



International Association of

Educating Cities

15
Information
bulletin
2013

EDUCATING CITIES
FOR A BETTER WORLD



experience

Sustainable Eco-Meals in Gothenburg's City Council Services

Gothenburg, Sweden's second most largely populated city, is located on the country's west coast. It has a population of approximately 500,000 inhabitants and occupies an area of 450 km², set in an extended green region of the country.

Since 2004, the city of Gothenburg has decided to increase the amount of fresh, ecological products in the meals served in municipal services. The city serves about 19 million meals a year in nearly 600 public canteens in schools and social centres, in addition to those meals delivered to some homes. Given the size of its purchase order, Gothenburg's City Council is a major consumer of food products,

putting it in a privileged position to have a positive influence on public health, as well as on the environment.

The sustainable food project aims to encourage sustainability in the long term and reduce the environmental impact on all stages of the chain: production, transportation, handling and waste management. In addition to significant improvements on the quality of life, this project has managed to encourage sustainable farming and proximity economics. It is estimated that the food industry is the cause of one third of greenhouse gas emissions.

The broad scope of the project led the City Council to set up a Local Support Group, made up of civil servants from a range of areas (public health care, environment, education, purchasing, customer service, etc.) and representatives from NGOs and other groups, such as the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation and the Global Picnic organisation, among others.

An innovative action plan to introduce sustainable food in municipal cafeterias and
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editorial

In 2012 there was a changeover at the helm of the Association's Secretariat, providing an occasion to take stock of our achievements to date and to establish lines of action for the future.

Pilar Figueras' legacy was knowing how to pool the efforts of many to enhance an Association that now knows no limits and continues to grow, showing the world a new way of perceiving education in the city. This is a project that continues involving individuals and political leaders from around the world, who share a view of education that not only justifies this Secretariat's work but that of many cities as well.

In our farewell to Pilar, we would like to express our gratitude by acknowledging her accomplishments and wishing her success in all of her future endeavours. Pilar's passionate dedication to work and her ability to meet goals without falling into self-complacent attitudes are just some of her virtues and among the valuable things we have learned from her.

To consolidate past efforts and take on the new challenges facing us, we will continue to

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Gothenburg City Council is trying to improve the eating habits of the city's inhabitants and contribute to a more sustainable economy by serving sustainable food in the meals provided by its municipal services.

Sustainable Eco-Meals in Gothenburg's City Council Services



change the population's eating habits was designed to implement this initiative. Some of the actions in the plan included the creation of a communication strategy aimed at the users of these services and their families, menus with less meat and more vegetables, awareness campaigns, training programs for canteen staff and other municipal employees.

In the case of schools, the number of curricular activities encouraging better attitudes towards sustainable and healthy food were increased and the use of community gardens was fostered.

A centralized buying system and the environmental and social responsibility

required of their suppliers allows Gothenburg's City Council to obtain quality products at a good price while reducing the negative effects on the environment. However, prohibiting the use of artificial fertilizers and chemical insecticides in ecological farming means that the crops are smaller. This, together with Sweden's harsh winter, makes seasonal ecological production smaller and this results in an increase in prices, making it harder to meet the fixed goals. Nevertheless, ever since the start of this project, the percentage of sustainable eco-meals in municipal services has increased to 22% and the goal is to reach 50% in 2013.

Improving citizen awareness is key in this process. This is why Gothenburg City Council publicizes the evolution of the project in an annual report which is published on its website. In addition, mass media have also covered the initiative.

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

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cities networks

★ Asia-Pacific Network Meeting



Representatives from 15 cities met in Gwangju on October 16 and 17 on the occasion of the 4th Asia-Pacific Network Meeting. Debates were held on the theme "Building of a Sustainable Educating City." Of particular interest was the presentation made by a representative from the Korean National Commission for UNESCO. Other issues addressed were the renovation of

the Network Coordinating Committee and the viability of new joint projects.

★ Meeting at the Central European Region

On October 1 and 2, the city of Katowice, Headquarter of the Central European Delegation, co-organised the International Congress for the Inclusion of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

★ 11th Spanish Network Meeting

The 11th Spanish Meeting, "Education: A Constant in Life," will be held from October 16-18 in Gandia. In the early weeks of 2013, information will be available at: www.ciudadeseducadorasgandia.org

★ Portuguese Network Meeting

Évora was the venue for a new Portuguese Network Meeting held on October 19th. During the course of the day, the network's activities

for the 2010-2012 period were evaluated. Among the other topics discussed were the renewal of the Coordinating Committee and the operation of the thematic groups. Braga was chosen as host city of the 5th Portuguese Congress of Educating Cities to be held in May, 2013.



More information at www.edcities.org

interview

Ms. Somjai Suwansupana Mayor of Phuket, Thailand



How has your city benefited from belonging to the IAEC?

Being member of the Association has given us a unique opportunity to exchange best practices with cities around the world and promote networking and future cooperation between local governments and the academic world.

What have you learned from your participation in the 12th International Congress of Educating Cities on "Green Environment, Creative Education"?

We came back from the 2012 IAEC Congress with the idea of encouraging students and civil society to help preserve our cultural heritage and protect the environment, and of the need to foster a public mindset that is more open to a sustainable, healthy and creative city.

What are Phuket's priorities at the moment?

The most important challenges facing the city of Phuket right now are to improve student achievement, integrate the management of solid waste and implement a 5-year Development Plan.

The first goal is to give students basic skills and knowledge and a positive attitude towards lifelong learning so that they can become active citizens in our country's constitutional democratic monarchy.

Secondly, the City Council is working together with citizens to reduce solid waste in order to keep the local incineration disposal plant from reaching a saturation point.

Finally, the main goal of Phuket's 5-year Development Plan is to foster the emergence of a creative city through development, social cohesion and a higher quality of life, the promotion of good governance and security and the preservation of our identity.

How does Phuket promote citizen participation?

We are committed to citizen empowerment and participation. In this regard, we have encouraged civil society to take part in a number of municipal activities, such as the drafting of Phuket's 5-year Development Plan. Feedback from social actors will be taken into account during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages. In addition, a public hearing will be held before the 5-year Development Plan is concluded.

We strongly believe that this participative approach can better serve local needs and strengthen ties with community.

Can you explain how the city promotes the protection of its cultural heritage and describe what actions have been taken to increase the feeling of belonging, of citizenship?

The City Council is working together with citizens to revitalize the city's old town, renovate its Sino-Portuguese historical buildings and preserve our traditional cultural heritage in order to make Phuket a cultural venue.

To achieve this we aim to empower community leaders and work hand-in-hand with them in a "win-win" initiative in accordance with the sufficient economy philosophy of the King of Thailand, Rama the 9th.

An example of this cooperation is the Old

editorial

work in a responsible, proactive way, open to dialogue, in order to continue to learn from our differences and maintain a balance within the Association. Our awareness and vocation as a public service will serve as our navigation chart. We will also work realistically and calmly to give the projects we support within the framework of our general action plan enough time to take root and develop.

We invite you to work with us as a team to continue to create a common legacy with your expertise, programs and policies, as we consider this to be an asset that multiplies as it is shared, helping each city progress both individually and together as a network.

We will continue working to reinforce the capacities of local governments by opening multi-directional communication channels, providing opportunities for exchange and reflection and offering forums to display and share best practices.

During this transition period, many of you have sent us your personal expressions of support and commitment which we much appreciate. Sharing with you the conviction that Education is a driving force for change, is a source of stimulus for us.

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Phuket Town Festival held every February since 1998. During the Festival, the old town is closed to traffic. Citizens and tourists can stroll up and down the streets, enjoying traditional costume parades, concerts, performances by children and young people, light shows, tasting local food and buying handicrafts.

In just 14 years, the festival has become one of the city's major events, widely supported by the local people.

More information at www.edcities.org

experience

Community Police Action: A Safer 'Alta' Area of Lisbon

One of the main challenges facing the Municipal Police Department of Lisbon –the Portuguese capital with nearly 500,000 inhabitants– is the need to develop a more open model for police intervention with greater community participation.

The project is based on the premise that responsibility for security should not be exclusively in the hands of the police and that community input is important in both identifying the problems and planning, implementing and finally evaluating the actions taken. The idea is to use preventive measures to respond more efficiently to the population's needs, create a greater sense of security among citizens and maintain public order.

The "Alta" area of Lisbon, literally translated as the "Uptown," was chosen as the district for this innovative project because it is a relatively new community in which problems of security and a lack of civic-mindedness have surfaced and, at the same time, it has a strong local association network willing to work with the city police force to confront these problems.

The Alta of Lisbon Community Group (GCAL in its Portuguese acronym), comprising representatives from NGOs, neighbourhood associations, businesses, schools, healthcare centres, etc., is characterised by the strong ties and the diversity of its members. This makes it possible to implement integrated strategies that reinforce the existing resources in this neighbourhood of nearly 34,000 people, 67% of whom live in state subsidised housing and are in low socio-economic groups.

In 2010, the GCAL created a work group to deal specifically with the security issue. Focus groups were set up to identify the population's primary problems and concerns, focus on the critical areas and design intervention strategies. Neighbours, technicians, coordinators and community leaders took part in these groups.

The findings were used to design a training program for community agents. Questions including community police models, interpersonal relationships, knowledge of the territory, awareness of cultural diversity

In order to better serve the population's needs the City of Lisbon is developing a pilot project for Police action with Community Input.



in the area, and conflict-solving techniques were addressed in these training modules.

Once the training course was completed, the community police began patrolling the neighbourhood on foot, creating a closer cooperation with local agents in the territory and progressively a greater sense of trust within the community.

Given the success of this initiative, Lisbon City Council plans to introduce it in other city neighbourhoods.

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

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did you know that...

- ★ The Organising and Scientific Committees for the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities to be held in Barcelona in 2014 have now been established.
- ★ The 2nd stage of the Travelling Exhibition "Educating Cities: Local Actions, Global Values" has already been presented in Paysandú and Rosario.
- ★ The Association's fourth monographic volume untitled "City, Environment and Education" has been published.
- ★ The IAEC participated in the 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Regional Conference, "The City: A Live Heritage," held in Salé (Morocco) and in a study conference on the role of the educating city in cultural tourism in Kairouan (Tunisia).
- ★ The next General Assembly will take place in Katowice on March 15, 2013, coinciding with the Executive Committee meeting.

the voices of the cities

1. Cozumel (Mexico) has created the programme **Agentes 00 Bullying** aimed at providing teachers, families and students themselves with the incentive and tools to prevent violence in schools.



2. The Romans-sur-Isère (France) City Council is encouraging young people to take an active part in city life through the **Pop Card**, a citizens' contract whereby young

people can choose to work on community projects in exchange for discounts on leisure activities and in stores.



3. Several departments of Santiago's (Brazil) City Hall contribute to promoting the principles of the Educating Cities Charter among the cities' student and adult population through the **Smequinho** project.