capacity. What’s more, the make-up of the government cabinet itself is a clear sign that there’s a firm conviction to working towards an equality-based society.

You have raised the need to build a new relationship with citizens and government that engages inhabitants. How is this open and participatory government materialising?

A democratic government must include channels of communication and citizen participation in decision-making processes that have an impact on their living conditions. Public hearings are an example of this, forming a space permanently open, in which as the Mayor I welcome, listen to and personally support the demands and requests of citizens.

In parallel, strategies and tools for citizen services have been bolstered, in order to improve the services provided by government agencies and mayor’s offices to the population, in terms of complaints, requests and applications. In this sense, the government of Mexico City, via the Digital Agency of Public Innovation, has created the Unified Citizen Attention System, which will operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and allow citizens to follow up their requests and applications.

The use and enjoyment of public spaces by citizens is an indicator of the perception of security in the city. What lines of action are

you implementing to reduce insecurity and give the streets back to the people?

The Patrol Neighbourhood Programme (*Programa de Cuadrantes*) is a strategy to fight crime and foster closer proximity between citizens and the security forces. It was aimed at creating more effective police responses, as well as a more effective control of the police forces, with a view to improving security for everyone living in or visiting the country’s capital city. What’s more, the “Yes to weapon surrender, yes to peace” strategy sets out to reduce the high rates of violence by raising public awareness about the risks of carrying weapons. We’ve also implemented series of transformations in the Centre for Command, Control, Computing, Communications and Citizen Contact of Mexico City to foster the prevention and control of criminal behaviour. That said, it’s essential to implement a comprehensive training and professionalisation strategy for the security forces that gives them more appropriate and sensitised security elements in the care and protection of citizens, as well as for a more effective fight against crime.

Which values do you want to convey through the actions of your government?

Values are positive characteristics of great importance that help us to be better as individuals and as a group. Priority action plans have been set up in Mexico City, such as a) equal rights; b) the sustainable city; c) zero aggression and more security; d) more and better transport options; e) the idea of the cultural capital of Latin America; and f) innovation and transparency. We intend to materialise these plans in government actions to convey a culture of values that are key for harmonious social coexistence. Without values as a reference for how we act individually and towards others, human relationships are weakened due to not harbouring common criteria for life in society. This is based on the principle of fostering and guaranteeing respect, justice, tolerance, fairness, honesty and well-being, among others, as essential basic conditions for the healthy and peaceful coexistence of our society.

More information at www.edcities.org

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experience

“Citizens Open School”, a proposal from Vitoria–Gasteiz

With 250,051 inhabitants, Vitoria–Gasteiz is a city in northern Spain, nestled in an environment of major biological wealth and with a high quality of life. Proof of this is that the city was nominated European Green Capital in 2012. Its economy has a strong industrial focus and an outstanding development of advanced services.

In 2016, the City Council launched the Citizens Open School as a meeting place to provide training with the aim of fostering citizen engagement, promoting the various participation channels and bringing the institution closer to citizens.

The Citizens Open School sets out to reach the maximum number of people with different profiles: social organisations, municipal staff, policymakers and individual citizens. Therefore, the programme is developed by and for them.

It works on a flexible and creative methodology that combines various formats. Some activities are aimed at training, while others are focused on experimentation, research, communication, evaluation or the proposal of new ideas. All of them are considered as meeting points where it's possible to share ideas, work together and reach agreements.

Some examples of activities are participatory dynamics; talks or conferences; round tables; experience sharing events; practical workshops on social skills that foster coexistence; talks and workshops for associations to promote membership and streamline the management and implementation of administrative



procedures; etc. Another key activity is the “Knowing Your City Council” initiative that sets out to bring citizens closer to council operations and citizen engagement channels by means of open days, appointments with technical managers, and information sessions, among others.

The Citizens Open School is managed by the Civic Engagement Department with the help of a technical secretary's office. Partners include 24 municipal services, other public and/or private institutions, various associations and leading members of the academia.

Participants in the activities have shown a high level of satisfaction. What's more, the range of courses has been extended to respond to different interests, which has helped diversify and multiply audiences.

A proposal that fosters the engagement of citizens committed to their community and who play a role in municipal policies.

Thanks to this initiative, progress is being made in the modernisation of public administration aimed at a greater transparency of institutions and greater citizen engagement with them.

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