



International Association of

# Educating Cities

**07**  
Information  
bulletin  
Special exhibition  
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EDUCATING CITIES  
FOR A BETTER WORLD

## FIRST PHASE OF THE TRAVELLING EXHIBITION: "LOCAL ACTIONS, GLOBAL VALUES"

In *The Man Without Qualities*, Robert Musil writes: "Cities, like people, can be recognized by their walk". This could be the motto for the exhibition *Educating Cities: Local actions, global values* that aims to make public some significant projects carried out by member cities of the International Association of Educating Cities –IAEC– ([www.edcities.org](http://www.edcities.org)). That is to say, to recognize and celebrate their educational trajectories.

At the 10th Congress of the IAEC, which took place in Sao Paulo in April 2008, the Executive Committee decided to add this new initiative to the ongoing Seminar *Educating Cities and Local Governance*, addressed to politicians and city decision makers, as well as the civil society of member cities. The initiative is also connected to the recent publication of the book *Education and Urban Life: 20 Years of Educating Cities*. The objective of all this is to come up with new forms of cooperation among cities that promote, in each of them, the conditions needed to assure long-lasting peace.

The exhibition intends to show some of the collective improvements that can be reached when communication and collaboration between local governments and civil society are open and fluid. Concretely, this exhibition aims to present the implications and the educational impact of local policies and to strengthen the bonds among local governments through the exchange of experiences. With this in mind, seven cities from the Association have been invited to take part in this first phase in order to illustrate, with examples, their interpretation of some of the principles of the Charter of Educating Cities.

The exhibition will be first presented in these cities and thereafter it will begin a more widespread tour, which will welcome new themes representative of government actions in other cities. The final objective is, on the one hand, to offer a rich and diverse assortment of experiences to be added to other existing tools of dissemination of good practices –such as the Association's International Documents Databank. And on the other hand, to make these experiences internationally known as to become a source of inspiration for interesting initiatives in other member cities. Exchange and collaboration are two words that are key to understanding this exhibition.

The fact that reality changes, is no secret. To know how to adapt to these changes is a virtue that the exhibition *Educating Cities: Local actions, global values* would like to achieve through the projects it presents and the activities planned throughout the tour.



  
**GRANOLLERS**  
(MAY 2009)

  
**BUDAPEST**  
(SEPTEMBER 2009)

  
**TAMPERE**  
(OCTOBER 2009)

  
**DAKAR**  
(NOVEMBER 2009)

  
**GUADALAJARA**  
(APRIL 2010)

  
**VALLENAR**  
(MARCH 2010)

  
**بيت لحم (BETHLEHEM)**  
(DECEMBER 2009)



# GRANOLLERS

## HISTORIC MEMORY AND IDENTITY: THE CITY OF GRANOLLERS

In order to know and understand a city, it is necessary to appreciate the ensemble of its symbols, legends and customs. This intangible heritage reinforces a sense of belonging to a city. In addition, a community's collective expression of its identity can serve as a tool for building citizenship based on democratic values.

The City Council and the people of Granollers - a city in the Barcelona metropolitan area with a rich industrial history - are well aware of this.

### MAY 31, 1938: THE BOMBING OF GRANOLLERS

Seventy years after the city was bombed during the Spanish Civil War, high school students and their teachers gathered together with survivors of that tragic event to commemorate it and to make a clear statement of commitment to peace. Since then, this event has been repeated every year.

### THE CITY'S FESTIVAL OF THE "WHITES" AND "BLUES"

The city of Granollers' main annual festival was created around an age-old competition between two tile makers to see who was the fastest at his job, recreating a rivalry among two heterogeneous groups of citizens - the "whites" and the "blues" - that carry out a friendly competition to win the right to organize the opening ceremonies for the following year's festival. The competition revolves around a program of activities aimed to strengthen the sense of belonging to the city and to encourage an encounter between tradition and innovation.



### THE GRANOLLERS SOUP POT

In 1982, the Neighborhood Association for downtown Granollers suggested reviving and updating an old tradition known as *L'Olla dels Pobres* (Soup Pot for the Poor). Ever since then, on the Saturday before Christmas, the association invites the people of the city to a bowl of *escudella* (a traditional Catalan stew) in the centrally-located Soup Pots Square. In addition, association members visit the schools to teach young children about the tradition.

People were so taken with this unique cultural event that later got together to create a monument to the *escudella*. Since then a cooking pot is permanently stored beneath the square and is brought out for the city's main culinary festivals. The popular saying, "Granollers is a grand soup pot" is an apt reflection of the city's tradition of hospitality.

# BUDAPEST

## THE EDUCATING ROLE OF CULTURE: THE CITY OF BUDAPEST

Budapest is the capital city of Hungary, a Central European country that was devastated by the two world wars and following that underwent repeated changes of its political system. After the restoration of democracy in the country, the marks left by many of those conflicts still remain but have never been brought out in the open and examined.

This situation triggered the idea of using theatre as a powerful instrument of expression, learning and social cohesion; an outlet through which young people could express their concerns and wishes, and an ideal means of encouraging intergenerational dialogue.



### KOLIBRI THEATRE

*The Kolibri Child and Youth Theatre* was created as a space in which to rehearse and carry out theatrical projects targeted both to children and young people and to the adults in their lives.

The actual performances have been, right from the start, as important as the conversations that followed. The aim is to provide resources allowing adults and youngsters, with different life experiences, to find common ground by sharing artistic experiences that address collective problems. It is about transforming the audience's individual reactions into a shared experience. To accomplish this, it is vitally important that the theatrical programming be genuine.

The effect of this project transcends the actual theatre walls and reaches all public spaces, including educational institutions.

The Kolibri Theatre programming includes 28 performances covering a range of subjects from

interactive musical pieces to puppet shows or short readings. There is additional didactic material provided with each performance.

The City of Budapest's Departments of Education and Culture recognize the important role theatre plays in young peoples' social integration. As a result, theatrical training has expanded into all areas. In addition to the Kolibri Theatre, the City Council supports thirteen other theatres.

The presence of theatre in public spaces, festivals, celebrations, etc., extends beyond the actual city limits. The fact that theatrical events can be programmed both in large open spaces and in small classrooms alike, is proof of the City of Budapest's commitment to education.

# TAMPERE

## ICTs AND SOCIAL COHESION: THE CITY OF TAMPERE

Tampere became an important industrial center in Northern Europe during the mid-19th century, the so-called Manchester of Finland. Today the city is still one of the driving forces of the Finnish economy, thanks to the active role played by its IT industry and university research.

Within this framework, the Tampere City Council is aware of the importance of guaranteeing the city's entire population access to the Information Society. To accomplish this, the local administration has opted to develop programs using new technologies to promote social cohesion; projects that go beyond the formal educational system.

In keeping with this approach, the Tampere City Library organizes free training programs in new technologies open to everyone in the city and particularly targeted to the elderly, immigrants and the unemployed.

Thus, the library offers an ongoing training service on Internet basics - *Netsquares*. In addition, it has

created an itinerant version of the same, called *Internet bus*. It provides the same service on wheels and makes it possible to learn in places where there are no fixed ICT classes.

The broad outreach of these programs not only encourages individual learning of these new technologies, but also strengthens connections among people. The teachers play a fundamental role in sparking interest in the new forms that the information society is constantly taking.

The positive response to this program has led to activities aimed at individuals who have mastered the basic skills. Thus, groups of people with shared interests can develop their own projects in cooperation with the city's cultural institutions. Two examples of this are the "Astronomy for All" project, developed in conjunction with the local astronomy society, and the "Digital Story Workshop."

The new technologies that can be seen as factors leading to social fragmentation can become, in the hands of the local administrations, one of the elements that most strengthens social cohesion among citizens.





## DAKAR LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY: THE CITY OF DAKAR

In keeping with the Senegalese government's decentralization policy, the political authorities in the capital city of Dakar addressed the issue of citizen involvement in city management decisions.

In order to set the foundations for this new relationship, specialists from the City of Dakar met in late 2002 with representatives from civic associations for several work sessions culminating in *The Civic Action and Citizenship Agreement*.

The main point of this agreement stressed the need to work together in a transparent manner on a shared project agreed upon by the citizens with the final aim of achieving harmonious, stable and sustainable city development.

In this newly defined relationship, importance was placed on the role played by two important pillars of the community association movement in Dakar:

the Collective of Committees for Local Development (CCDL) and the Union of Movements and Associations for Development (EMAD). Both organizations serve as frameworks for reflection, coordination and action at the neighborhood level with representatives from community-based institutions and organizations.

The mobilization and significant participation of local actors in community projects has given life to numerous citizen initiatives and projects. Examples of these are the preventive health campaigns against diseases such as malaria and the AIDS virus. In this regard, the CCDL and EMAD, in coordination with City Hall departments and neighborhood associations, have organized numerous forums, concerts, conferences and caravans to inform citizens of the different methods for the prevention of those diseases.

Likewise, they carry out community mediation actions to resolve conflicts within the community and to encourage citizens' participation in local management issues.

*The Civic Action and Citizenship Agreement* is a fundamental element in legitimizing municipal action and encourages growing understanding of the roles and functions of social players.



## BETHLEHEM CONFLICT RESOLUTION: THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem is located in a region that has been wracked by violent conflict for many years. It is a city of great social diversity; of profoundly different political convictions and religious beliefs coexisting in the same space.

Bethlehemites use their differences to strengthen their mutual understanding and respect as a way of building peace, harmony and solidarity.

The Bethlehem Municipality plays a basic role as a mediator in solving the social problems within the community of Bethlehem. To that end, the Municipality has a committee composed of members of the City Council which is entrusted to follow up and mediate in the day-to-day problems and conflicts that arise among citizens. The City adopted these procedures in conflict resolution as a supportive measure to guarantee the security and the stability of the community.

Beyond the City's action, the social structure of Bethlehem also includes conciliators who intervene in conflictive situations or attacks on personal ho-

nour. Their judgments are based on traditions and customs handed down by elders from generation to generation. The rules operate as real social laws regulating the relationships between families and clans.

These mediators are appointed by the elderly, whose wisdom is recognized by the social entities and the Bethlehem Municipality. The conciliators are not substitutes for the legal authorities; instead, their involvement is seen as an element that reinforces social stability. They work together with government agencies to maintain peaceful coexistence between the different social sectors in Bethlehem.

Another important means of administering justice in Bethlehem is through application of the tenets of the Islamic Religion, widespread in Palestine due to the long history of nomadic and immigrant populations in the region.

The traditional code of justice in effect in Bethlehem is a clear example of how the most everyday conflicts in the city are resolved. Incompatible goals or

different perceptions between individuals or social groups require the presence of a third party capable of fostering peaceful coexistence.

Justice mediation, the application of traditional wisdom and the City of Bethlehem's initiative are the best guarantees of respect and social peace.



## VALLENAR URBAN PLANNING, PUBLIC SPACE AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: THE CITY OF VALLENAR

The Huasco River, that ties together and gives life to the terraced valley of the same name, has attracted a variety of settlements along the shores of its long course, with the Chilean city of Vallenar situated in the heart of the valley. When Vallenar began to take shape as a city, the river was not seen as a space to be integrated in this urban environment, where there was already a serious scarcity of green areas and parks for recreational use. In the mid-1990s, the city government decided to develop a project to address this issue.

### THE RIVERSIDE PROMENADE

The project's aim was to take over the river space as a basic part of a new urban development plan that would encourage the use of its banks as a place for social gathering and recreation, ridding the riverside of its image as an abandoned space.

Incorporating the river into the city meant setting aside a public space in which citizens could gather and interact; promote outdoor cultural, sports and recreational activities, and attract tourists to the area.

The specific aims set out by the designers of the riverside promenade were to:

- Channel the river, reinforcing its banks in order to protect against the rises in the river.
- Order the riverbank using walls built out of natural materials.
- Use river water for the park watering system.
- Place sports courts of various types along the edges.

→ Rehabilitate a series of natural pools to create a spa for people in the community.

That is how a multi-purpose green space of over 2,000 linear meters complete with sports and recreational equipment was created, offering the entire community a broad range of outdoor leisure activities.

From the outset, the community participated in this ambitious project to transform the riverside, providing input on the initial plans and, at the same time, gaining awareness of the importance of the surroundings and of respecting the environment.

Today, the Huasco River, newly-revived as the central core of an ecosystem and integrated in urban life to the citizens' benefit, is a focal public space in the City of Vallenar.





Public space is where a horizontal and broad communication can be established among citizens. It is a place that generates democracy, culture and education. Experiencing the city offers the opportunity to continue building it and restoring it to revive the values of each of the communities within it.

### LA VIA RECREATIVA

La *Via Recreativa* (Recreational Route) is a program developed by the City of Guadalajara (the capital of the Mexican state of Jalisco) with the primary aims of recovering public space, improving coexistence and social cohesion among its citizens, reinforcing the sense of belonging to the city, and encouraging alternative means of moving around the city.

The route extends 25 kilometers along the length of the city's main avenues and crosses the city from east to west through numerous communities of varying socioeconomic levels. It also connects with three other cities in the larger metropolitan area: Tlaquepaque, Tonalá and Zapopan.

The Recreational Route involves freeing some of the city's main streets of traffic on Sundays, turning them into recreational areas where pedestrians can ride bicycles, skate, walk and enjoy educational and entertainment activities offered in the nearby squares. An average of 120,000 people use the route every Sunday.

Different city departments organize coordinated interactive activities such as traveling book and toy libraries, interactive science exhibitions, family-focused workshops, concerts, etc.

The use of this route has also led to programs focused on improving the urban landscape, as in the case of San Jacinto Park, a recovered green space more than 25,000 square meters in size, and the "Green City" Project for developing green areas on the sidewalks along the city's Route 1.

The use of public space as an instrument for social inclusion has extended to other projects such as "Guadalajara on a Bike" and "Sports in the Street," the latter of which organizes sporting events in those communities that lack sports infrastructure.



The singularity of the exhibition that is now being presented lies in the very process of cooperation among the participant cities. That is to say, the seven cities that make up part of the show now, as well as those that subsequently wish to become part of it, on presenting their own experiences, will demonstrate to what extent local government action can promote democracy and thus favour the conditions for peace among its inhabitants.

Using public space in the service of fostering citizenship, means creating conditions to promote respect, community living, solidarity and the defence of public interest. This context, reflected in the Charter of Educating Cities, is ideal for a large number of educational, cultural and social practices and experiences that generate dialogue, a key necessary element to build peaceful societies.

Through this new initiative, the International Association of Educating Cities also intends to make visible the importance of civil society in cities' governance, as the experiences of this initial phase prove it. These processes of interaction are needed in order to implement political decisions.

The IAEC has organized the exhibition *Educating Cities: Local actions, global values* in collaboration with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation. The UNESCO Chair of Cultural Policy and Cooperation at the University of Girona has developed a specific line of reflection which applies to the design of some educational proposals in accordance with the fundamentals of human rights. The Chair contributes to this project by emphasizing the educational side of the cultural experiences and practices chosen in this first phase, and by producing an educational guide that can be adapted and applied according to local requirements. This guide contains educational proposals for working in a rigorous and interesting way to promote the global values illustrated in the exhibition to school children, young people, families and citizen groups.

The IAEC, in conjunction with the UNESCO Chair, will compile, analyze and evaluate the results of this first phase in order to propose new road maps for future exhibitions.

