



Educating Cities

Information bulletin • 2007

Educating cities for a better world



Recreational open-air activities



experience

The Mexican city of Guadalajara promotes healthy open-air recreational activities

From Guadalajara (Mexico), we have received an integral, healthy recreational experience, the **Recre-Active Way (Vía RecreActiva)**, which has managed to improve quality of life and socialisation by offering alternatives for spending one's free time.

Guadalajara is the capital city of the Mexican state of Jalisco and is one of the most important cultural, industrial and economic hubs in the country. The municipality has 1,646,319 inhabitants and has been opening up basic urban spaces for the last three

years in order to provide free-time activity through its **Recre-Active Way**.

Three years ago the city council of Guadalajara presented this project, which consists of a series of activities to foster sport, social welfare, community development and quality of life for its citizens by opening up the longest linear park in the city every Sunday for 6 hours by using the main public thoroughfares of the city. Vehicular traffic is closed off and replaced by strollers, gymnasts, athletes, cyclists, places for reading and games where children, adults and the elderly mix.

The Recre-Active Way snakes through 15 city neighbourhoods and hooks up 10 main squares, parks, boulevards, promenades, churches and the historical town. This proposal is addressed to all the citizens, independently of the neighbourhood in which they live, regardless of gender, age, economic, education or cultural level.

The project began in September 2004 on the basis (continued on page 2)

“The Recre-Active Way is actually a series of actions aimed at fostering sport, social welfare, community development and quality of life in the city by opening up a 21.5 km. linear park (the longest park in the city) every Sunday for 6 hours.”

editorial

It is our pleasure to present the new four-monthly publication of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC). This is our way of responding to the demand expressed by some of the cities by providing you with one more tool for communication and exchange. Its aim is to provide member cities with a selection of theoretical and practical articles to gain progress towards the educating city.

Each issue of the Bulletin will highlight two good practices from the Educating Cities International Documents Databank, in an attempt to show the geographic variety and uniqueness of the cities in the Association; the diversity of issues that concern them and the different ways of tackling them.

(continued on page 3)

Recre-Active Way

of a preliminary diagnosis, technical traffic study and social study. After the intervention of the administration, the project was presented and promoted and then implemented by redesigning the signage along the 21.5 km. route of roads and thoroughfares.



Since then it has been opened every Sunday without interruption, first from 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 a.m. but soon given to its great success it was extended for two more hours.

During 2006 an average of 98,000 people use this “park” although the intention now is to convert the project into a permanent city program, increase participation, improve

security and reinforce the coordinated work, and, especially, extend the Recre-Active Way to other areas and neighbourhoods in the city, especially to the most underprivileged areas.

As positive points we should highlight the collaboration of private initiative, municipal and state bodies; the support and coverage of the media, the acceptance by the citizens; respect by and support from motorists and public transport; the recovery of public spaces and the increase in the development of new shops near the Way. We have seen, however, that there is a need to regulate the use of the Recre-Active Way and improve the road signs along all the pedestrian crossings.

The initial objectives of the programme were sundry: to foster sport amongst citizens and new healthy habits, improve recreational possibilities in public spaces, foster the use of alternative means of transport to the private automobile, develop a sense of belonging to the city and get the citizens to commit to peaceful, respectful coexistence

by fomenting civic awareness (respect for others, public spaces and rules).

The Recre-Active Way project has become a very positive recreational alternative offering visible social, economic and environmental improvements in the form of socialisation-coexistence, promotion of the city and a wide range of recreational activities and has given rise to the design of solutions for traffic, services, urban furniture, landscaping and road signs.

You can find additional information on this experience at www.edcities.org



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city network

Cities for people: education and social space in changing times is the title of the 8th Meeting of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities, which will be held on 28, 29 and 30 March in Donostia-San Sebastián.

This network, which is made up of 177 cities, organises a nation-wide meeting every 2 years in order to move forward in the application of the principles of the Charter of Educating City, deepening the concept of the Educating City and thinking about questions of major interest to city development.

Some of the issues that will be dealt with at the lectures and round tables are: the new educative and social challenges, the construction of citizenry, joint developments, the city as a place for encounter, communication and conflict and a space for creation, values and learning.

This meeting will also be a good opportunity to exchange experiences and to present the results and new proposals of the thematic groups, which are:

- City, education and heritage values.
- Transversality: the city and education in the municipal services.
- Multi-culturalism and Education.
- Recreation and Education.

Participants will have the chance to share their concerns, proposals and expectations on the new challenges that cities face in a globalised world taking into account the principles set down in the Charter of Educating Cities.

For more information go to: www.donostia.org/rece



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Donostia-San Sebastián
Kursaal
28-29-30/03/2007

8º Encuentro de la Red Estatal de Ciudades Educadoras
El desafío de las personas: educación y espacios urbanos en un cambio de época

8ª Trobada de la Xarxa Estatal de Ciutats Educadores
El desafió de les persones: educació i espais urbans en un canvi d'època

8º Encuentro de la Red Estatal de Ciudades Educadoras
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www.donostia.org/rece





interview

Jordi Hereu Mayor of Barcelona



Why did Barcelona opt for and continue to support Educating Cities?

The city is a source of education. We decided to support Educating Cities because, based on this conviction, and rooted in the tradition and history of the city, we were led to a belief in the importance of the relationship between education, the city and the citizenry. We were starting from a broad conception of education, which goes beyond the family and the school, and, even though the latter are included as indispensable factors, this concept contains a multiplicity of agents and activities.

(...) Barcelona wanted to share and discuss this conviction with other cities. This is why it organised the 1st International Congress of Educating Cities in 1990, where almost 60 cities from 20 countries debated and adopted the Charter of Educating Cities. Now more than 340 cities in 35 countries are continuing to work on meeting its principles.

From the point of view of the mayor's office, what do you think an Educating City is?

It is a choice in which education is seen as a tool for achieving a citizenry that is more educated and cohesive. It is a permanent, ongoing process, which leads us to do things differently.

We understand that education is not only the responsibility of a single department. It is a commitment of the entire local government in response to an undeniable reality. A large part of our municipal policies and actions, -town planning, sport, environment, culture, economic, transport, health-, contain educative facets, which must be discovered and developed through transversal work. (...)

Could you highlight a project or experience in Barcelona in the last 20 years that from your point of view has strengthened the city as an educating space?

I am very proud to affirm that it would be very difficult at this time to point to a single project that does not have an educating side to it, so it would be difficult to highlight a single experience. But to give a few examples, we could cite the implementation of selective waste collection, the improvement in the connection of neighbourhoods to public transport, the fostering of public spaces, the architectonic adaptation of the city to the needs of the disabled, the creation of participation councils, the participatory design of public spaces, the library plan, the pedagogical programs for our museums, the civic centres, the health campaigns, etc. As I said before, all our municipal actions have an educating facet to them.

What is the most effective way of involving citizens in the city's problems and finding solutions?

By listening a lot and making the participation of the citizenry visible when decisions are being made. In order to achieve this we use different tools, such as the participatory councils, the local pacts, tools for electronic participation.... I have already said on many occasions that I am the mayor for the people of Barcelona, and that is why I want to listen to all their opinions, and get to know their different concerns. Nothing that happens in Barcelona is alien to me.

In a globalised world, what do you think are the most important challenges facing Educating Cities?

Global changes have local impacts, which in many cases cannot be managed in an isolated manner by local governments. They require covenants with civil society itself and in many cases, international pacts. We could talk about the migratory movements from rural areas to the cities, and from developing countries to developed countries and all the challenges they involve: working on the sense of belonging to the city, learning how to share and get along with different cultures, etc. (...) The main challenge that the educating cities are facing is the provision of information to and communication with all their citizens, the fostering of a culture of participation and co-responsibility, while encouraging transversal working methods in order to offer better responses to these challenges.

More information on the website www.edcities.org

editorial

Each issue will also include an interview with a representative of local government of a city in the IAEC, or a person of renowned prestige, with whom we talk about the transformations and challenges affecting cities and possible ways of dealing with them from the perspective of the Educating City.

The territorial and thematic networks will have a place where they can report on their activities, and we have also reserved space to listen to the voices of the cities, i.e., your initiatives, concerns, opinions and questions.

The structure of the Bulletin will be flexible, in order to adapt to your needs and demands. That is why we are inviting you to send us your suggestions on issues to cover, persons to interview, issues to deal with, readings of interest and, especially, the experiences of your municipalities.

In order for this new form of communication to be useful, interesting and appealing

WE NEED YOUR COOPERATION!!

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10th International Congress. Building Citizenship
in Multicultural Cities

experience

The city of Antwerp is working to integrate young people into the education system and labour market

The city of Antwerp, the second largest in Belgium, has almost half a million inhabitants; its population is growing at a rate of 1.4% and people under 25 constitute 28% of the population. Approximately 1 out of every 3 young people leaves the school system without a diploma and the unemployment rate amongst young people under 25 years old is 28.29%. Four out of every 10 young people who are looking for work do not have a secondary school diploma and one out of 30 receives welfare assistance, representing 20% of the beneficiaries of social services.

In the face of this stark reality and in order to avoid an increase in social exclusion and unemployment, the city council of Antwerp is coordinating, amongst others, the **Wacker** pilot project based on a methodology for identifying, evaluating and reinforcing the



competences of young people acquired in non-formal contexts, i.e., outside the school system, in order to facilitate their return to the system or access to the job market.

The Wacker project, addressed to young people from 16 to 25, began on 1 April 2006 in Youth Work and it will finish in September 2007. The objectives of the program are as follows: to develop methodologies and tools for recognising non-formal and informal learning of youth, strengthening their self-esteem and improving their competences through self-observation; and, on the other hand, to train youth educators in competences recognition.

The program is rolled out as follows: firstly, teams are created and an atmosphere of trust is established amongst the participants, and, through a table game, young people acquire new competences for day-to-day situations.

The educators help the group of young people to recognise, define and identify their own competences through the preparation of a personal dossier based on creditable information. The individual results are discussed with their colleagues and evaluated amongst their peers.



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ESF: bijdragen tot de ontwikkeling van de werkgelegenheid door het bevorderen van inzetbaarheid, ondernemerschap, aanpasbaarheid en gelijke kansen en door het investeren in menselijke hulpbronnen.

“The Wacker project uses a methodology to identify, evaluate and reinforce the competences of young people acquired outside the education system”.

The personal dossier is rounded out by integrating the results of the evaluation in the previous phase and a personal development is established in which the competences are evaluated on the basis of their possible applications and uses.

As a tool of support for the program a municipal website is being prepared where one can find different tools for identifying competences that can be used by educators, teachers and youth.

The learning acquired in non-formal contexts is a recent issue in national and local policy in Belgium. In Antwerp the debate began in the second half of 2004, and since January 2005 it has become a priority in education and youth policies. Thanks to the Wacker project, a debate has begun inside different youth organisations, and a positive reaction has been noted amongst young people: they are open to participation.

You can find more detailed information on this experience at the website www.edcities.org.

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did you know that...

- ★ 16 cities have joined the IAEC since the last General Assembly (September 2006).
- ★ The Brazilian Network is holding its 4th Meeting on 12 and 13 April in Salvador de Bahia.
- ★ The Mexican cities in the IAEC are meeting in Playa del Carmen on mid April to discuss setting up a territorial network.
- ★ The period for submitting candidacies for organising the 11th International Congress of Educating Cities in 2010 has been opened.
- ★ Lisbon will be hosting the next IAEC Extraordinary General Assembly on 16 November 2007.

the voices of the cities

1. The **Senior citizens University** of Quebec (Canada) has adapted various types of university education to the needs of people over 50 years old, in order to promote their individual, cultural and social development.
www.ulaval.ca/dgfc/age3/index.html

2. The City Council of Tampere (Finland), companies and universities in the city are collaborating on the **eTampere** program to promote knowledge, business, public digital services and the acquisition of the needed skills for the knowledge society.
www.etampere.fi

3. The **Metrocable** of Medellín (Colombia) connects the underground with a cable car. This initiative has been accompanied by educative and recreational activities addressed to the citizens. This is an innovative system of public transit that contributes to improving mobility and socio-economic development of areas that had been segregated by the mountainous terrain of the city.
www.metrodemedellin.org.co

