

International Day of the Educating City

Press Kit

30 November 2016

Better Educating Cities for a better World

International Association of
Educating Cities
Association Internationale des
Villes Éducatrices
Asociación Internacional de
Ciudades Educadoras



#EducatingCityDay

Contact:



✉ edcities@bcn.cat

☎ +34 93 3427720

www.edcities.org

<http://www.edcities.org/international-day/>

[@educatingcities](#)

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Who are we?

The International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) is a not-for-profit organisation that brings together local governments committed towards the fulfilment of the Charter of Educating Cities, which is the roadmap of this world movement that began in 1990 with the 1st International Congress of Educating Cities and was formally constituted as an Association in 1994.

Currently, **485 cities from 36 countries** from all continents form part of this Association. (Complete list at: <http://www.edcities.org/en/list-of-member-cities>)

A group of 15 cities from different latitudes make up the Executive Committee, charged with directing, managing and representing the IAEC. These cities are currently: Barcelona (Spain), Cascais (Portugal), Changwon (Republic of Korea), Granollers (Spain), Lisbon (Portugal), Lomé (Togo), Medellín (Colombia), Morelia (Mexico), Oporto (Portugal), Rennes (France), Rosario (Argentina), Santo André (Brazil), Sorocaba (Brazil), Tampere (Finland) and Turin (Italy).

What are our goals?

- To promote the fulfilment of the principles established in the Charter of Educating Cities.
- To foster the dialogue, reflection, exchange and cooperation between the Educating Cities.
- To highlight the role of the local governments as educating agents and promote their relevance as key actors for tackling the challenges of the 21st century.
- To strengthen the institutional capacities and improve the governance in the member cities.
- To make the voice of the local governments heard in international and national institutions on issues of interest for the member cities.

What is an Educating City?

It is a city committed towards formal, non-formal and informal education as a tool for social transformation; a city that creates synergies and mobilizes the maximum number possible of educational agents acting in the territory. We are talking here about an education which is lifelong and which crosses the different spheres of the life of the citizens.

It involves the commitment towards a model of city governed by inclusion and equal opportunities, social justice, participatory democracy, living together among different cultures, cross-generational dialogue, the promotion of a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, the planning of an accessible and interconnected city, cooperation, peace, etc. All of these principles are contained in the Charter of Educating Cities.

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What does the Charter of Educating Cities propose?

It is a manifest of 20 principles that describes how an Educating City should be and defines strategies and fields of action.

The Charter was drafted at the First International Congress of Educating Cities held in Barcelona in 1990 and updated in 1994 and 2004, and was created with the intention of becoming a political instrument and one of mobilisation in the cities.

Contemplated in this is the **Right of the Educating City**, as the fundamental expression of the collective, social, economic and formative rights of all the people, within the framework of the principles of freedom, equality, dignity and solidarity.

All the inhabitants of a city have the right to enjoy, in liberty and equality, the means and opportunities for education, leisure and individual growth that the city offers. The right to an educating city is understood as an extension of the fundamental right of all to education. The educating city constantly recommits to the lifelong education of its inhabitants in the most varied ways. And to make this possible, all groups, with their own particular needs, must be taken into account... (Principle 1, Charter of Educating Cities)

What role do the local governments play in the Educating City?

Local governments that add this attribute to their name place **education as a central axis in their political project**. This implies becoming aware of the fact that the different policies and actions that are proposed and set in motion from the different municipal institutions and services (such as urban planning, environment, mobility, culture, sports, health, etc.) transmit and educate with certain values.

This is added, at the same time, to the active commitment towards working on countering the numerous mis-educating phenomenon and factors that still persist in the cities (to quote some, we can talk about violence, racism, inequality, the segregation of neighbourhoods, the predominance of the car over the pedestrian, the privatization and deterioration of the public spaces, etc.). To tackle these important challenges entails, necessarily, the coordination between departments and the commitment towards crosscutting work. At the same time, it involves acting to join synergies with the civil society.

Therefore, in the first instance, the local government takes on the commitment towards this model of city, articulating a major local network of educating stakeholders, public and private, based around a common project for turning the urban space into an educating space, where, in addition to providing access to knowledge and know-how, values and attitudes are transmitted so that the people can develop their skills and capacities, and to live and work with dignity and contribute to the development of their communities.

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What is the role of the school and the family in the Educating City?

Families and schools are the first instances of people's socialization and education. The educating city not only recognizes their important function, but also aims to turn the city into a major classroom, where everyone, young and old, can learn about local emblematic monuments and buildings, about museums and cultural centres, about parks and gardens, about the institutions and services, about the layout of the streets and the public transport which allow us to move around the city, as well as about the people who live and work in the city.

Therefore, in the educating city, the school opens its doors so as to count on the support of many other institutions and agents that also play an educating role in the city, with the aim of forming a better prepared, critical and co-responsible citizenship, capable of facing the challenges of the 21st century.

The initial educational opportunities for children and youths, are complemented with many others formal, non-formal and informal lifelong educational proposals.

What is the role of the civil society in the Educating City?

Local governments share the task of providing lifelong learning and educational opportunities with a multiplicity of educational, social, cultural, sports... entities, organizations, clubs and associations, as well as with the business fabric, the media, etc. Therefore, the entities and organizations of the **civil society** are key partners in the construction of the Educating City. Analysing the educational impact of the messages that they all emit and trying to boost civic and democratic values in favour of a better living together in our cities is crucial to gain progress towards this city model.

Why is citizen participation essential in the construction of the Educating City?

Being local governments the administration closest to the citizenship, they become the ideal platform for advancing towards a participatory democracy. This implies creating spaces of dialogue in which the different cultures and social groups are present, and to open up the decision-making processes to the citizenship. Citizen participation is, therefore, the driver of the transformation that the educating cities undergo, which in itself constitutes an educating process: it is by participating that people engage and are likely to be committed citizens, acquire interest in public issues and learn to dialogue and to respect different opinions in search of agreement.

What is the reason for the International Day of the Educating City?

After more than 25 years of experience, the General Assembly of Educating Cities agreed to establish the 30th November as the International Day of Educating Cities so as to build awareness on a world level of the importance of education as an engine of change and to add new allies in favour of this model of city.

So, this year, **2016, the first edition of the International Day of the Educating City will be held.**

With this global celebration, the IAEC aims, at the same time, to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda, produced by means of an unprecedented dialogue between the UN member states, local governments, the civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, grants special importance to the cities (Sustainable Development Goal 11) and to ensure inclusive equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (SDG4).

The organization of the day can also be a unique opportunity for making known the commitment of the municipality towards the principles of the Charter of Educating Cities, so as to revitalize it and to make the work being carried out known to the citizenship, generating in this way greater appropriation, commitment and results.

When will it be held?

The activities will be concentrated on **November 30th**, to commemorate the fact that on this day in 1990 the Charter of Educating Cities was proclaimed, in Barcelona. By concentrating the activities of all the cities on the same date we intend to make clearly visible the global character of the celebration. However, it exists the possibility of extending the activities throughout the week.

Where will it be held?

All the cities of the Association are invited to participate, as well as all those others who wish to commit themselves towards the construction of cities that offer opportunities for personal and collective growth based on an inclusive equitable quality education for all.

What type of activities will be organized?

Member cities have designed programmes as plural and diverse as they are themselves, with the aim of stimulating the reflection on re-thinking the city under the approach of education together with municipal staff, citizen entities, the private sector, experts and the citizenship in general.

Lectures, workshops, dialogues, exhibitions; panel discussions with entities from the civil society; festivals, open doors day and the programming of joint activities; school fair projects; and leisure-cultural programmes, to name some.

However, the public reading of the Manifesto of all the Mayors of the Educating Cities is one of the activities that the majority of the cities will be sharing.

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Manifiesto of the Mayors of the International Association of Educating Cities

We declare our commitment to the sustainable development goals, and we work specifically in order to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, as the driver of individual and collective development and urban transformation that makes our cities more just, more empathetic and inter-cultural. To build cities where everyone can enjoy full equality and where we can join in dialogue and live together while respecting our differences.

Today we can affirm, beyond doubt, that education has breached the walls of the schools and has spread across the entire city, permeating its neighbourhoods, public spaces and institutions. However, we can also objectively see that numerous mis-educating factors and phenomena still persist in our cities.

Aware of the challenges we face, we are committed with conviction and determination to countering these regressive phenomena by putting forth a city policy model that places people at the core of our priorities and which, based on education, provides coherence, drive and meaning to our actions, as a tool for social transformation, cohesion and mutual respect.

Educating cities endeavour to make education the transversal axis of all local policies, by becoming aware of and reinforcing the educating potential of actions and programs in the field of health, the environment, town planning, mobility, culture, sport, etc.

We endeavour, therefore, to democratize access to all city's assets so that each city space can be a source of education in which everyone can live, enjoy and emancipate themselves, taking maximum advantage of the opportunities that the city has to offer in order to meet their expectations with civic-minded, democratic attitudes. A city respectful of the environment and in dialogue with its surrounding cities and rural areas.

We pursue a participatory democracy by uniting the proposals and efforts of civil city in jointly building better cities where no one is left behind. In order to achieve this ambitious goal, we are committed to citizen education, and to the establishment of the mechanisms necessary to formulate, implement and evaluate public policies with the participation of an active citizenry endowed with a critical, committed co-responsible spirit.

This is a road that very different cities from all continents have shared and which has a history of more than 25 years since the proclamation of the Charter of Educating Cities. That is why we join the celebration of the International Day of the Educating City with the wish to garner every day the support of more people, associations, companies, institutions, etc., to enthusiastically work for a comprehensive, replenished and emancipatory education. And we invite all cities large and small from all latitudes to join us in this audacious, hope-inspiring endeavour to engage in building **better Educating Cities for a better World**.

