



International Association of

Educating Cities

13
Information
bulletin
2011

EDUCATING CITIES
FOR A BETTER WORLD



Fashion workshop

experience

The network of Antioquians abroad engaged with Medellin

“Sos Paisa” is a special programme of the Mayor’s Office of Medellin rolled out by the Agency for Cooperation and Investment. It arose in 2004 as part of the process of internationalisation of the city. It seeks, through the Antioquian diaspora the transformation of the city and a rupture with the negative historical stigmas that associate the city with drug-trafficking and delinquency.

Located in the north-west of Colombia, Medellin is the capital of the Department of Antioquia and the second largest city in the country. In the last 70 years Medellin has

grown importantly in demographic terms, from 168,000 inhabitants in 1938 to 2,340,000 in 2010. 12% of the country now resides there.

In the last decade, the city has gone through a major process of transformation thanks to the decision of the municipal government to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants, promote education and civic culture, strengthen social capital and citizen solidarity. Proof of this process is the fact that in 2010 Medellin was ranked as the municipality with the best quality of life in Colombia by the National Competitiveness Council.

One of the programmes that forms part of the Medellin Development Plan is the Network of Antioquians abroad: “Sos Paisa”, through which the City Council wants to make the *paisas*, that is to say people born in the Department of Antioquia, living abroad as active boosters of the city. Appointed goodwill ambassadors of the city, they have the task of legitimising the process of transformation through solidarity and improved performance. Through strategies of personalized tutorials the City Council attempts to empower them in their diplomatic mission.

(continued on page 2)

“Sos Paisa” is an initiative of the Mayor’s Office of Medellin that seeks to foster among its expats a sense of belonging to the city, making them goodwill ambassadors and promoting their active participation in the city’s development.

editorial

The international congresses of the IAEC are considered as milestones for exchange, learning and reflection amongst the member cities; they are a unique opportunity to learn about the experiences of the city hosting the congress thanks to in the field visits, as well as a way of expanding the Association.

Under the theme **“Green Environment, Creative Education”**, the next Congress will be held from **26 to 28 April 2012 in Changwon (Republic of Korea)**. This is the first time that an International Congress of the IAEC will be held in Asia.

In order to roll out the theme of the 12th Congress and involve different municipal departments, three thematic axes are being proposed, which cover several sub-themes:

1. Policies, green urban planning and sustainable infrastructures: urban planning design and city infrastructures should be modified, bearing in mind sustainable criteria, including the fostering of a more ecological mobility and the conservation of bio-diversity.

2. Inclusive governance, social justice, community empowerment and capacity building: facing environmental problems

(continued on page 3)

experience

The network of Antioquians abroad engaged with Medellín



International trade workshop



Orchestra direction

The proposals for participation are varied. For example, through the www.sospaisa.com communication channel expats are invited to remain abreast of the news, programmes and activities that are going on in Medellín and to spread the word about them through the communities in which they reside, as well as recommend the city as a tourist destination and host for events and conventions. They can also provide the Mayor's Office of Medellín with their contacts with academics, politicians, cultural and commercial

entities, etc. in order to open new paths of cooperation and work. Another possibility that they have is to make donations in kind, time and knowledge to the different social programmes of the city. Thus, for example, expats that visit Medellín can share their knowledge acquired abroad through talks that the City Council organises on issues relating to their specialities; they can also volunteer for social projects or make donations of school and health equipment, etc.

At this time the Network has 9,400 registered expats residing in 72 different countries, mainly in the USA, Spain, Canada, Venezuela, Panama, Italy, France and Mexico.

This is a pioneering experience in terms of format, which gives emigrants back their status as active citizens, making them promoters of the city, strategic allies of its integral development and multipliers of positive experiences. Without a doubt, this is a rather unconventional tool of citizen participation based on an alternative perspective on migration and new forms of governance.



You can also find more detailed information about this experience at the website: www.edcities.org

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cities networks

★ 3rd Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Network

Representatives of 13 Asian member cities participated in the 3rd Meeting of the Network in Changwon on 14 November, in which it was agreed to start up cooperation projects in the region, set up a regional bureau for Asia-Pacific and a schedule for future meetings, among others. More than 100 delegates and experts participated subsequently at the International Symposium "Educating Cities and Sustainable Development", held on 15 November and organized by Changwon City and the Korean National Commission of UNESCO.



★ Conference of the Central European Delegation

Katowice organised a Conference on "Man-Education-Art-Contact: Practice and Future Prognosis" under the auspices of the Polish Presidency of the European Union. The conference fostered an exchange of experiences amongst the more than 100 experts from different cities in the field of socio-cultural action and education through art.



★ 4th National Congress of the Mexican Network

The members of the Mexican Network met in Tenango del Valle on 4 and 5 August on the occasion of the 4th national Congress, which, under the title "Environment and Creative Education" was designed to prepare the participation of the Mexican cities at the next International Congress.

More information at www.edcities.org

interview

Mr. Moon, Dong-Shin

Mayor of Gunsan, Republic of Korea



What are the main areas of action of the local government of Gunsan City?

Gunsan City has been carrying out its vision consistently in order to reach its goal of building an "international business and tourism city of half a million citizens". Gunsan has emphasized making itself a business hub for northeast Asia and becoming a model of prosperity, harmony and dignity.

Gunsan decided that its lines of action should be as follows:

- Creation of a prosperous business city: Gunsan has attracted 397 businesses to its industrial complex, including the engine and high-tech industries, the key sectors for Gunsan to become a prosperous business city.
- Creation of an appealing tourist city: since opening the 33.9 km-long Saemangeum causeway in April 2010, the number of visitors has hit 10 million, which makes Gunsan one of the "must-see" places in Korea. Gunsan has a long-term strategy to create a tourist belt uniting the Saemangeum area, the Gogunsan Islands, the Eunpa Tourist Park, the old city center, and the Geumgang River.
- Creation of a balanced city and pole of attraction for growth: Gunsan is striving to expand its urban infrastructure, for example, through the construction of different roads that connect better the city.

What initiatives are being carried out in order to achieve social cohesion among your citizens?

In order to building a harmonious city that can make all the social classes cohere, Gunsan

spares no effort in providing equal education opportunities. In this sense and in its endeavor to become an educating city, Gunsan has expanded its education infrastructure, has built children's and community libraries and lifelong education centers.

What environmental policies and initiatives are being promoted by the local government?

Gunsan City is striving to create job opportunities and economic growth by attracting high-tech industries, but it is also not skimping on its effort to bequeath upon the next generation a greener industrial complex by reducing CO₂ emissions and developing green industry.

In order to create green spaces in an urban area, Gunsan has been rolling out its "urban forest" and "cypress forest" projects. On the other hand, different programs and activities are contributing to improving air quality. These environmental practices are some of the measures being taken to deal with climate change.

What changes have been introduced into the administration and what communication mechanisms have been developed?

In order to achieve a responsible administration, self-evaluations in the main areas of activity are carried out every quarter. A citizen participatory budgeting system has been set up along with a public information system, and a local rendering of accounts system, etc. These services have been created to make our administration more effective and open to the citizenry.

Furthermore, our municipal workers are

editorial

requires new forms of governance that pool efforts and involve the citizenry; by adopting this new focus, awareness and capacity building play a key role.

3. Green economy, green jobs and green energy system and technologies: in the construction of more sustainable cities should also include the implementation of more efficient, clean production systems, the commitment of companies to social and environmental criteria and a change in consumption habits.

Lectures, round table discussions and the presentation of experiences at the workshops and poster spaces, as well as "on site" visits to the experiences of Changwon, will offer the participants the chance to share and debate their proposals for sustainable development around these three axes of work.

In order to foster participation, the Organising Committee offers a broad policy of discounts and waivers of registration fees.

We look forward to your participation!
For more information on the 12th Congress please go to: <http://www.iaec2012.go.kr>

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trained to provide better citizen services and for them to learn about their duties as public servants. They are also being trained in organizational skills in order to improve the effectiveness of the municipal administration.

What are the benefits for your city of belonging to the International Association of Educating Cities?

Joining the Association has allowed us to increase our international contacts and raise brand awareness of our city. Through the IAEC Gunsan can now share best practices and ideas with 450 cities in 32 different countries. Of special note is the Educating Cities International Documents Databank which contains experiences collected over the last 20 years.

More information at www.edcities.org

experience

'this is not a plot', a proposal from Zaragoza for reconvertng public spaces

Zaragoza, a Spanish city of 675,121 inhabitants located on the banks of the Ebro River, started up an employment plan in 2009 aimed at the long-term jobless through the clean-up of abandoned public and private lots in the historical centre of the city. Based on this employment plan, the Municipal Housing Society of Zaragoza came up with a project called "this is not a plot" which, beyond its initial objective, attempts to temporarily reconvert spaces at low cost for the citizens of Zaragoza.

One of the keys to "this is not a plot" project is that it enjoys citizen participation. Before each intervention, the town-planning and socio-economic context of the area in which the space is located is analysed. Once there is an agreement with the owners of the land, meetings are organised with the representatives of civil society (neighbourhood associations, schools, cultural and sport associations, elderly care centres, etc.) in order to identify the main needs of the community and to agree on the new uses and the design of the spaces. To achieve this Municipal District Councils are involved in the project.

Thanks to this participatory management of public space, which has been a major

educational process in itself, the creation-reconversion of all types of spaces for people of all ages has resulted in gaining: children's play areas (Parcheesi and Goose chase board games painted on the ground, tricycle tracks, etc.), petanque, basketball, volleyball and futsal courts, urban vegetable gardens, a beach-park, green walls, etc.

Thus, empty lots have been reconverted for the use and enjoyment of the citizenry. Proof of this is the large variety of activities that are organized by neighbourhood groups in these spaces: open-air movie screenings, educational workshops on contact with nature for children, neighbourhood sports competitions, etc.

The success of the application of the program in the city centre led to the programme's extension to other districts. Since its beginning, interventions have been made in 29 different spaces, reconverting 42,000 m² of lots and providing jobs to 110 people who were unemployed. All of this was in collaboration with 60 entities of civil society and an annual budget of Euros 2.2 million (2011).

"This is not a plot" has won numerous Spanish and international awards for architecture and town planning, including, of special note, the Prize for the best participatory town planning

Through the "this is not a plot" project, the city council of Zaragoza is temporarily reconverting abandoned lots, involving citizens in the design of the new uses and fostering job finding for the unemployed.



New leisure spaces



Preparing an urban vegetable garden

initiative in 2011 awarded by the Eurocities network as well as the Dutch Institute of Architecture Prize.

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

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did you know that...

- ★ The third issue of the Monograph collection has been released under the title: "City, Youth and Education", now available through the portal.
- ★ The Educating Cities International Documents Databank of has a new on-line publication: Focus Experience.
- ★ The Charter of Educating Cities has been translated into Arabic, Chinese and Japanese.
- ★ Guadalajara received the Training Seminar entitled "Educating City and Local Governance", from 8 to 10 December.
- ★ The experiences submitted to the Contemporary Issue: "Social Inclusion: betting for Equal Opportunities" will be published soon.

the voices of the cities

1. Avilés (Spain) has opted for the democratisation of access to the Information Society and the struggle against the "digital gap" through its **Local Technological Booster Centres**, which offer citizens the chance to receive free of charge training in the use of ICTs.

2. The Local Volunteer Bank of Águeda (Portugal) fosters volunteering in areas including the environment, education, sport and health, and foments the coming together of supply of and demand for these services.



3. We Are All Artists, is an initiative promoted by the Solís Theatre of **Montevideo** (Uruguay) whose goal is to bring children in touch with the scenic arts through different activities carried out at the primary schools and at the Theatre.