



DECLARATION

16th International Congress of Educating Cities Andong, 25-28 October 2022

The 16th International Congress of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) was held in Andong, South Korea, from 25 to 28 October 2022, with the participation of 129 cities from 22 countries on 4 continents, UNESCO's GNLC, cities from the Korean Lifelong Learning network, academics, experts and citizens in general. The Congress included as well dialogue between young people and a representation of elected members in order to incorporate their voices and opinions into the debate on the future of education. The Congress was held under the slogan "Devising the Future of Education in the City: Innovation, Tradition and Inclusion", after a four-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic in a hybrid format to allow more people to take part, and focused on the following three cornerstones:

Traditions and identity: learning from the past

With globalisation, many cities around the world are facing the uniformity and standardisation of customs, lifestyles, values and trends, resulting in a loss of their identity and the characteristics that make them unique. This process of homogenisation is often detrimental to local identities.

Conserving traditional heritage and culture and making it accessible to all citizens, including new generations and the migrant population, is a priority for the Educating Cities. This also means fostering a sense of belonging, as people cannot respect or protect what they don't know or love. However, even considering tradition as the bridge towards building the future, it's important to promote a critical understanding of the past and to consider the lessons learned, incorporating all citizens into the process of creating the identity of our cities, as culture should be understood as a dynamic process in continuous construction.

Inclusion: building a city for all people through education and values

Education plays a key role in addressing the challenges posed by inequality and polarisation. The Educating City pursues inclusive and equitable development that leaves no one behind through access to quality lifelong educational opportunities for individuals and groups at risk of exclusion. What's more, it fosters positive values such as harmonious living, cooperation and empathy, which help strengthen community ties and care for the common good.

Technology and social innovation: promoting a sustainable city centred on people

Technology is already impacting and transforming our cities and lifestyles, in expected and unexpected ways alike. Although technology and innovation can be huge allies in tackling major challenges, such as climate change and its impact on cities, we should also be aware of



the negative effects they can cause (such as isolation, sedentary lifestyles, loss of humanity, etc.), in order to counteract them. Educating Cities should reflect on the role of education in fostering technology and social innovation to help build more inclusive, fairer, greener, healthier and more habitable cities for everyone.

The Educating Cities are aware that:

We are living in a context of multiple crises - geopolitical, economic, social and environmental - with a major urban dimension. Ongoing technological innovations and rapid social and environmental changes contrast with an economic slowdown and a volatile and uncertain global scenario. In this context, many local governments around the world are looking to learn from one another, lay down new paradigms, gather experiences and reflect together to find more efficient and innovative solutions to the challenges. One of the IAEC's most valued characteristics is the spaces it offers its members to meet with peers and experts to share experiences and knowledge. During the Congress, there was debate on how to build, from a holistic perspective of an Educating City, more sustainable communities where past, present and future coexist. Communities where people can realise their full potential by fostering living conditions based on equity and social justice.

We, the Educating Cities undertake to:

1. Work towards the transformation of the city to make it more inclusive through the active participation of citizens, as well as to promote inclusive and equitable development through education.
2. Streamline access by the population as a whole to the educational opportunities provided by the environment.
3. Promote the creation of quality lifelong learning programmes adapted to different generations, with special emphasis on groups in the most vulnerable situation, and recognise young people as citizens of the present, facilitating spaces for meeting, listening and co-construction.
4. Facilitate spaces for advice and innovative learning in state-of-the-art technologies and provide formal and non-formal educational opportunities, as well as job opportunities in the field of technologies and social innovation in the post-COVID era.
5. Provide citizen participation spaces focused on fostering the feeling of belonging and the preservation and transmission of culture, including the culture of underrepresented, minority or communities in a vulnerable situation, as well as meeting spaces that stimulate intergenerational and intercultural dialogue for harmonious living.



6. Design and implement urban regeneration and development projects that preserve traditional culture from an inclusive perspective, cherish diversity and foster social cohesion.
7. Join forces and spearhead cultural changes - from a local level - regarding the promotion of sustainable lifestyles and the creation of greener cities. Sensitise citizens through their active participation in sustainable initiatives and practices.
8. Encourage critical reflection on local traditions, history and heritage regarding the city's own identity, as well as the application of lessons learnt from the past and traditions in education.
9. Foster digital literacy and connectivity among all citizens, as well as initiatives to prevent and tackle the misuse of technologies, malpractices and their consequences.
10. Promote an education in basic values for harmonious living and the social progress of our communities, such as respect, empathy, equality, solidarity and critical thinking.

Finally, the IAEC calls on all member cities to continue expanding their knowledge of the local reality in order to give more bespoke answers to the challenges on the horizon, while always in permanent communication with citizens.