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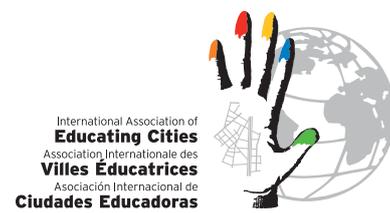
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATING CITIES
2014



CITY,
SOCIAL INCLUSION
AND EDUCATION



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Editorial

Twenty-first-century cities are spaces that encapsulate the contradictions of globalization. As Saskia Sassen reminds us, they have become the center of operations for increasingly globalized economic relationships and are almost the only visibly localized part of a strongly de-localized economy, with greater virtual than physical projection. Likewise, the city is a space in which we witness the most fragmentation, social polarization, and inequalities in life conditions between those citizens who manage to function within the system and those remaining on the outside. There is no question that, at present, the latter group is growing exponentially. As pointed out in Thomas Piketty's controversial book on income and wealth distribution in capitalist economies over the past one hundred years, inequalities have steadily increased (excepting the period between the two World Wars), to the point of reaching levels that existed during the early years of capitalism.

In cities, more than anywhere else, inequality translates into exclusion and the steady weakening of mechanisms that in other times could generate social cohesion. The inequalities are reflected in statistics, but are also visible in everyday neighborhood life; in the isolation—physical and otherwise—of the urban peripheries in relation to city centers; and in the dynamics that create what Loïc Wacquant refers to as hyperghettos or anti-ghettos, that is, spaces that where ethnically homogeneous or heterogeneous groups, that are not even considered a “reserve army of labour”, are concentrated and where a multitude of social problems exist.

Thus, urban segregation involves much more than physical separation. It becomes a place splintered by an economic model of growth that can continue to generate pockets of exclusion and, instead of turning the tide, constantly relies on discursive or political means, or police intervention, to contain social unrest and discontent. Sometimes these formulas address questions of dispersion and concentration, but when instability and poverty reach extreme limits, they are never able to suppress social outbursts.

A city is also a space of political contradictions. It is a place where social control and emergency measures can coexist with the best cases of social inclusion. It is precisely in city environments where we see the finest examples of social inclusion, offering attention to disadvantaged and marginalized groups with regard to training, social integration and generation of opportunities. Therefore the city is, at once, a fragmented environment and a place of rescue that creates links of solidarity and shared intelligence. Regardless of how policies are developed,

institutionally or otherwise, the city is a space with “urban capability” of speech, as Sassen states. Enough gaps surface to make the powerless become visible, bringing to the fore alternative means of inclusion. It is also an educative space with regard to inclusion; one through which to learn how to work towards guaranteeing rights of access, recognition and participation. Paradoxically, cities are spaces where the most people are marginalized, but also places filled with experiences that remind us that there are other just and fair ways to live within society.

This monograph, “City, Social Inclusion and Education,” reflects the contradictory forces that coexist in the city. It combines a careful analysis of the social fragmentation in that context with reflections on directions for change. The contributions compiled in this publication describe the work that different organizations have done to encourage citizen participation and present valuable city experiences from varying perspectives that focus on meeting the needs of the most vulnerable segments of the population.

The first section comprises five interviews with distinguished representatives of organizations dedicated to working for inclusive education and citizen rights. Josep Roig, Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) explains the concept of “the right to the city” and the initiatives that this organization is carrying out with local governments on a worldwide scale, in support of inclusion. Marcio Araujo de Lacerda, Mayor of Belo Horizonte (Brazil), describes the inclusive urban planning projects being developed in this city, that include policies focused on infrastructure and transport, as well as social policies aimed at integrating the pockets of poverty located on the city's periphery. Michel Destot, former Mayor of Grenoble, recounts this French city's battle against discrimination that includes actions carried out at different levels, heightening awareness of the issue both among citizens as well as among civil servants in the local administration. Camilla Croso explains the work being done by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and the different steps being taken to see that nation-States are guarantors of the right to education, and that educational development goals are a focus of attention (particularly with regard to the Post-2015 agenda). Closing this section is an interview with Yannis Vardakastanis, President of the European Disability Forum (EDF), in which he describes the work being done by this organization in defense of the rights of persons with disabilities and, specifically, the inclusion of those rights in different European policies and laws.

The second section comprises four theme-focused articles. The first text by Saskia Sassen on cities' “capability

of speech," offers an interesting analytic framework that reveals the gaps in the system that allow for the empowerment and visibility of the more disadvantaged sectors of society. Sassen shows us that there are always physical and symbolic spaces to be found in urban environments that can confront and respond to the ever growing deurbanizing forces in the so-called "global city." In the second article Loïc Wacquant provides tools with which to understand the new dynamics that generate urban poverty, the mechanisms of fragmentation and the new forms of territorial stigmatization resulting from unstoppable urban segregation. Wacquant very clearly helps us understand the connections between the economic, physical and symbolic borders that marginalize large sectors of the population. In his text, Quim Brugué emphasizes the importance of the links between citizenship, participation and democracy in order to move towards a more deliberative democracy that goes beyond the clear limitations of the current representative democracy. This is not a utopian concept, but rather a realistic approach to politics understood as a space for shared debate and for generating collective intelligence. This section closes with an article by Ana Falú. Taking off from Henri Lefebvre's concept of "right to the city," this author reveals the ongoing gender inequalities that are still in force, thus violating all types of citizen rights. Falú offers experiences that point to a possible paradigm change, essential to providing women with their full rights.

The last section of the monograph recounts good practices developed in various cities, focused on social and educational inclusion of a range of different social groups. The first of these is the Zanardi Houses (Case Zanardi) project in Bologna. Based on the model designed to fight hunger and poverty following World War I, this initiative draws citizens together to create opportunities for housing and food provision, and boost the city's social capital. This is a way in which the city can work together with civil society to develop highly successful social projects. The Arts and Crafts Factory (Fábrica de

Artes y Oficios de Oriente) located on the eastern, and very marginalized, periphery of Mexico City, is a project which makes very clear that free access to art and cultural is basic to social community development. On another front, the development of the CoTRE in Toulouse, that is a participatory commission focused on the foreign population's right to vote, demonstrates alternative ways through which to fight discrimination and give foreigners a voice. In addition, the CoTRE supports various initiatives that aim to encourage a closer link between the city's native and foreign population. The fourth experience is set in the city of Gunsan, in South Korea. Starting in 2007, this city developed numerous lifelong learning projects, primarily directed towards the most disadvantaged segments of the population, offering free or very low-cost cultural and educational opportunities. Lastly, the Santa Maria da Feira's Creative Orchestra (Orquestra Criativa), is a good example of how, by opening doors to greater inclusion, music can become a joint creative act and engender a space through which to develop cross-generational and inter-cultural links, and reinforce citizen self-esteem. It is an orchestra that combines the use of standard musical instruments with others made from recycled materials, including pipes, bottles, cans and buckets, in which children, young people, adults and the elderly alike, without any previous formal musical training, can take part in the process of music creation.

With this wide offer of varied experiences, the monograph provides a clear portrait not only of the very harsh circumstances of exclusion that exist in the world's largest cities, but also of the positive and creative initiatives being put forward at the local level. There is no question that the combination of theoretical analysis and practical experiences are leading to ongoing and solid local policies supporting inclusion and social justice, in keeping with the commitment of all educating cities.

Xavier Bonal

Professor of Sociology at the Autonomous University of Barcelona

A portrait of Josep Roig, a middle-aged man with glasses, wearing a suit and tie, sitting at a desk with his hands clasped. The image is overlaid with a blue tint.

Josep Roig

Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

INTERVIEW

Josep Roig was named Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) in September 2011.

He was a founding member of Metropolis in 1985, becoming Secretary General of the organization in 1999. In addition, he held the positions of Deputy Secretary and Executive Director of Metropolis'99 between 1997 and 1999. Previously, Josep Roig was Secretary General of the Barcelona Quality Network until 1997, Quality Coordinator of the Barcelona 2000 Strategic Plan and worked as a consultant to organizations in the public sector.

In his roles in the Barcelona Metropolitan Corporation (CMB) he worked on economic promotion, asset management, finances and planning, first as Coordinator of Technological and Industrial Parks (1983-1990); later as Deputy Director (1996-2000); and, following that, as Financial Director and Deputy Director General (2009-2011).

Within the academic field, Josep Roig was Executive Director of the University of Barcelona from 1990 to 1994 and, previous to that held the post of professor of Urban and Regional Planning from 1977 to 1985 at the University of Barcelona's Department of Economics.

Could you describe the UCLG's main goals?

United Cities and Local Governments is the world organization of local and regional governments, and their representative associations. It was created in 2004 when local and regional authorities around the world decided to join together to have one single voice on the international scene and carry on the missions of two organizations: the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the United Towns Organization (UTO/FMCU), established in 1913 and 1957, respectively.

Today the UCLG is present in 155 of the 192 United Nations member states and its direct membership comprises 1,000 cities and national associations.

The UCLG's aim is to represent local and regional governments on a worldwide level, promoting their values, goals and interests in the international community, through ongoing cooperation among them.

This organization is committed to working towards, through the action of its members, a fair, sustainable and supportive society, based on local democracy, autonomy and decentralization, in the defense of citizens' general interests.

The UCLG defends the "Right to the City." How do you define that right?

Indeed, in recent years, the concept of "the right to the city" has become a part of the UCLG members' brief. As we see it, this right aims to establish a new political and cultural model whereby the local territory is built collectively to be a space in which citizens can enjoy their rights.

In other words, we see the right to the city as a tool with which to build democratic, sustainable, fair and humane cities that allow equal access to resources, services and opportunities provided in urban areas.

In 2011, the UCGL took a clear stance in support of this paradigm in adopting the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City, that was drafted by the members of the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights.

The Charter-Agenda encourages local governments to design public policies that contribute to make the right to the city a reality in their territories. In this document, the right to the city is about respect and the protection and implementation of a set of rights (to participatory democracy, accessible basic public services, housing, gender equality, sustainable urban development, etc.) through local public policies drawn up in close dialogue with citizens.

The added value of this text, which sets it apart from earlier documents (for example, the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City), is that each of those rights is linked with a proposed plan of action that aims to help the local signatory governments put the stated commitments into effect through municipal programs or policies.

What are the main challenges faced by cities today in a context of globalization and increased social inequalities? Does the UCLG offer recommendations on how to fight inequality?

A worrisome question with regard to inequality and social exclusion, is the lack of access by vulnerable groups to basic citizen's rights (civil, political, economic, social and cultural).

During the course of 2008 UCLG members debated these issues in depth and drew up the document For a World of Inclusive Cities which proposes that social inclusion policies be a main focus in local government agendas,

together with the human, infrastructural and financial resources required to carry them out.

What are the principles and policies that should characterize an inclusive city?

In the document I mentioned earlier, For a World of Inclusive Cities, we identified four basic principles necessary in building more cohesive cities: that the social policies be part of a global policy, in other words, a priority for all local governments around the world; that they pursue the affirmation of rights, that is, to not consider them assistance policies; that they contribute to promoting diversity; and, lastly, that they contribute to fomenting local democracy and active citizen participation.

With regard to the type of policies that can lead things in that direction, it is important, above all, to point out that the range is very broad because fighting against social inequalities requires making an impact on various levels: social, economic, political, cultural, relational, digital, generational, and gender-wise.

Without trying to cover the whole ground, I would mention policies of reducing poverty, and generating employment and income; policies promoting health and personal independence; of attending to the needy and supporting families; combining paid work time with care giving, child rearing, and leisure time; policies protecting young children and the elderly who are vulnerable; of opening more doors to culture, information and ongoing training; urban policies based on relationships of proximity and accessible, sustainable mobility by means of quality public transportation; policies that strengthen democracy and critical, participatory and co-responsible citizenship; full rehabilitation policies in the poorest urban neighborhoods that lack quality public spaces and facilities. And there are more.

Among its goals, and in the Rabat Declaration, the UCLG aims to make the voice of the cities heard in the definition of Post-2015 Millennium Development

Goals, and in the aims that will result from the 2016 Habitat III Conference. What are the main demands?

The UCLG believes in the principle put forward in the Rio+20 Declaration which specifies that the new international development agenda must recognize the role of the sub-national spheres of government as main actors in development, given their demonstrated capacity to find innovative solutions to global challenges. In this regard, our job is to see that the Global Development Agenda focuses on people and empowers those actors and institutions—particularly those closest to the people—that are capable of bringing about changes that make for a more equitable and sustainable society.

With this goal in mind, local and regional governments around the world have promoted the creation of an international group to try to identify the priorities and shared messages with an eye towards the future Development Agenda. The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments for Post-2015 Development Agenda Towards Habitat III, as it is called, proposes a specific Sustainable Development Goal for urbanization that would recognize the growing importance of cities and also of regional cohesion, and of the ties between urban and rural areas in drawing up strategies, and actions to take, for a more sustainable world.

We are saying to the international community that sustainable development will not be achieved without addressing the growing inequalities in the current context of the world economic and social crisis that is increasingly playing out in many cities around the world.

In this regard, the future development agenda must boost local economic development with a focus on universal access to quality basic services, with policies aimed at eliminating poverty and with the creation of decent jobs. In addition, it is about fostering a sustainable urban economy that promotes responsible consumption and production and promotes solidarity and learning among equals, where culture plays a decisive cohesive and holistic role.





© Beatriz Galindo



Meeting of the UCGL World Council in Rabat © UCLG

The future development agenda must trust in governance at all levels, including local and regional, and promote a global partnership where all of the interest groups work in cooperation. In order to achieve that, decentralization must play a central role and the new Development Agenda must be reinforced by a New Urban Agenda in 2016.

In the Rabat Declaration, the UCLG manifests its support for the creation of one single Post-2015 global development agenda rather than various different sectorial agendas. Why has the UCLG taken this position?

After the Rio+20 conference, two interest groups began to emerge with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). There were those who viewed them as something to be developed separately from the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and then there were others who believed that development and sustainability should go hand in hand, and that the new sustainability goals should be combined with the new development goals to shape a new single set of goals.

UCLG members have always asserted that the Post-2015 Agenda must be single and universal because you cannot consider development without taking into account sustainability nor can you consider global objectives without taking into account varying responsibilities that address capabilities and circumstances in different parts of the world. The new goals must be inclusive from the moment of defining them to implementing them and must rely on the involvement of all of the actors, not just the member states, thus making it easier to guarantee that they will be achieved.

What lines of joint work could be established between UCLG and IAEC to impact this international agenda by bringing to it increased awareness of the concerns and potential of educating cities?

Given that it is a network of networks, the UCLG is a privileged platform for developing new ideas and agreeing

on global strategies. With regard to education in the cities, we want to promote cooperation and specific actions among them, to promote further discourse on social inclusion and educating cities, and support the most direct manifestations of that.

Documenting the experiences that can serve as examples to encourage certain ways of shaping an international agenda could be of great strategic value. Our future aim is to convince many more cities and networks to join in sharing knowledge, and that world policies will include the lessons learned at the local level.

What role can local governments play in the search for a solution to the dynamics of exclusion that we are seeing in cities throughout the world?

As mentioned previously, the numerous experiences of the cities and authorities should be incorporated into the Global Agenda, and the UCLG –together with its members and partners– aim to create this bridge between the global and the local level.

Our network offers local leaders the opportunity to learn from other experiences while, at the same time, conveying their own visions to different international institutions and organizations. The grass roots solutions need to translate into policies at the national and international level.

Thus, we must create a real exchange among members that is able to quickly respond to national and international proposals in addressing these questions and can work in close cooperation with other important partners such as civil society and the private sector.

Our aim is not to make the voices of local governments one, but rather to make sure that our diversity and experience reaches the international agenda with the strength of a well coordinated world-wide network.

The challenge we face in order to achieve that, is to understand more about the different worlds in which we live, develop new ways of learning, and build a network of knowledge to benefit the local communities that our members represent. ●



Marcio Araujo de Lacerda

Mayor of Belo Horizonte (Brazil)

INTERVIEW

Marcio Araujo de Lacerda is a business administrator. He was born in Leopoldina and spent his childhood and adolescence in Inhapim. At the age of 17 he moved to Belo Horizonte, where he studied at the Federal Technical School and, in 1965, began working for the Minas Gerais Telephone Company. He was a political activist during the military dictatorship and was imprisoned for four years as a result of the political repression at the time. Unable to return to his previous job, he then began a successful career as an entrepreneur, creating two telecommunication companies active in 16 Brazilian states as well as in Chile and Bolivia. In 2003, he was named Executive Secretary of the Ministry of National Integration. From April 2007 until May 2008, he was Secretary of Economic Development for the state of Minas Gerais. In 2008, he was elected mayor of Belo Horizonte and was reelected in 2012 on the first ballot. The Datafolha and Ibope Institutes have, on three consecutive occasions, named him the best mayor in Brazil.

What are the main urban planning challenges facing Belo Horizonte and other large cities?

Belo Horizonte, capital of Minas Gerais state, is a young city that was planned as a modern urban center in the late 19th century, symbolizing the progressive aims of the recently proclaimed Brazilian Republic. Over the course of the 116 years of its existence, the city has grown and become the third largest metropolitan area in Brazil and, thus, an important city in Latin America.

The commission lead by urban planner Arão Reis conceived the future Belo Horizonte as a city with a population of 200,000. Today 2.4 million people live in this metropolis, thus creating social and urban planning

challenges that influence the planning and execution of local public policies which become even more complex when taking into account the other 34 municipalities in the metropolitan area, comprising nearly 5 million people.

Given that it was a planned city from the start, the capital of Minas Gerais boasts a feature that has been important in shaping its international relationships, and that is a sense of solidarity. In fact, when Belo Horizonte was first created it relied on engineers, architects, workers and, later, a wide range of artisans, who arrived here from other cities and states in Brazil and many from other countries. In addition to being a welcoming, fraternal

Panoramic view of Pampulha © Breno Pataro



place, it was also a city of hope, where many of those who came here did so with a dream of a better life.

The challenge for large cities, and primarily those in Latin America, is rooted in their chaotic growth during the second half of the 20th century and which, in many cases, persists today. Both in Latin America and in Asia there is an excessive dependency on private transportation and limited investment in road infrastructure. The housing issue also presents a challenge.

How would you define the concept of inclusive urban development? Could you briefly offer a few examples of that?

Inclusive urban development means that the city's collective needs take priority over individual interests in the urban planning and growth process.

Now, in the present, is when we begin to build the Belo Horizonte that we want in the future: all of the initiatives, projects, programs and actions put in place today will have long-term repercussions. Based on that logic, which serves as a parameter for any administration aiming to be modern and efficient, the City developed a strategic plan—"BH 2030"—that is a vision of the Belo Horizonte we aspire to within 16 years. Thus, by planning the future and acting in the present, we are looking to create a Belo Horizonte built by and for all.

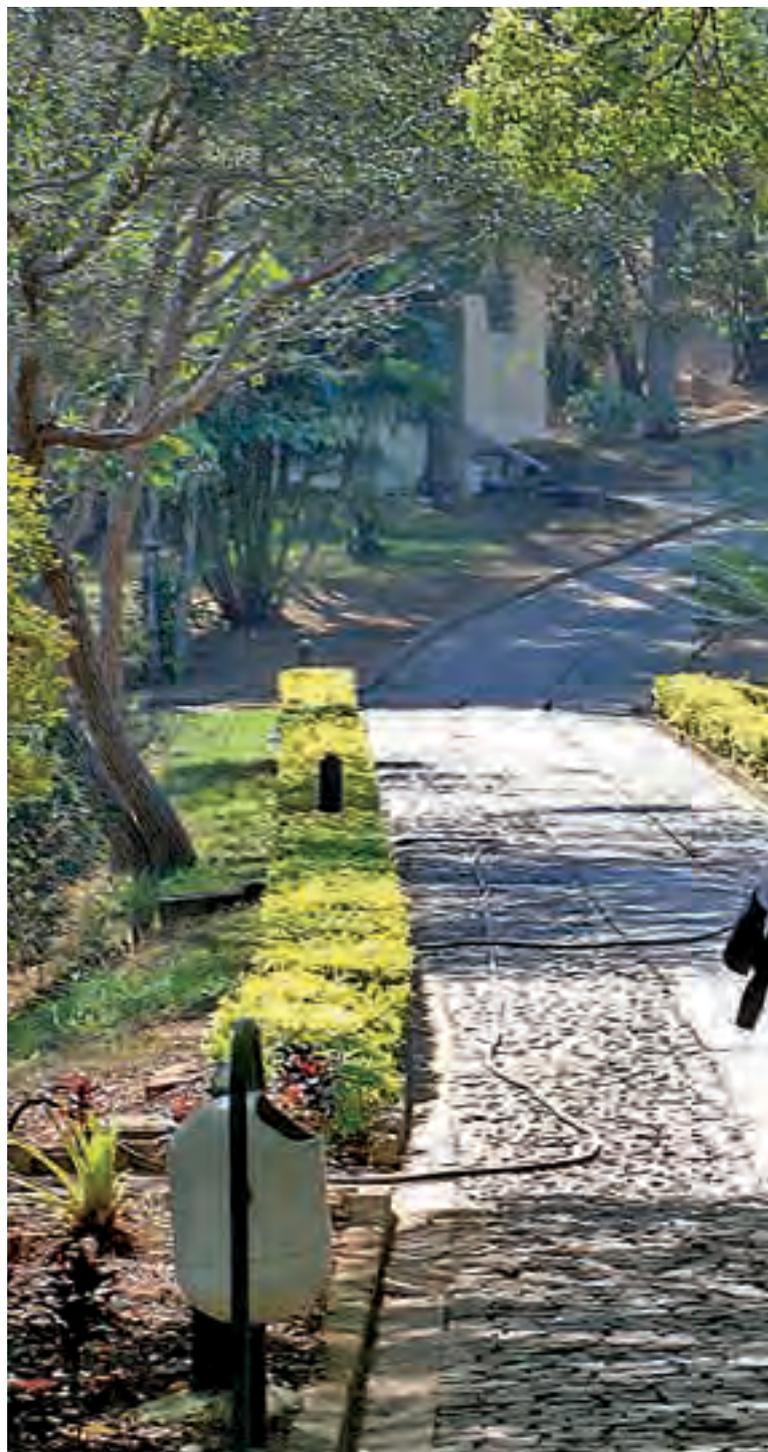
Applying a new management and strategy, the "BH Targets and Results" plan provides ongoing evaluation of the public policies and programs and projects underway. This is very much a "hands on" management model that aims to achieve the goals set out by the Government Plan for social, economic, environmental and institutional change.

In this sense we are taking an important step to continue to improve peoples' lives in this city by facing present challenges and planning for the future: building a city that is sustainable and provides opportunities and quality of life.

With regard to inclusive urban development, I would point out the Specific Global Program (PGE) which is an in-depth study of Belo Horizonte's *vilas* and *favelas*, with the direct participation of the people who live in those communities. This is a three-stage project involving collecting data, performing an overall assessment of the main problems in the area in question and, then, defining the local priorities and the steps necessary to address them. The PGE is a planning tool that focuses on the redesign of urban spaces and on the environmental and social initiatives taken in the *vilas*, *favelas* and poorer city neighborhoods. It involves a detailed study on conditions in those areas, taking into account urban planning and socio-economic and legal territorial questions. The Program's purpose is to provide solutions to improve the quality of life in those communities and integrate them

into the city as a whole. One of the advantages of the Global Plan is that it encourages improved efficiency and organization in carrying out projects, to ensure that the money invested in them is not wasted. Another advantage is the support provided by financial institutions. The city has received, through the PGE projects, considerable resources to invest in *vilas* and peripheral areas from the Federal Government of Brazil and from other national and international financial entities.

Lagoa do Nado Park © Adão de Souza.



Likewise, it is important to point out the participation of the inhabitants of these areas in developing the Plan and helping to establish priorities regarding the actions needed to improve conditions of the settings in which they live. To date, 63 plans have been carried out, benefiting 90 communities comprising close to 312,000 people, and another five plans—focused on nine *vilas* totaling approximately 6,400 inhabitants—are currently in the development stage.

How does the City of Belo Horizonte guarantee citizen participation in urban planning questions?

Citizen participation in Belo Horizonte's urban planning is carried out through various different means. There is, for example, the Urban Policy Municipal Conference that takes place every four years starting from when the Belo Horizonte Directive Plan—Law N° 7165/96—was passed. The Conference's aim is to assess the development and impact of the norms set out in the Directive Plan and the





Start of the activity of the BRT system © Adão de Souza



Accessibility to the vehicles © Breno Pataro

Law on Land Parceling, Occupation and Use and to modify and re-prioritize the schedule of investments in works.

Another instrument for citizen participation is the Municipal Council of Urban Policies (COMPUR), set up in 1996 as part of the Directive Plan, through which urban planning and management policies for Belo Horizonte are discussed and deliberated. COMPUR comprises 16 members and the respective substitutes: that is, eight representatives from the City Administration, two representatives from the Municipal Council (with legislative power) and six citizen members who are elected through sectoral citizen assemblies. All of the representatives serve two-year terms on the council.

I must also point out that since 1993, Belo Horizonte has been committed to Participatory Budgeting, thus fostering a democratic approach to city administration by including citizens in decisions regarding the works to be done and the investments involved. The Participatory Budget operates in two ways: through direct citizen participation according to the administrative district and through digital feedback. The District Participatory Budget determines the investments to be made in each of the nine city districts. Every two years meetings are held among neighborhood residents and in district assemblies to discuss and select, by direct vote, works to be carried out by the City. The Digital Participatory Budget was created in 2006 as a means for citizens to choose, on the Internet, works they wish to see undertaken. This budget process was carried out on four different occasions (in 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2013) with a total response of 390,000 valid votes by internet, telephone and Android and iOS apps. In the first year, 20 million reais were invested in projects on the basis of the feedback and 50 million were invested in the other three years. In sum, 48 urban renewal projects were approved through this budget.

It is important to note that the Participatory Budget, be

it through direct or digital mode, is focused on a defined geographic area, addressing citizen needs in the different city districts. Among the important works carried out as a result of the participatory process was the renovation of Plaza Raul Soares, in the Central-South area of the city, which was approved in 2006 as the first project resulting from the Digital Participatory Budget. Other approved initiatives include: revitalizing streets and avenues, installing video surveillance systems, bridge building, reviving public transport lines, and upgrading city squares and their environs.

In 2013 the winning project resulting from the Digital Participatory Budget was the urban development and renovation of public spaces in the nine city districts.

What initiatives have been carried out to improve public transportation in the city? How are people being encouraged to use these means of transport?

Approximately 50% of the population of Belo Horizonte population uses public transportation on a daily basis. There are over one million vehicles operating in the city, 71% of which are cars. These figures illustrate the importance of mobility in the sustainable development of Minas Gerais' capital. It is no coincidence, then, that guaranteeing accessibility to all parts of the metropolitan area is an important element in Belo Horizonte's main long-term strategy. Integrating the networks, addressing the transport needs, and offering quality public transportation services are the primary means of meeting that challenge.

The Belo Horizonte Mobility Plan (PlanMob-BH) establishes guidelines for the city to follow in order to meet the population's present and future transportation needs. The overall concept takes into account other concerns including social inclusion, environmental sustainability, participatory governance and democratization of public spaces. The Belo Horizonte



Vila Viva São José © Isabel Baldoni

Mobility Plan was developed based on these references and began with a detailed analysis of the current transportation conditions both within the city and regarding connections with other municipalities in the larger metropolitan area. In order to improve the public transportation service, the city is putting into place, during the course of 2014, the efficient, high-quality BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) system which works similarly to the metro and is capable of meeting peoples' transport needs in a quick and comfortable manner. This same system is successfully operating in other parts of the world, such as Curitiba, Brazil; Beijing, China; Johannesburg, South Africa; and Los Angeles, U.S.

The vehicles in the system can carry more passengers than traditional buses and operate on reserved lanes. Modern stops along the routes provide off street ticketing machines for greater security and agility. The platforms at the stops are at the same level as the bus doors, thus facilitating access to the vehicle. This system serves 700,000 people in the city, on a daily basis.

Apart from the implementation of the new BRT system, the city of Belo Horizonte signed an important agreement with the Government of the State of Minas Gerais and the Federal Government, to add two additional lines to the capital's metro network. During 2014 an invitation to tender will be put out for the expansion and modernization of the metro system.

You mentioned that the long-term public transportation strategy aims to guarantee mobility and accessibility to the entire metropolitan area. What actions are being considered to improve connections between the city center and the favelas and vilas to integrate them into one single city?

First of all, I must point out that no public manager can sit back and be comfortable as long as there exist poor living conditions and a lack of housing in the city in question,

where citizens lack basic sanitary and infrastructural needs and have little access to social services such as education and health. Belo Horizonte is making an enormous effort to integrate the *vilas* and outskirts into the city as a whole by developing the necessary urban infrastructure in those settlements as well as social policies aimed at their populations, while preserving their history and social capital to the extent possible. These actions form part of the Lively Town (*Vila Viva*) program that includes work on the sanitation system; resettlement of families living in precarious conditions; housing construction; elimination of risk areas; restructuring of the road system; upgrading alleyways; and creating parks and facilities for sports and leisure activities. When the urban development project is completed, the area will be legalized with the issuance of deeds for the occupants of the sites.

The steps taken through the program is improving quality of life for nearly 165,000 inhabitants of the *vilas* and outskirt towns of Serra, Morro das Pedras and Santa Lúcia; of the Califórnia, São José, Pedreira Prado Lopes, Taquaril, São Tomás, Aeroporto, Cemig, Alto das Antenas *vilas*; and of the inhabitants of the slum areas of Belém avenue, Córrego Santa Teresina and the Várzea da Palma Complex, altogether representing 35% of the total *vilas* and *favelas* populations. The Lively Town works—totalling 1.16 billion reals—were funded through the Federal Government's Growth Acceleration Program together with financing from the Brazilian Development Bank and the Caixa Econômica Federal.

One of the mainstays of Lively Town is citizen participation and thus the program establishes a new approach in the process of preserving protected areas. Opening up dialogue with the community through the Health and Environmental Education Program ensures the participatory aspect of the initiative and therefore guarantees greater environmental sustainability.

The city's goal is to transform Belo Horizonte into a metropolis that includes all of its lively *vilas*, and expand the program to other communities.

In terms of accessibility and mobility, the Lively Town program built 6 kilometers of connecting roads and 30 kilometers of urban development of alleyways. Avenida Cardoso opened in December 2008 (*Vila Viva* in Serra), and is 1.6 kilometers long, connecting this outskirts town with nearby neighborhoods. Once these avenues opened up, various bus lines were extended to meet the needs of the people in those newly upgraded areas that benefited from the program works.

Are there educational programs in place designed to raise childrens' awareness of the issue of sustainable urban development?

The Municipal Education Department, in keeping with city policy, conceives public space as a school of citizenship and, as part of its pedagogical policy, carries out initiatives aimed at turning different parts of the city into educating spaces.

The Child Education policy takes sustainability issues fully into account, starting with the creation of the Municipal Schools of Early Childhood Education. It is important that, from a very early age, children explore other ways of finding their place in the world with the aim of guaranteeing the sustainability of the spaces in which they live.

The BH Childrens Program introduces young children into the city's cultural and green spaces. As they move through the city, they come in contact with life experiences different to their own, reinforcing their sense of belonging and the responsibility of each citizen to maintain a clean and orderly city.

The "Educating the City to Educate" project offers children the opportunity to maintain close contact with cultural spaces in the city, including its museums.

On another front, the Comprehensive Education, Human Rights and Citizenship Program, through the City and Environment Unit provides support to environmental projects in Municipal Schools, expanding the educational space beyond the classroom. In cooperation with the

Urban planning improvements through the Vila Viva Program in the conurbation of Serra © Isabel Baldoni



Municipal Urban Services Department, the Public Heritage Preservation project battles against tags and invites city schools to strengthen the historic memory that has been, and continues to be, basic to building a social identity.

Public areas serve as meeting places for social interaction. Could you describe a city initiative aimed at fomenting harmonious coexistence among different population groups, age groups, etc.?

Various elements are taken into consideration in encouraging social interaction among Belo Horizonte citizens from different backgrounds and social classes. Cultural and social centers promote interaction through programs for the senior citizens, as well as sports and leisure activities and programs fostering the creation of employment and income. These are further enhanced by the city's many cultural activities, from national and international festivals to more local events that offer opportunities for encounters through shared art, music and social events.

The City of Belo Horizonte manages 16 cultural centers operating in the majority of the city's districts, with the aim of applying the Municipal Foundation of Culture's policy directives and consolidating and decentralizing

Municipal School of Children's Education Curumins © Divino Advincula



Municipal School of Children's Education Minaslândia © Divino Advincula





Railway station © Alessandro Carvalho

the city's cultural services. The aim is to maintain spaces for the enjoyment, presentation and creation of cultural events that contribute to the development of local identities. The cultural centers offer a range of workshops, art shows and film screenings, among other activities—all free of charge—which encourage and allow for greater interaction and exchange of experiences among the different communities. In addition to the Cultural Centers, Belo Horizonte has two municipal theaters; one large public library and three district libraries; two museums (one focused on the city's history and the other an art museum); the BH Public Archives; the Fashion Reference Center; the Dance Center and the Kubitschek House. All of the cultural facilities are open to the public and promote a wide range of cultural and social activities, free of charge.

The most important among the large festivals that offer opportunities for encounters, enjoyment and broader access to art, is the Belo Horizonte "Palco and Rua" International Theater Festival which was created in 1994 and will soon be holding its 12th edition. It takes place every two years and is completely decentralized, offering theater performances, lectures, seminars and parallel activities in the nine city districts. An average of 150-160,000 people attend the festival each year that it is

held. The Black Arts Festival (FAN), dating back to 1995, is one of the largest of its kind in Brazil and reflects the city's interest in supporting events that respect cultural diversity and which democratize access to art. FAN grew out of the need to share the art created by Africans and carried on by their descendants, in Brazil and from abroad, and holds a strong place in Belo Horizonte's art world. This festival also takes place in different spaces throughout the city and with free admission. Since 1997, Belo Horizonte has hosted the International Comic Book Festival (FIQ), an event not to be missed by comic fans and considered to be the best within the genre in Latin America. In 2011, a total of 145,000 people attended this event which is, again, open to the public and free of charge.

In addition to cultural facilities, the city has more than 30 Centers of Reference for Social Services (CRAS), which are public units located in marginal areas. One of their aims is to strengthen the role of family support and contribute to the improvement of quality of life, through group activities such as lectures, workshops and study groups. Each CRAS attends to the needs of at least one thousand families per year. There are also special areas of the BH Citizenship Program that stress social inclusion, guaranteeing those in the most vulnerable circumstances,



Pampulha. JK House and Art Museum © Divino Advincula

access to public resources and services. The program bases its management model on decentralization and interdepartmental work; thus it encompasses the various city departments and places the family at the fore. Currently, the 33 centers serve more than 17,500

people. In these spaces, families can access the Internet, participate in courses designed to generate employment and income, attend cultural events, participate in free gym classes at municipal facilities, and take advantage of a range of other services. ●



Michel Destot

Member of the Parliament for Isère and former mayor of Grenoble (France)

INTERVIEW

Michel Destot graduated from the École nationale supérieure des Arts et Métiers, he holds a degree in Atomic Energy and a PhD in Nuclear Physics (thesis presented during the presidency of the Nobel Prize winner Louis Néel). He also holds a degree in Political Sciences from the Institute of Political Sciences of Grenoble.

Destot began his career as a research engineer in nuclear physics, at the Atomic Energy and Alternative Energies Commission (CEA), first in Saclay and later in Grenoble, before he created and became CEO of CORYS, a high-tech startup that specialized in simulation technology for creating and developing complex systems applied to the fields of energy and transportation.

He was elected for the first time in 1977 as Councillor, forming part of Hubert Dubedout's municipal team, and in 1985 Destot was appointed General Counsel . He has been Member of Parliament for Isère since 1988, and he was Mayor of Grenoble between 1995 and March 2014.

At the national level, he has presided over the National Council of Local Missions (1998-2002), the Transportation Authorities Group (2001-2008) and the Association of French City Mayors (since 2007).

Within the French Socialist Party, Michel Destot is the President of the National Council and a member of the National Bureau. He has also been National Secretary in charge of enterprise and industry. Since 2009, he has led the reformist European think tank *Inventer à Gauche*.

Since 1995, Grenoble has become a benchmark city in the fight against racism and discrimination. Could you tell us about the background of this city's activism?

Grenoble, the capital of the Alps region, has a population of 160,000 placed in the center of a major metropolitan area of 600,000 inhabitants that will acquire the status of a Métropole (official intercommunal structure in France) in 2015. An Olympic City since 1968, it is recognized worldwide as a competitive economic hub, an international centre for science and higher education, a pioneer in sustainable development and social policies, and stands out for its quest for improvement and innovation in all areas. Our city also boasts a rich population makeup: cosmopolitan and multicultural, coming from the four corners of the earth, with more than 70 nationalities that together participate in the city's development and image.

Therefore, I have always made a point of basing my commitment and my political action on two values that I have often highlighted: reducing inequalities and being open to others, to the world and to its different cultures. I believe that it is a fair reflection of the image of Grenoble. Therefore, it only made sense that from 1995 on the Grenoble City Council should make equality and the fight against any form of discrimination one of the main focuses in its policies.

Originally centred on efforts aimed at supporting integration of the greatest possible number of people and fighting racism and anti-Semitism, the municipal staff attempted to slowly enrich and reinforce its policy, enabling it to feed into the full range of areas covered by the public action.

In 2010, Grenoble approved a Municipal Plan for the Prevention of Discrimination. Could you describe what that Plan involved? What were the benefits and the difficulties you encountered when you launched a crosscutting plan such as that one?

Actually, the City of Grenoble put together that plan as an extension of its previous commitments, with support from ACSE (the French National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunities).

This plan brought together all the different municipal efforts aimed at reinforcing equal treatment and eliminating prejudice. It allowed us to make the fight against discrimination one of the major focuses in a large number of public policies: human resources, access to employment, housing, and education.

All the efforts we pursued stemmed from the City's desire to act on several different levels:

- as employers, to benefit municipal employees and for the aspirants to occupy the vacant jobs;



Panoramic view of Grenoble © Laurent Espitallier

- as a public agent, pursuing and increasing awareness-raising efforts;
- as administration, at the service of all citizens of Grenoble, in the different areas where they may encounter discrimination.

This crosscutting approach and this multiplicity of efforts were the keys to the plan's value. It did not simply target one specific issue or another, but rather aimed to put up an all-encompassing, consistent fight against the mechanisms of discrimination as a whole. The awareness the plan has raised has allowed us to prove to many that anti-discrimination policy is one of the cornerstones of our social cohesion, and that it is necessary for the equal treatment we aim to achieve.

Does the City Council work with local NGOs and other agents from civil society? What mechanisms of cooperation have been established?

Clearly, policies such as these can never be effective in isolation. That is why the Grenoble City Council has been working in close collaboration with all the agents in the area, be they institutional, economic, or community-

based. The fight against discrimination calls for raising awareness among all citizens and mobilizing all the agents involved in public life.

That is why, together with all these agents, year after year the City Council has organized awareness-raising activities during events such as the International Women's Day, Education Against Racism Week, or the International Day Against Homophobia.

The City has also supported local associations and NGOs fighting against discrimination and prejudice by providing operating grants, funding for projects, and the use of municipal premises. In the calls for proposals, a specific section was devoted to efforts towards equality.

You mention that part of this Plan involved launching systems for raising awareness of discrimination within the municipal administration staff itself. Could you tell us what these training programmes consist of? What kind of a response have they received among city employees?

The internal programme of the plan aimed at prevention and treatment of any discrimination that the City's

employees or candidates to municipal employment might encounter. That is why this initiative was implemented in ongoing collaboration with trade union organizations.

Since 2010, several hundred municipal employees have received training in preventing discrimination, particularly through awareness-raising programmes, provided to supervisory and public service staff, which included a module on equal treatment. These training courses enabled us to convey a “culture of equality” within the municipal services and identify potentially problematical situations and practices.

These training courses were very well received among the municipal staff. I will give you an example: when we handed out a questionnaire about the fight against discrimination, we received over 1,200 responses from municipal employees. That is a clear indication of the importance they attribute to this issue and of their will to make a strong commitment to the initiative we set forth.

Did the fight against discrimination translate into affirmative action efforts in terms of access to public employment in the Grenoble City Council?

Strictly speaking, we did not apply an affirmative action policy in the Grenoble City Council. However, we did everything within our power to ensure equal opportunities for municipal employment candidates, as well as equal treatment for all the staff members once they were hired.

I would like to emphasize that, although we cannot describe it as affirmative action, the City has been strongly committed to hiring people with disabilities, with a disabled employee rate of over 6.7%.

In the context of the economic crisis, have you been seeing a rise in the rejection of diversity, and particularly of immigrants? In this context, what kind of a response do the initiatives against social discrimination have among the city's citizens?

Unfortunately, in times of crisis, there is always the danger of people closing in upon themselves. Therefore, our efforts become all the more important: the fight against inequality and discrimination ought to enable us to regroup and recover together.

But honestly, as I said before, given the makeup of this city's population, the citizens of Grenoble are receptive to others and accepting of diversity, actually viewing it as an asset. It is an advantage we want to maintain, and that is why the anti-discrimination policies have not been aimed at one specific population group or another—which would in and of itself be discriminatory—but rather focus on the practices we want to avoid so that nobody feels stigmatized. That is actually what ensures their effective ownership and, ultimately, their success.



Upper photo:
Education against Racism Week

Lower photo:
Celebration of the International Women's Day

How does the City address the problem of preventing discrimination in education?

The subject of discrimination in education was taboo for a long time, because it challenged the myth of a Republican, inclusive, egalitarian school. However, we know from empirical studies that discrimination can appear in school orientation, in the relationships with students or their families, in the sanctions system, or even in student placement in internships.

That is why Grenoble is participating in a plan to fight discrimination in education, led by the metropolitan's administration (known as *La Métro*) and by the Academic Inspection, which has already raised awareness among several hundred social and educational agents. In this same area, two Grenoble schools—the Lycée Mounier and the Collège Aimé Césaire—are involved in a study of equality in educational practices.

Needless to say, in addition to these efforts led by the City Council, associations and the Culture youth organizations are encouraged to intervene as much as possible in the schools, providing guidance to teachers and students alike.

Are there indicators that allow the impact of the anti-discrimination programmes to be assessed?

We have carried out two evaluations. The first was performed in 2012, as part of a deliberation held in the City Council to account for the efforts made and the results achieved, as those are the basis of Grenoble candidacy for receiving the Diversity Label.

The second evaluation involved working jointly with a team of social science researchers from the PACTE laboratory, who also produced a study of municipal policies and the quantitative and qualitative improvements that they brought about.

Based on the criteria applied and the indicators selected, these two evaluations allowed us to measure the actual impact of the local policy on the daily lives of the municipal employees as well as in that of the fellow citizens:

- ongoing increase of the number of agents with a heightened awareness of how to prevent discrimination;
- jointly with trade union organizations, better identification of situations and practices in order to prevent potential problems, and implementation of processes that help to avert them;
- higher recruitment of people with disabilities within the City Council, up to 7% of total employment;
- priority granted to individuals from Vulnerable Urban Areas (Zones Urbaines Sensibles, ZUS), strongly affected by discrimination in hiring, for access to public employment with the City Council and its semi-public companies;
- effectiveness of mechanisms aimed at helping citizens find employment, as part of the “100 opportunities,

100 jobs” programme, which is especially aimed at individuals living in ZUS areas and young people;

- success of the procedures introduced to reinforce equal treatment in access to social housing and in the service provided to those requesting housing assignments;
- improvement of the practices to help children and families within our education/youth programmes, through staff training and a greater involvement of families, particularly of fathers, to fight effectively towards gender equality in family roles.

Was this anti-discrimination plan inspired by other cities and/or do you know whether other cities have shown interest in this initiative?

This plan is fairly unique in France because of its crosscutting approach. In a sense, we have been pioneers in this area, which makes sense given the DNA of the city. Grenoble is often given as an example in terms of its capacity for innovation in science and higher education, but it has the same potential in social and societal terms.

International Women Exhibition



This innovation has also been adopted as a guideline at the local level, given that in a sense we have created a dynamic in the metropolitan area and even at the national level. The fact is that many city councils have come to Grenoble to study the plan and its outcome, inspired by our example.

Do you believe that the basis that would ensure the plan's continuity has been consolidated?

Absolutely. All the training efforts, the awareness raising, the information, they all have an effect. We have specific examples day after day in all areas, be it human resources, access to housing, education, coexistence, etc. And if Grenoble is official candidate for the Diversity Label, it is precisely to ensure the

continuity and durability of a policy that is essential in this day and age.

What would you say the IAEC has to offer in the fight against discrimination?

As I see it, the IAEC ought to be taking the lead throughout the entire network of member cities in terms of implementing anti-discrimination policies in the school system. Together with the cities that are already involved, it must participate in a widespread effort to raise awareness; this is not a policy that can be applied in isolation. The solutions come from dealing with actual situations and practices. In order to do so, the IAEC could encourage the exchange of best practices and promote specific collaborative efforts among city governments. ●





Camilla Croso

President of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE)

INTERVIEW

Camilla Croso is Brazilian, received her degree in Biology from the University of São Paulo and a Master's Degree in Social Policy and Planning from the London School of Economics. She is currently the General Coordinator of the Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education and President of the Global Campaign for Education. She is a member of various boards that focus on the issue of the right to education, including the United Nations Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative, the UNESCO-coordinated Education for All Steering Committee, and the Organization of Ibero-American States' Board of Consultants for Educational Goals 2021. Her research and publications focus especially on the subject of non-discrimination.

Could you tell us about the Global Campaign for Education and its aims? Who are its members?

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) is a broad-based civil society network that works at the international, regional, national and local level in defense of education as a fundamental right that favors a decent and dignified life for individuals in which social and environmental justice prevail. The GCE's mission is shaped by two key objectives: to promote education as a means of overcoming all forms of discrimination, both within and beyond the educational context; and to work to strengthen and support adequate financing for public education systems that address the common interest, citizens' empowerment, an ethic of cooperation, peaceful resolution of conflict and the importance of diversity.

The GCE membership covers a wide spectrum, including national education campaign coalitions in over 100 countries; regional networks; teachers' unions; movements focused on the rights of women, children, young people and adults; and international NGOs.

How important is networking in the Global Campaign for Education?

Networking is fundamental to how the GCE carries out its mission and very much in keeping with the political agenda the Campaign promotes. Networking involves horizontality, dialogue, reflection, collective action and cooperation, and valuing different cultures.

The right to education today necessarily calls for a broad lifelong vision that goes beyond formal schooling. How does the Global Campaign for Education view the Right to Education?

The GCE considers that each and every human being has inalienable rights, among which is the right to education. This is a right that serves an individual throughout his or her life, regardless of age. Likewise, the GCE's position is

that States are guarantors of the right to education, which must be respected, protected and carried out taking into account its formal, non-formal and informal dimensions. In order for this right to be carried out, education must promote other human rights, based on the values and principles of dignity, non-discrimination, cooperation, citizenship and peace.

What are some of the GCE's most significant activities in recent years, focused on inclusive education?

One of the GCE's primary aims is to encourage non-discrimination, so promoting inclusive education has been one of its main focuses in recent years. The GCE actively advocates gender equality in, and through, education at all levels. For example, it presented a research project and subsequent recommendations on that subject to the CEDAW (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women). The GCE also works to defend intergenerational inclusion, supporting education for individuals who tend to suffer age discrimination, as is the case with small children, young people and adults, particularly the elderly. In addition, and among its other activities, the GCE organizes the Global Action Week which in 2014 has centered on raising awareness about inclusive education, focusing especially on the right to education of people with disabilities, with mobilizations that have taken place all over the world.¹ Last, but not least, inclusive education is one of the main issues being put forward by the Campaign for the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the concept is now established in the overarching goal approved by the Global Education Meeting last May.

1. More information can be found at the following link: <http://www.campaignforeducation.org/en/global-action-week/global-action-week-2014/around-the-world>



Children taking part in a big picture claiming for early childhood care and education, Bangladesh © CAMPE, Bangladesh

Within the context of the current financial crisis, donor countries have drastically cut back development aid. How does this affect education? What alternative resources are available for educational development? What role can local governments play, whether or not they are responsible for the formal education system?

Firstly, the GCE stresses the fact that resources do exist, even in this current period of economic crisis, and that prioritizing how those resources are applied is a political choice. We have seen that, for example, through the big bailouts to “save” banking systems around the world. It is also important to remember that international cooperation is part of the system of human rights guarantees, given that General Comment # 11 of the ICESCR (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) indicates that, “when a State party is clearly lacking in the financial resources and/or expertise required to ‘work out and adopt’ a detailed plan [to implement the Right to Education], the international community has a clear obligation to assist.” In this regard, the reduction of international resources earmarked for

education is a serious drawback, which must be remedied. Given that, in addition to working to turn around the regressive trend in international cooperation, the GCE is placing important focus on domestic financing of education, whereby States must promote fair tax systems, and responsible action must be taken on the corporate level with businesses duly and fully paying into that system.

We also consider it key to recognize the fundamental role that local governments play in guaranteeing rights, by working closely with other organizations and by contributing with ideas, proposals and decisions, and by investing in policies fostering the right of all to education when they hold this responsibility.

The year 2015 is approaching and it seems clear that, despite the important steps forward that have been made by the Education for All programs, as well as the Millennium Goals, many of the aims have not yet been met. What do you think failed in the process of trying to meet those goals? What immediate actions do you think should be taken now?

In our view, problems exist not only within the educational systems themselves, but also beyond them, that tend to receive less attention and which should come to the fore in the current Post-2015 debate. Problems within the educational systems include, for example: lack of political will to consider education as a lifelong right, thus sidelining early childhood, youth and adult education to focus almost solely on the primary school phase; little emphasis placed on inclusion and non-discrimination which are not only qualitative aspects of the right to education but are also essential to achieving quantitative results; contradictory positions on the concept of education, with strong support for reductionist concepts focused on education geared to the work market, employability and based on competition (among schools, students and teachers), that tend to augment inequalities; insufficient resources dedicated to education (and, simultaneously, encouragement of low fee private schools for economically disadvantaged segments of the population), which translates into promoting low-quality education. But in addition to the internal problems of educational systems there are others that go beyond that, such as unjust tax systems; regressive macroeconomic models; policies and practices that weaken public systems and services; and the growing criminalization of activist citizen groups, movements and organizations.

The intense current debates regarding the Post-2015 Development Agenda have put on the table the question of whether there should be a specific agenda for educational goals or if those should be part of a



The national education coalition in Nicaragua organized a march through the streets of Managua to raise awareness of the right to education for children with disabilities
© Foro de Educación y Desarrollo Humano Fedh-Ipn, Nicaragua



Public event outside the German Parliament in which participants symbolically break down the barriers to education for children with disabilities © Globale Bildungskampagne



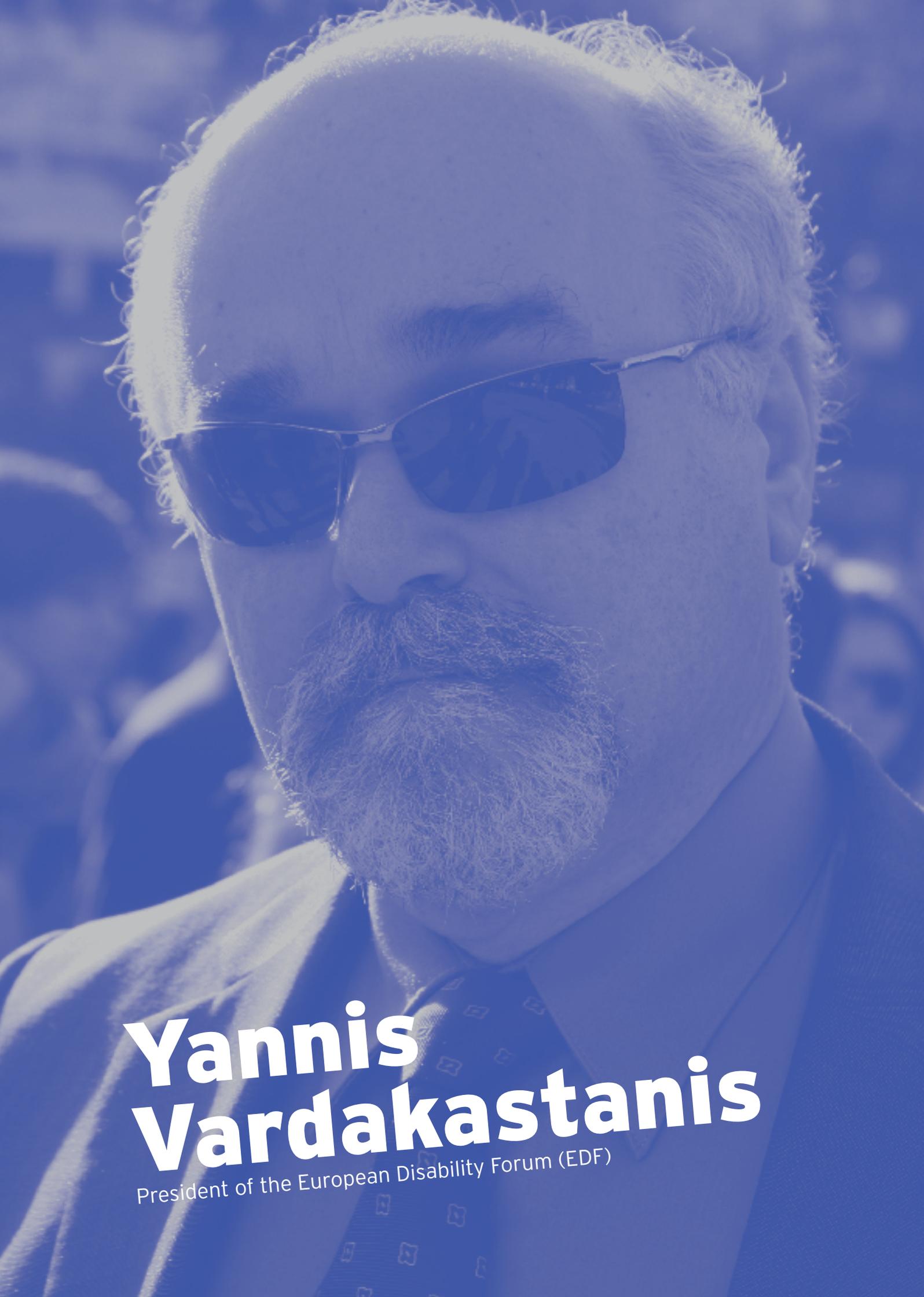
The national education coalition in Somalia has been working with young campaigners with disabilities to promote inclusive education and to increase the number of children with disabilities who enroll school
© EFASOM, Somalia

global development agenda. What is the GCE's position on this issue?

The GCE has come to strongly advocate both positions which we consider complementary. An overarching education goal and set of targets must be core elements of the future development agenda, recognizing education a basic human right, as well as the strategic role it plays in the other development goals and human rights in general. A development agenda that does not take into account and give priority to education is unthinkable. At the same time, there must also be a specific platform focused on promoting the right to education that allows for a more detailed elaboration of a rights-based education agenda, with goals specifying the challenges and commitments for each educational stage—both quantitatively and qualitatively—as well as the transversal goals regarding quality of education, financing and governance. In addition to that, implementation strategies must be detailed together with a governance architecture based on multilateralism, acknowledging the role of States and of civil society organizations. Thus, the GCE advocates for a post-2015 education agenda that stands on its own and will be detailed along with a framework for action (to be approved in Korea, at the World Education Conference in May 2015), and that this agenda must also be incorporated in the global development agenda (to be approved in New York in September 2015).

In recent years we have witnessed significant changes in terms of how education is provided and financed, with changes that lean in the direction of both privatization and outsourcing of services provided within public schools. What is the GCE's position within this new scenario?

The GCE actively promotes the idea of free quality public education, which means strengthening public education systems and public debate steering the definition and monitoring of education policies. In this way, the GCE is closely examining the trends in education towards privatization, observing what is taking place in different parts of the world to better understand different forms of privatization and their impact. In the international arena, particular issues in question are: the promotion of low fee private schools; privatizing public education systems and channeling public resources into the private sector; introducing market-based ideas into the public school system; commercializing education and profit making in and through education; and supporting what some authors refer to as “consultocracy” whereby private consultants become key agents in promoting education policies and practices, thus taking responsibility away from the States and diminishing the active democratic role of citizens in the process of defining the educational policies. ●



Yanniss Vardakastanis

President of the European Disability Forum (EDF)

INTERVIEW

Yannis Vardakastanis was born in Zakynthos (Greece) in 1957. In 1989, he received a degree in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley. He has extensive experience working in the field of disability, in the positions of: Special Advisor to the Minister of Education for the education of students with disabilities (1982-84); Special advisor to the President of the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation and Delegate to the Greek Ministry of Labour on disability issues (1985-89); and Managing Director of the National Institute for the Protection of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing People (1986-89).

From 1983 to 1992 he served as Vice-President and then President of the Panhellenic Association of the Blind and since 1989 has been actively involved in the National Confederation of Disabled People in Greece (N.C.D.P.), where he has been President since 1993. Since 1999, Yannis Vardakastanis has been President of the European Disability Forum and chairs different Commissions and Committees of several European and international NGOs of persons with disabilities. From 2002 to 2007, he was actively involved as the EDF representative in negotiations at the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons. Since 2007, he has been the EDF representative in the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and since July 2012, the IDA chairperson.

What is the European Disability Forum's mission? How does it operate?

The European Disability Forum is an independent European NGO platform run by persons with disabilities and their families. The EDF was created in 1996 by its member organisations to make sure decisions concerning disabled persons in Europe are taken with, and by, people who have disabilities. Its mission is to ensure access to human rights and equal opportunities for women and men of all ages with disabilities, and actively include them in the development of policies and legislation in Europe.

The EDF comprises one national council per country in the European Union and European Economic Area, and national observer networks in Serbia, Albania, Montenegro and Turkey, as well as European federations representing specific groups of persons with disabilities or involved in related areas of activity.

The EDF holds two large Board meetings a year where all national and key European networks are represented, and one annual general assembly. The Executive Committee carries on the association's work in between these meetings and expert committees also offer the EDF policy advice in specific areas. The entire membership is consulted on all positions adopted by the EDF.

The EDF is a key counterpart to EU institutions on the rights of persons with disabilities and is invited to take part in a number of working groups to prepare EU

legislation. The EDF is also a member of the EU Framework for monitoring the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which the EU is a party. The EDF has also developed key alliances with civil society organisations in the area of social rights, non-discrimination, consumer issues and mobility, as well as with industry and social partners.

What are the EDF's main claims and areas of focus?

The EDF works towards the implementation of the rights established in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in all areas of work within the European Union. We have contributed to ensuring legislation on non-discrimination; the adoption of a European strategy on disability; passengers' rights in all modes of transport; accessibility of infrastructure through public procurement, structural funds and transport rules; and have introduced accessibility in Information and Communication Technology legislation. The EDF has also succeeded in ensuring that persons with disabilities are mainstreaming in programs eligible for EU funding, including youth and education, research, structural funds and external aid. The EDF also works towards ensuring progressive interpretation of human rights law, notably through third party interventions at the European Court of Human Rights. We have also developed an observatory on the economic crisis with regard to

persons with disabilities and we try to raise awareness of the economic and social rights of persons with disabilities and promote independent living conditions and access to inclusive education.

In your opinion what are the main obstacles to social inclusion of persons with physical or mental disabilities?

Inclusion of persons with disabilities requires, on the one hand, a change of mentality and fighting the battle against prejudice, but it also demands concrete measures to achieve equality. For instance, in order to ensure inclusive education you must not only convince staff and teachers in schools that all children can learn and can also contribute to improving education for others, but you need to provide the necessary accommodations to specific needs, such as a screen reader, braille, a support teacher, a sign language interpreter; and you must also adapt your teaching methodology and material according to the particular requirements of those children. In order to make a pedestrian area or a park accessible you must also plan those areas in a different way to ensure that obstacles are removed, information must be adapted to different needs, etc. In the long run, all of these measures benefit everyone, but without these, the inclusion of persons with disabilities will be impossible.

Furthermore, until now there has been a tendency to exclude persons with disabilities from society by setting us apart or offering special services. People with high support needs still suffer the most from this situation and are more vulnerable to abuse either due to lack of support or because they are placed in institutions, thus losing control of their lives. Persons with psychosocial disabilities are probably the most stigmatised group in society.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted in 2006, undoubtedly represents progress from the point of view of social inclusion. What is your current assessment of the degree to which the rights set forth in the convention have been achieved?

The UN Convention has undoubtedly brought about a paradigm shift by establishing that all persons with



EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM

disabilities should enjoy all human rights on an equal basis with others and has also clarified how this can be achieved.

A key provision in the Convention is the right to equality in the eyes of the law, which makes clear that persons with disabilities have legal rights and can exercise them and that no one can make decisions for them, but rather, when needed, a system of support should be put in place.

Also, both the right to access and the right to independent living have been set out in human rights laws.

The Convention has already brought about some important changes in legislation at the national, local, and EU level. In addition, many countries have put action plans in place, both at the national and local level, for persons with disabilities. The fact that the European Union is a party to the Convention has also generated an informal system of peer review among countries which is beneficial. Nonetheless, much work still remains to be done, because the awareness about the rights set forth in the Convention is still low. The economic crisis has also led to a setback in many countries, as basic services have been cut and some plans to ensure further accessibility have been postponed, as has been the case in France.

What role must local governments, as the administration closest to the citizens, play in the inclusion of persons with disabilities? Could you provide us with a good example of how to implement a cross-cutting approach at local level in this regard that could serve as an inspiration to our member cities?

The local level is the most important one for persons with disabilities, as most of the decisions concerning the planning of the urban or rural environment, access to educational, cultural, housing, social and employment services are made at the local level. Indeed, in order to achieve meaningful change it is important to address the inclusion of persons with disabilities from all of these different angles, taking into account all the phases of implementation from planning to procurement, and then development. In addition persons with disabilities must be involved in the process through their representative organisations and have a real say in matters. Finally ensuring equal opportunities for employment of persons with disabilities in the different services also contributes to the success of such a plan.

In 2006 the EDF implemented a project with several of its members on "Achieving disability rights through mainstreaming at regional and local level" which included a review of the situation and key recommendations. The findings of the project show that a cross-cutting approach can only work through a systematic involvement of persons with disabilities and the development of an action plan with clear responsibilities and deadlines. It is also important to involve the different decision-making levels, and to implement the project through staff training. A solid budget must also be established to achieve the objectives agreed upon in the action plan. Another critical aspect is the need for cooperation among organisations of persons with disabilities.

The EDF is also working with the European Commission on the "Access City Award" that has fostered and

showcased innovative practices in cities of over 50,000 inhabitants for encouraging the participation of persons with disabilities in key aspects of everyday life: buildings and public spaces, transport and related infrastructure, information and communication, including new technologies, and public facilities and services. The award, which the city of Gothenburg received in December 2013, publicly recognises cities that proactively support and develop accessibility in their cities. It is also intended to encourage the exchange and sharing of good practices. The EDF hopes that more and more cities will apply.

It would be very interesting to organise a debate with key decision-makers and persons with disabilities on the role of local governments with regard to inclusion of persons with disabilities.

The EDF organised a meeting with the 5 main Political Groups of the European Parliament © EDF





The EDF supported the demonstrations all over Europe of the disability movement for a social way out of the crisis © EDF



The 3rd European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities. The EDF brought more than 500 delegates from organisations representing persons with disabilities together with EU leaders © EDF

One of your slogans is “Nothing about us without us.” Do you think that this principle is being respected today? What are your recommendations for promoting participation of disabled people in the design of local policy plans?

There are a number of positive examples: In Sweden organisations of persons with disabilities have adopted an ‘agenda 22’ which is a holistic plan for the implementation of disability rights at local level. The agenda 22 was originally based on the implementation of the UN standard rules on the equalisation of opportunities for persons with disabilities, but now refers to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The concept is simple but it implies a real change of perspective. Local authorities and organisations of persons with disabilities agree to establish an equal partnership that will assess local policies on the basis of the various articles of the UN Convention in order to highlight gaps and draw up a list of actions to be taken. Those actions will then be included in future policy programmes agreed upon at local level and must be accompanied by a solid budget. Implementation and progress must be reviewed regularly. The development of this concept has led to the establishment of local disability councils of organisations of persons who themselves have disabilities, that are regularly consulted on local decisions.

This year the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is working on a report on political and public participation of persons with disabilities and we hope that its recommendations will inspire key decision-makers to further mainstream the inclusion of persons with disabilities in their workplace.

In May 2014 we had European elections, and local elections are coming up in many EU countries. Given that, we must remember that local authorities have a key role in ensuring the accessibility to voting polls and local assemblies. It is important to guarantee that citizens with disabilities have the same rights to access as any other citizen.

The realities faced by persons with disabilities forces society to define and debate the concepts of equality and difference. How does the EDF position itself in this debate? Does this call for more equality or greater recognition of difference?

Equality is the ultimate goal we are striving for, but in order to approach that and ensure equal opportunities for all, specific measures must be adopted, as I mentioned before. One must understand the perspective of persons with disabilities and the barriers we face in trying to overcome the hurdles. In this regard, a constant dialogue with persons with disabilities is very important.

Do you think educational systems grant sufficient importance to understanding the realities faced by persons with disabilities? Do you think educational institutions effectively address the principle of inclusion?

In many countries, educational systems tend to be based on the principle of academic achievement rather than on the principle of inclusion. The more that is the case, the more children are excluded, including children with disabilities, such as those from immigrant backgrounds and those with less educated parents. We must review and adapt the education system to



The EDF presented its manifesto in the European Parliament in view of the EU elections 2014 © EDF

make it more inclusive, thus allowing all students to be able to learn more. There are many positive examples across Europe of successful inclusive education, but this can only work through the design of a holistic project involving both teachers and students.

What are the priorities for change of the EDF from the point of view of society's awareness with regards to persons with disabilities?

Persons with disabilities have a positive role to play in society and can be actors of change. We are not a burden; on the contrary, we can be a key part of our communities if adequate measures are put into place. ●

Does the City Have Speech?¹

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Speech is a foundational element in theories about democracy and the political. As a concept it has seen both expansions and contractions of its meaning. But it has not yet been expanded to include the concept that the city might have speech, as far as I can tell and others tell me. Arguing, as I do in this essay, that cities have speech, albeit of a very different sort from that of citizens and corporations, is in many ways a question transversal to both the law and urbanism. It is not present in either one of these bodies of scholarship; this is particularly so since I do not confine the notion of speech to that of urban government, nor do I construct the content of the city's speech in the terms provided by the law. Thus this inquiry requires expanding the analytic terrain for examining the concept of each, *speech* and the *city*.

Cities are complex systems. But they are incomplete systems. In this incompleteness lies the possibility of making—making the urban, the political, the civic. The city is not alone in having these characteristics, but these characteristics are a necessary part of the DNA of the urban—cityness. Every city is distinct and so is each discipline that studies it. And yet, if it is to be a study of the urban, it will have to deal with these key features: incompleteness, complexity, and the possibility of making. These take on urbanized formats that can vary enormously across time and place.

Given such diversity, urban research need not recognize the distilled, abstract versions of these three core concepts—complexity, incompleteness, and making. Mostly, researchers and interpreters of the urban use or invoke the concepts of their disciplines or their imaginations and the concrete features of the cities they observe. But those three abstract features are present if it is indeed the urban and not simply dense built-up terrain of a single sort—endless rows of housing, or of offices, or of factories. Thus a vast stretch of suburban housing is not a city; it is built-up terrain and so are office parks. If we want to make the concept of the city work analytically, we will have to be conceptually discriminating.

Here I use these features of cities to engage in an experimental search. I will argue that there are events and conditions that tell us something about the capacity of cities to respond systemically—to talk back. Let me offer an initial sketch of what I mean by way of a simple example: a car, built for speed, exits the highway and enters the city. It hits a traffic jam, composed not just of cars but of people bustling around. Suddenly, this car is crippled. Built for speed, its mobility is arrested. The city has spoken.

A first approximation is to think of such speech as an urban capability. The term *capability* is by now well established. But adding *urban* to this term is unusual. I introduce it to capture an elusive mix of space, people, and particular activities, especially commerce and the civic. This term captures the social and material physics of the city. Understood this way, the notion of urban capability functions as an analytic borderland—neither simply urban space nor simply people (Sassen 2008, chap. 8). It is their combination under specific conditions, in thick settings, confronting particular potentials and particular assaults that can generate speech. These urban capabilities become visible in a range of situations and forms. In this becoming visible they become a form of speech.

It is impossible to do full justice to all the aspects of this process in such a short essay; here I limit myself to the basic building blocks of the argument. One is the city as a complex and incomplete system that enables making and has given cities their long life; the combination of these two features has allowed cities to outlive systems that are more powerful but also more formal and closed—national states, kingdoms, financial firms. The other is the mix of diverse urban capabilities that can be conceived of as speech acts and in turn signal the larger notion that cities have speech, albeit informal and mostly unrecognized as such.

The substantive rationality underlying this inquiry about the city and speech rests on two matters. One is the fact that the city is still a key space for the material practices of freedom, including its anarchies and contradictions, and a space where the powerless can make speech, presence, a politics. The other is that these features of cities are under threat by a range of acute processes that deurbanize cities, no matter how dense and urban they may look; these threats include extreme forms of inequality and privatization, new types of urban violence, asymmetric war, and massive surveillance systems.

1. Saskia Sassen, "Does the City Have Speech?," in *Public Culture*, Volume 25, no. 2, pp209-221. Copyright, 2013, Duke University Press. All rights reserved. Republished by permission of the copyright holder, Duke University Press. www.dukeupress.edu

But to see this takes time listening to, and perhaps understanding, the speech of the city, and we may well have forgotten how to listen, let alone understand. In what follows I explore some of the speech acts of the city.²

Analytic Tactics

When doing this type of experimental rumination, I find myself needing the freedom to engage in what I think of as analytic tactics. Method is too confining. One of these tactics is to operate in the shadow of powerful explanations. Powerful explanations are to be taken seriously, but they are dangerous. My first move is to ask what such an explanation obscures precisely, because it sheds such a powerful light on some aspects of a question. In exploring the notion that cities have speech, I cannot stay with the powerful explanations that tell us what a city is. The city's speech happens in an in-between zone: it is not quite simply the city as material and social order. It is an elusive urban capability—not fully material, not fully visible.

A second analytic tactic, partly arising from the first, is the need actively to destabilize stabilized meanings. Such destabilizing allows me to see or understand that which is not contained in the main narratives that explain an epoch or organize a field of scholarship, and we need to do this especially at a time of rapid transformations.

Thus the notion itself that the city has speech entails destabilizing the notion that the city is a self-evident condition marked by density, materiality, and crowds and their multiple interactions. The overwhelming facticity of the city needs to be destabilized. I am interested in recovering the possibility that the interactive deployment of people, firms, infrastructures, buildings, projects, imaginaries, and more, over a confined terrain, produces something akin to speech: resistances, enhanced potentials, in short, that the city talks back.

Complexity and Incompleteness: The Possibility of Making

Cities are one of the key sites where new norms and identities are made. They have been such sites at various times and in various places and under very diverse conditions. Thus even as cities have long been home to racisms, religious hatreds, expulsions of the poor, they have historically evinced a capacity to triage conflict through commerce and civic activity. This contrasts with



Frankfurt, financial city © Wolfgang Staudt (Flickr)

the history of the modern national state, which historically has tended to militarize conflict.

The conditions that enable cities to make norms and identities and to transform conflicts into a strengthened civiness vary across time and place.

Epochal change, as in our shift to the global, is often a source of new types of urban capabilities. Today, given globalization and digitization—and all the specific elements they entail—many of these conditions have once again undergone change. Globalization and digitization produce dislocations and destabilizations of existing institutional orders that go well beyond cities. But the disproportionate concentration and acuteness of these new dynamics in cities, especially in global cities, forces the need to craft new types of responses and innovations, especially on the part of both the most powerful and the most disadvantaged, albeit for very different reasons.

Some of these norms and identities justify extreme power and inequality. Some reflect innovation under duress: notably much of what happens in immigrant neighborhoods or in the slums of megacities. While the strategic transformations assume sharp forms and are concentrated in global cities, many are also enacted (besides being diffused) in cities that are not centers of power and extreme inequalities.

Cities are not always the key sites for the making of new norms and identities or institutional innovations generally. For example, in Europe and much of the Western Hemisphere, from the 1930s up until the 1970s, the factory and the government were the strategic sites for innovation through the social contract and the enablement of a prosperous working and middle class based on mass manufacturing and mass consumption. My own reading of the Fordist city corresponds in many ways to Max Weber's notion that the modern city is not a space of innovation, unlike the medieval cities of Europe. The strategic scale under Fordism is the national scale, in which cities lose significance. But I part company from Weber in that historically the large Fordist factory and the mines were sites of innovation: the making of a modern working class and a syndicalist project. In short, it is not

2. I use *speech* in the abstract sense of the law, as in, for instance, the way corporations have speech as articulated by the Supreme Court in 2010 in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, which upheld the rights of corporations to make political expenditures under the First Amendment right of free speech. Cities, like corporations, do not speak in the human voice; they speak in their voice.



15-M Movement. Camping in Barcelona © Freddy Monteiro

always the city that is the site for making norms and identities.

In our global era, cities have emerged once again as strategic sites for cultural and institutional change. The conditions that today make some cities strategic sites are basically two, and both capture major transformations that destabilize older systems organizing territory and politics. One of these is the rescaling of the strategic territories that articulate the new politico-economic system and hence at least some features of power. The other is the weakening of the national as container of social process due to the variety of dynamics encompassed by globalization and digitization. The consequences for cities of these two conditions are many; what matters here is that cities emerge as strategic sites for major economic processes and for new types of political actors, including nonurban processes and actors.

A distinction that matters for my examination is between ritualized spaces we recognize as such and spaces either that are not ritualized or that we fail to recognize as such. Much of what we experience as urbanity in our Western European tradition is a set of practices and conditions that have gone through a refining and a ritualizing over time and across space. Thus, in our partly imagined European tradition, the passeggiata is not just any walk, and the piazza is not just any square. Both have embedded genealogies of meaning and ritual, and both contribute to the constituting of a public domain via ritualization.

Across time and space also, history has given us glimpses of a very different type of space, one that is less ritualized and with few, if any, embedded codes. It is a space for making by those who lack access to established instrumentalities. I have been working on a conceptual recovery of this type of space and have called it the "global street" (Sassen 2011). This is a space with few, if any, of the ritualized practices or codes that the larger society might recognize. It is rough, easily seen as "uncivilized."

The city, and especially the street, is a space where the powerless can make history, in ways they cannot in rural areas. That is not to say that it is the only space, but it

is certainly a critical one. Becoming present, visible, to each other can alter the character of powerlessness. This allows me to make a distinction between different types of powerlessness (Sassen 2008, chaps. 6 and 8). Powerlessness is not simply an absolute status that can be flattened into the absence of power. Under certain conditions, powerlessness can become complex, by which I mean that it contains the possibility of making the political, the civic, a history. This brings to the fore the fact of a difference between powerlessness and invisibility/impotence. Many of the protest movements we have seen in the Middle East and North Africa, Europe, the United States, and elsewhere are a case in point: these protesters may not have gained power; they are still powerless, but they are making a history and a politics.

This leads me to a second distinction, which contains a critique of the common notion that if something good happens to the powerless, it signals empowerment. Recognizing that powerlessness can become complex makes conceptual room for the proposition that the powerless can make history, even if they do not become empowered, and that thereby their work is consequential even if it does not become visible promptly and can indeed take generations. Elsewhere (Sassen 2008, chaps. 2, 3, and 6) I have interpreted several historiographies as indicating that the temporal frame of the histories made by the powerless tends to be much longer than the histories made by those with power.

Urban Capabilities: They Precede Speech and Make It Legible

If the city has speech, what might it look or sound like? What language does it speak? How does it become legible to us who speak another language and whose voice is at best a cacophony?

A first, little step is to posit that the city's speech is a capability to alter, to shape, to provoke, to invite, all following a logic that aims at enhancing or protecting the city's complexity and its incompleteness. Let me elaborate on this in a somewhat exaggerated way for the sake of clarity and argue that focusing only on the facticity of the

city is not enough to understand the question of whether the city has speech.

The question of speech cannot be reduced to that facticity even as it requires recognition and an analytic awakening of that facticity. That is to say, we have flattened the facticity of the city, when we should make visible its differentiations so that it can work analytically. Such flattening does not help us see how this facticity interacts with people's actions or that there is a making here, a collective making between urban space and people. For instance, rush hour in the city is a process where we bump into one another, rip off a button here and there, step on one another's feet. Yet we know none of these actions are personal in the city's center at rush hour, unlike the neighborhood, where they would all be provocations.

What makes this possible is a tacit code embedded in this type of time/space—not place per se, but the space that is constituted by people in the city center during rush hour. We need to name this capability that is a collective production emerging out of an intersection of time/space/people/routinized practices.

I think of this as an urban capability—urban centrality is made through built environments, people's routinized practices, and an embedded and shared code. It enables a series of complex interactions and sequences and, in so doing, mobilizes a specific meaning.

Not just the outcome but the work itself of making the public and making the political in urban space is constitutive of cityness. In cities we can see the making of new subjects and identities that would not be possible in, for example, rural areas or a country at large. There is a kind of public-making work that can disrupt established narratives and thereby make legible the local and the silenced even in visual orders that seek to cleanse urban space. One example is the early high-end gentrification in Manhattan—a whole new visual order that could not, for a while, render invisible the homeless it had produced. A second example is the immigrant street vendor on Wall Street catering to the high-level financier in a rush,

altering the visual corporate landscape with the robust smell of roasted sausages. I see in these examples the city talking back, altering the outcome sought with elegant visual orders. At the other extreme, a city's sociality can bring out and underline the urbanity of subject and setting and dilute more local or more essentialist signifiers; the need for new solidarities when cities confront major challenges can bring this shift about.

In my research, I find that key components of cityness have been crafted out of the hard work of going beyond the conflicts and racisms that might mark an epoch (Sassen 2008, chap. 6). It is out of this type of dialectic that came the open urbanity that historically made European cities spaces for expanded citizenship. More generally, movements that comprise disparate groups with a variety of grievances can coalesce no matter how diverse their politics. The actual lived interdependence of daily life in a city enables such coalescing—if water, electricity, or transport fails in a city, it affects all regardless of their social or political differences. Such a coalescing would be unlikely and unnecessary in national political space given less mutual interdependence/dependence and generally in a more abstract space. These partial orderings we see in cities can add to the DNA of the city's civicness: they feed the making of an *urban* subject, rather than a religious or ethnic or class-based subject. These are among the features that make cities a space of great complexity and diversity.

Large cities at the intersection of vast migrations and expulsions often were and are spaces with the capacity to accommodate enormous diversity of groups. And such accommodating is often the work of further developing cityness—either this or spatial segregations that deurbanize a city. It is worth noting that when it all succeeds, such cities actually enable a kind of peaceful coexistence for long stretches of time. Coexistence does not mean equality and mutual respect: my concern here is with built-in features and constraints in cities that produce such a capacity for interdependence even if there are major differences in religion, politics, class,

Rush hour in New York © rc.d (Flickr)



Hot dog stall, New York © Karlis Dambrans (Flickr)



and more. I am thinking here of urban capabilities more akin to infrastructural or subterranean capacities whose outcomes are partly shaped by the necessity of maintaining a complex system marked by enormous diversities and by incompleteness. This gives cities speech.

Perhaps the most familiar and clearest instances are periods of peaceful coexistence in cities with sharp religious differences; these make visible that conflict does not necessarily inhere in such differences. And it is not only the famous cases of Augsburg and Moorish Spain, with their much-admired coexistence of very diverse religions, collective prosperity, and enlightened leaderships. It is also Old Jerusalem's bazaar as a space of commercial and religious coexistence across centuries. Baghdad was a flourishing polyreligious city under the Abbasid caliphs, around the year 800, and even under Saddam Hussein's extremely brutal leadership was a city where religious minorities, such as Christian and Jewish communities, often centuries old, lived in relative peace.

But history also shows us that this is a capability that can be destroyed and has often been destroyed. The destruction has inevitably brought with it a deurbanizing and ghettoizing of urban space. Thus, in sharp contrast with that older period, Baghdad is today a city where ethnic cleansing and intolerance are the de facto "regime," one catapulted by the disastrous and unwarranted US invasion. These and so many other historical cases show that a particular exogenous, indeed a deurbanizing, event can suddenly reposition religious or ethnic difference as agents for conflict. The same individuals can experience and enact that switch. The systemic logic in Hussein's Baghdad was of indifference to minorities like Christians and Jews; it was not a question of tolerance by residents or an enlightened leadership.

Systemic indifference, I would argue, can in many cases function as a kind of subterranean urban capability at work: a civiness that does not depend on tolerant citizens and enlightened leaders but is an outcome of interdependencies and interactions in the physical and

economic life of the city. Conversely, its breakdown becomes visible as collapse into lethal conflicts and ethnic cleansings that deurbanize the city and savage that urban capability.

Versions of urban capabilities can be found in a series of cases, some more elusive than others. One of these concerns the question of repetition, a basic feature of the built environment of cities and generally of our economic and technical worlds. Yet, in the city, repetition becomes the active making of multiplication and iteration. Further, urban settings actually unsettle the meaning of repetition.

There is plenty of repetition in any city, but it keeps being captured by the specifics, the conditionalities, across different urban spaces. A bus, a telephone booth, an apartment or office building, even if standardized throughout much of a city, will take on diverse meanings and utilities across the diverse types of spaces of a city. It makes visible how the diversity of urban environments re-marks even the most standardized item and makes it part of that neighborhood, that public space, that city center. On a more complex level, neighborhoods in the same city can exude very different auras, sounds, smells, choreographies of how people move through that neighborhood, and who is welcome and who is not. In short, repetition in a city can be quite different from mechanical repetition as in an assembly line or the reproduction of a graphic. I want to take it a step further and posit that we see in these instances a capacity that I would like to see as speech.

A more elusive form of speech is the making of presence. In my own work I have developed notions of "making presence" to rescue an actor, an event, from the silence of absence, invisibility, the virtual/representational eviction from membership in the city. I am especially interested in understanding how groups and "projects" at risk of invisibility due to societal prejudices and fears become present to themselves, to others like themselves, and to others unlike themselves. What I seek to capture is a very specific feature. It is the possibility of making presence

Favela do Moinho, São Paulo © Milton Jung (Wikimedia Commons)



Aerial view of an American residential neighborhood © <http://www.futureatlas.com/>



where there is silence and absence. A variant of such making of presence is the *terrain vague*, an underutilized or abandoned space that lies forgotten among massive structures and construction projects. It is not unique to today's period—under other arrangements, and with variable particularities, it also existed in the past. I think that this elusive in-between space is essential to the experience of urban living and that it lends legibility to transitions and the uneasiness of specific spatial configurations. We can find the *terrain vague* in even the densest city. With its visual marking as underutilized space, these spaces are often charged with memories of other visual orders, with presences of the past, thereby unsettling their current meaning as underutilized space. They are thus charged precisely because they are underutilized. As memories, these spaces become part of the “interiority” of the city, the city's present, but it is the making of an interiority that is outside the dominant profit-driven utility logics and their spatial framings. They are the vacant grounds that enable residents who feel bypassed by their city to connect with it via memory at a time of rapid changes—an empty space that can be filled with memories. And it is where activists and artists find a space for their projects. This is a making of presence that is an act of speech.

Deurbanizing Forces

Given their complexity and incompleteness, cities have historically evinced a capacity to survive upheavals, in part by talking back and constraining deurbanizing tendencies. But they never succeed fully. Power, whether in the form of elites, government policies, or innovations in built environments, can override the speech of the city. We see this in the development of megabuildings, highways running through the city, extreme high-income gentrification that privatizes urban space, the proliferation of vast concentrations of poor-quality high-rise residential buildings without commercial centers and workplaces, and more. All of these are among current deurbanizing trends.

Ours is a time when stabilized meanings have become unstable. The large complex city with all its diversities is a new frontier zone. This is especially true if it is a global city, defined by its partial shaping within a network of other cities across borders. Actors from different worlds meet there, but without clear rules of engagement. Where the historic frontier was in the far stretches of colonial empires, today it lies in our large complex cities. For instance, much of the work by global firms to push for deregulation, privatization, and new fiscal and monetary policies took shape and has become concrete in global cities. It is how global firms construct their equivalent of the old military fort of the historic frontier: their network of forts is the regulatory environment they need

in city after city worldwide to ensure a global space of operations (Sassen 2008, chap. 5). This is a formidable onslaught on the city and its capabilities to ensure cityness.

In my research on our current period (Sassen 2014), I have examined especially three types of developments that can deurbanize the city. One is the sharp growth in inequalities of diverse sorts that can lead to radical expulsions—from homes and neighborhoods, from middle-class lifestyles. These trends take particularly acute and visible shapes in cities, with their expanded luxury spaces and poverty spaces. A second is the building of whole new cities, including intelligent cities often built as a business for profit; there are well over six hundred cities either under construction or in the planning stage. A particular concern is the extreme use of closed intelligent systems to control whole buildings. Given the accelerated rate of obsolescence of technologies, this may well shorten the life of vast stretches of such new cities. One challenge, in my view, is the need to urbanize these technologies so that they might contribute to the urbanity of those areas. The third project concerns the large-scale surveillance system now being developed cooperatively by several countries, notably the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom. I turn to this third aspect with some detail below.

In July 2010, the *Washington Post* published the findings of a two-year investigation, “Top Secret America,” in three parts (Priest and Arkin 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). Constituting this “top secret America” are 1,271 government organizations and 1,931 private companies, collectively employing an estimated 854,000 people with top secret security clearance—nearly 1.5 times as many people as live in Washington, D.C.—including 265,000 private contractors (Priest and Arkin 2010a). They work on programs related to counterterrorism, homeland security, and intelligence. There are about ten thousand locations where this work is conducted across the United States. Of these buildings, four thousand are in the Washington, D.C., area, occupying 17 million square feet—the equivalent of almost three Pentagons or twenty-two US Capitol buildings (Priest and Arkin 2010a).

Housed in these buildings are powerful computers that collect vast amounts of information from wiretaps, satellites, and other surveillance equipment monitoring people and places both within and outside of US national territory. Each day the National Security Agency alone intercepts and stores 1.7 billion e-mails, instant messages, IP addresses, telephone calls, and other bits of communications, a small proportion of which is sorted and stored on seventy different databases (Priest and Arkin 2010a, 2010c). Some of this information will make it into the tens of thousands of top secret reports produced by analysts each year, but only a handful of individuals have

access to all of them, and the volume is so great that many go unread (Priest and Arkin 2010a, 2010c).

This surveillance apparatus is there for our “security.” For our security we are all under surveillance; that is to say, we are all constructed as suspects, for our security. It does lead me to ask: under these conditions, who are we, the citizens—the new colonials?

Cities, with their diversities and anarchies, with their built-in capabilities to contest deurbanizing trends, become a strategic space to contest reducing us all to suspects. The city is one place where a kind of structural convergence could develop beneath visible familiar separateness and racisms and work itself into the social level and bring together people from very different communities to contest overwhelming surveillance. This potential does not fall ready-made from the sky—it needs to be made with hard work. But diverse complex cities are one key site for such making.

Conclusion

Why does it matter that we recognize the fact of urban capabilities and the possibility that this might be a mode of speech, with all the weight this concept evokes? It matters because these capabilities are systemic properties that aim at securing cityness, that is to say a complex space that thrives on diversities and tends to triage conflict into a strengthened civicness. Further, such capabilities get constituted as hybrids—mixes of the material and social physics of a city. This interdependence entails a continuous transformation of both the material and the social, with periods of stability and continuity and

periods of upheaval, as is the current one that took off in the 1980s.

The project is not about anthropomorphizing the city. It is about understanding a systemic dynamic that has the capacity to contest what is destructive to its DNA—to repeat, a DNA that is conducive to cityness and its diversities. At the limit, the city allows the powerless to make history, thereby producing a critical difference—between mere powerlessness and complex powerlessness where the making of presence and of a history come into play.

But there are limits to the city’s capabilities, and historically we see both the capacity of cities to outlive other more formal closed and rigid systems and powerful forces that deurbanize cities. Among these deurbanizing forces in the current period are extreme forms of inequality, the privatizing of urban space with its diverse expulsions, and the rapid expansion of massive surveillance of citizens in the most “advanced” democracies across the world. These forces silence the speech of the city and destroy urban capabilities. ●

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Ghettos and Anti-Ghettos: The New Regime of Urban Marginality in the 21st Century

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ARTICLE

To relegate (from the late Middle English, *relegaten*, meaning to send away, to banish) is to assign an individual, population or category to an obscure or inferior position, condition, or location. In the postindustrial city, relegation takes the form of real or imaginary consignment to distinctive sociospatial formations variously and vaguely referred to as “inner cities,” “ghettos,” “enclaves,” “no-go areas,” “problem districts,” or simply “rough neighborhoods.” How are we characterize and differentiate these spaces, what determines their trajectory (birth, growth, decay and death), whence comes the intense symbolic taint attached to them at century’s edge, and what constellations of class, ethnicity and state do they both materialize and signify? These are the questions I pursued in my book *Urban Outcasts*¹ through a methodical comparison of the trajectories of the black American ghetto and the European working-class peripheries in the era of neoliberal ascendancy. In this paper, I revisit this cross-continental sociology of “advanced marginality” to tease out its broader lessons for our understanding of the tangled nexus of symbolic, social and physical space in the polarizing metropolis.

The book *Urban Outcasts* (2008) was born of the confluence of two shocks, the first personal and the second political. The personal shock was the firsthand discovery of the black American ghetto—or what remains of it—when I moved to Chicago and lived for six years on the edge of the city’s South Side. Coming from France, I was appalled by the intensity of the urban desolation, racial segregation, social deprivation and street violence concentrated in this *terra non grata* that was universally feared, shunned and denigrated by outsiders, including by many scholars.

The political shock was the diffusion of a moral panic about ghettoization in France and through much of Western Europe. In the 1990s, the media, politicians and even some researchers came to believe that working-class neighborhoods at the periphery of European cities were turning into “ghettos” on the pattern of the United States. And so public debate and state policy were reoriented toward fighting the growth of these so-called ghettos, based on the premise that urban poverty was being “Americanized”, that is, stamped by deepening ethnic division, rising segregation and rampant criminality.

Bring these two shocks together and you have the question that animated a decade of research: are the US ghetto and the European lower-class districts with concentrations of immigrants converging and, if not, what is happening to them? And what is driving their transformation? To answer these questions, I gathered statistical data and carried out field observation in a dilapidated section of Chicago’s “Black Belt” and in a deindustrializing suburb of the “Red Belt” of Paris

located between Roissy Airport and the capital. I also reconstructed their historical trajectory, because you cannot understand what happened to these declining neighborhoods in the 1990s without considering the full sweep of the 20th century, stamped by the bloom and then the demise of Fordist industrialism and the Keynesian welfare state.

Ghetto, hyperghetto and anti-ghetto

On the American side I show that, after the riots of the 1960s, the black ghetto *imploded*, or collapsed onto itself if you wish, due to the concurrent retraction of the market economy and retrenchment of the social state. The result was a new urban form that I call the *hyperghetto*, characterized by double relegation on the basis of race and class and reinforced by a state policy of welfare withdrawal and urban abandonment. So when we speak about the American ghetto we must imperatively historicize it and not confound the “communal ghetto” of the 1950s with its *fin-de-siècle* descendant.

The communal ghetto was a parallel world, a “black city within the white”, as the African-American sociologists St Clair Drake and Horace Cayton put it in their master-book *Black Metropolis* (1945)². It served as a reservoir of unskilled labor for factories and its dense web of organizations offered a buffer against white domination³. With deindustrialization and the shift to financial capitalism, the hyperghetto does not have an economic function and it is stripped of communal organizations, which have been replaced by state institutions of social control. It is an instrument of naked exclusion, a mere receptacle for the stigmatized and superfluous fractions

of the black proletariat: the unemployed, welfare recipients, criminals and participants in the booming informal economy.

On the French side, the reigning media and policy perception turns out to be dead wrong: lower-class boroughs have undergone a process of pauperization and gradual *decomposition* that has taken them away from the pattern of the ghetto. A ghetto is an ethnically homogeneous enclave that contains all the members of a subordinate category and their institutions, and prevents them from fanning into the city. Now, declining *banlieues* are very mixed and have become more diverse in terms of ethnic recruitment over the past three decades; they typically contain a majority of French citizens and immigrants from two to three dozen nationalities. The growing presence of these postcolonial migrants results from a decrease in their spatial separation: they used to be barred from public housing and thus more segregated. And the residents who rise in the class structure through the school, the labor market or entrepreneurship quickly leave these degraded areas.

The Red Belt *banlieues* have also lost most of the local institutions tied to the Communist Party (to which they owed their moniker) that used to organize life around the triad of factory, union and neighborhood, and give

people collective pride in their class and city. Their ethnic heterogeneity, porous boundaries, decreasing institutional density and incapacity to create a shared cultural identity make these areas the exact opposite of ghettos: they are *anti-ghettos*.

Immigrants and their children in the French city have become more mixed, not more separated; their social profile and opportunities are becoming more similar to those of native French people, not more different, even as they suffer higher rates of unemployment. They are becoming more diffused in space, not more concentrated. It is precisely because they are now more “integrated” into the mainstream of national life and compete for collective goods that they are seen as a menace, and that xenophobia has surged forth among the native fractions of the working class threatened by downward mobility.

What the urban peripheries of Western Europe suffer from is not ghettoization but the dissolution of the traditional working class caused by the normalization of mass unemployment and the spread of unstable and part-time jobs, as well as vilification in public debate. In effect, the discourse of “ghettoization” partakes of the symbolic demonization of lower-class districts, which weakens them socially and marginalizes them politically.

Detroit, city from the industrial belt © Bob Jagendorf (Flickr), 2009



Urban Outcasts demonstrates that the thesis of “convergence” between Europe and America on the model of the black ghetto is wrong empirically and misleading policy-wise. Then it goes on to reveal the “emergence” of a new regime of urban poverty on both sides of the Atlantic, distinct from the regime of the preceding half-century anchored in stable industrial work and the safety net of the Keynesian state. This *advanced marginality* is fed by the fragmentation of wage labor, the reorientation of state policy away from social protection and in favor of market compulsion, and the generalized resurgence of inequality - that is, it is marginality *spawned by the neoliberal revolution*. This means that it is not behind us, but ahead of us. It is bound to persist and grow as governments implement policies of economic deregulation and commodification of public goods. But this new social reality, spawned by the scarcity and instability of work and the changing role of the state, is obfuscated by the ethnicized idiom of immigration, discrimination and “diversity”. The latter are real issues, to be sure, but they are not the driving force behind the marginalization of Europe’s urban periphery. Worse, they serve to hide the new social question of insecure work and its consequences for the formation of the urban proletariat of the 21st century.

Territorial stigmatization

Indeed, one of the distinctive features of advanced marginality is the suffusive *spatial stigma* that discredits people trapped in neighborhoods of relegation. In every advanced society, a number of urban districts or towns have become national symbols and namesakes for all the ills of the city: Clichy-sous-Bois (where the November 2005 riots started) in France, Moss Side in Manchester for England, Berlin-Neuköln for Germany, the South Bronx for New York, etc. This growing defamation of the bottom districts of the metropolis is a direct consequence of the political weakening of African Americans on the US political scene and of the working class on the European political scene.

When a district is widely perceived as an urban “hellhole” where only the detritus of society would tolerate living, when its name is synonymous with vice and violence in journalistic and political discussion, a taint of place becomes superimposed onto the stigmata of poverty and ethnicity (meaning “race” in the United States and colonial origin in Europe). Here I draw on the theories of Erving Goffman and of my teacher Pierre Bourdieu to highlight how the public disgrace afflicting these areas devalues the sense of self of their residents and corrodes their social ties. In response to spatial

Favela de Rocinha, Rio de Janeiro © Alicia Nijdam



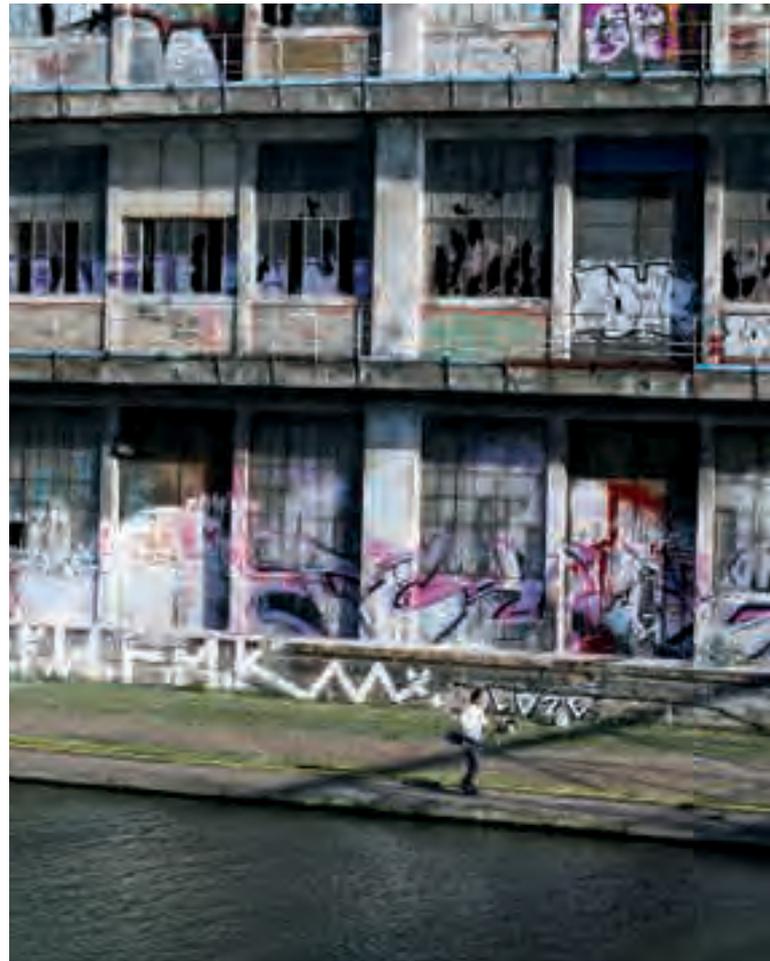
defamation, residents engage in strategies of mutual distancing and lateral denigration; they retreat into the private sphere of the family; and they exit from the neighborhood (whenever they have the option). These practices of *symbolic self-protection* set off a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby negative representations of the place end up producing in it the very cultural anomie and social atomism that these representations claim were already there.

Territorial stigmatization not only undermines the capacity for collective identification and action of lower-class families; it also triggers prejudice and discrimination among outsiders such as employers and public bureaucracies. The young men from La Courneuve, the stigmatized Red Belt town outside of Paris I studied, constantly complained that they must hide their address when they apply for jobs, meet girls or attend the university outside their city, to avoid negative reactions of fear and rejection. The police are particularly susceptible to treating them more severely when officers find out that they come from this tainted town widely seen as a fearsome “ghetto”. Territorial stigma is one more obstacle on the path to socioeconomic integration and civic participation.

Note that the same phenomenon is observed in Latin America, among dwellers of the ill-reputed *favelas* of Brazil, the *poblaciones* of Chile, and the *villas miserias* of Argentina. I suspect that the residents of Villa del Bajo Flores, La Cava or Villa de Retiro in Buenos Aires know too well what “address discrimination” is. This territorial stigma attaches to these lower districts of the Argentine city for the same reason that it coalesces around the hyperghetto of the United States and the anti-ghettos of Europe: the concentration in them of the jobless, the homeless, and paperless migrants, as well as the lower fractions of the new urban proletariat employed in the deregulated service economy. And the tendency of state elites to use space as a “screen” to avoid facing problems rooted in the transformation of work.

Punitive Containment of the new marginality

Spatial taint grants the state increased latitude to engage in aggressive policies of control of the new marginality that can take the form of *dispersal* or containment, or better yet combine the two approaches. Dispersal aims at scattering the poor in space and recapturing the territories that they traditionally occupy, under the pretext that their neighborhoods are devilish “no-go areas” that simply cannot be salvaged. It is currently at work in the mass demolition of public housing at the heart of the historic ghetto of the US metropolis and in the pauperized peripheries of many European cities. Thousands of housing units are destroyed overnight and their occupants are disseminated in adjacent areas



Old warehouses of Pantin, Sena-Saint Denis, Paris © Diane B. (Flickr)

or poor districts further out, creating the appearance that “the problem has been resolved”. But dispersing the urban poor only makes them less visible and less disruptive politically; it does not give them work and grant them a viable social status.

The second technique for dealing with the rise of advanced marginality takes the opposite tack: it seeks to concentrate and contain the disorders generated by the fragmentation of work and the destabilization of ethnic (racial or national) hierarchy by throwing a tight police dragnet around the neighborhood of relegation and by expanding the jails and prisons in which their more unruly elements are chronically exiled. This *punitive containment* is typically accompanied on the social welfare front by measures designed to force recipients of public aid into the substandard slots of the deregulated service economy, under the name of “workfare”. (I describe the invention in the United States of this new politics of poverty wedding restrictive “workfare” and expansive “prisonfare” in my next book, *Punishing the Poor*, 2009⁴). But the policy of *mano dura* or “zero tolerance” is also self-defeating. Throwing the jobless, the marginally employed and petty criminals behind bars makes them even less employable and further destabilizes lower-



Upper photo:
Oliver Street, Brentwood block, Baltimore (2009) © Dorret
Lower photo:
Brentwood block demolished, Baltimore (2010) © Dorret



Burnt cars on the outskirts of Paris (November 2005) © Alain Bachelier

class families and neighborhoods. Deploying the police, the courts and the prison to curb marginality is not only enormously costly and inefficient; it aggravates the very ills it is supposed to cure. And thus we re-enter the vicious circle pointed out long ago by Michel Foucault: the very failure of the prison to solve the problem of

marginality serves as justification for its continued expansion.

For all these reasons, the study of the new marginality is of pressing interest, not just to scholars of the metropolis, but also to theorists of state power and to citizens mobilized to advance social justice in the 21st century city. ●

1. See Loïc Wacquant, *Urban Outcast: A comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2008); French translation: *Parias urbains. Ghetto, banlieues, État* (La Découverte, 2006 and 2007); Catalan: *Pàries urbans. Gueto, banlieues, Estat* (Edicions de 1984, 2007); Spanish: *Los Condenados de la ciudad. Gueto, periferias, Estado* (Siglo 21, 2007); Turkish: *Kent Paryaları. İleri Marjinaliğin Karşılaştırmalı Sosyolojisi* (Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2011); Dutch: *Paria's van de stad. Nieuwe marginaliteit in tijden van neoliberalisme* (EPO, 2012); Danish: *Byens Udstødte. En komparativ sociologi om avanceret marginalisering*

(Hovedland/Bogan Publishers, 2013); German: *Die Verdammten dieser Stadt* (Springer, 2014); Italian: (Edizioni ETS, 2014); Japanese: (Shinyousha, forthcoming in 2015)

2. St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1945] 1993).
3. Loïc Wacquant, *The Two Faces of the Ghetto and Other Essays*. (New York and Oxford: University Press, in press)
4. Loïc Wacquant, *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009)

Building Citizenship and a Cohesive Society Through Citizen Participation

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ARTICLE

The article begins by defining what citizen participation is and why it is important, to then point out the inclusive and educational dimensions of participation, understood as public dialogue. Starting from these premises, the assertion is made that we can only build a cohesive society if we're capable of creating the "democracy-citizenship-education" triangle. Instead of technocratic, customer-focused or populist solutions, the author proposes the reinforcement of democracy; one that needs citizens who are educated in civic values. Today, this is the only possibility for reshaping a society based on cohesion and justice.

"At the heart of the polis must always be the *paidea*, education in social values."
(Monedero, 2013)

Democracy and education have always been two closely linked terms. For the ancient Greeks, the possible excesses and demagogic deviations from democracy—in the assembly-based version of the concept in that period, could only be avoided through a combination of good laws and educated citizens. Socrates, for example, considered education the only path by which to build a virtuous community. Aristotle and Plato, as well, stressed the important role of education in their respective political ideals. The ancient democratic model, with all of the limitations of one where neither women nor foreigners were considered to be citizens, makes education one of the main pillars of a prosperous and happy society.

This tradition was maintained in the Roman Republic, but fell apart during the Middle Ages. In going from the *polis* to the *Celestial City*, the *homo credens* replaced the *homo politicus*. Social order no longer needed *virtuous* and interested citizens who were involved in matters of collective interest, but rather *believers* who obeyed the divine dictates without question. Democracy disappeared, and with it went the need for an educated citizenship capable of judgment. Education ceased to be valued for its ability to build citizenship and, instead, became something of a threat. Education, as is well-known, was confined to the monasteries and not accessible to the population at large.

In fact, it was not until the revival of so-called modern democracy at the end of the 17th century, that education was once again considered to be important to the functioning of political institutions. The representative model that grew out of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 in Philadelphia was overshadowed by the fear that widespread and mediocre revolutionary masses would take advantage of democracy to create disorder and instability. That is why they found a middle ground with a system that, on one hand, placed emphasis on an elite

governing sector, but also stressed the need, as J.S. Mill suggested, for example, to educate citizens in order to encourage moderate behavior. Thus, education became both a requirement for well-functioning democracy and a factor that explains the unequal distribution of power in society.

Liberal representative democracy has been the main model up until now, though today it is showing clear symptoms of wearing thin. These democracies, defined by Robert Dahl (1992) as polyarchies, function on the basis of institutionalizing an intermediary network between citizens and the governing level. It is such a dense network that when individuals turn to political institutions they are left feeling impotent. With no sense of control or the possibility of becoming involved on the upper-echelon governmental level that is protected by this thick institutional screen, citizens are raising the cry of "we're not represented" and challenging this liberal democratic model.

This crisis has fostered a growing process of disaffection among citizens with regard to politics in general and particularly with respect to political leaders and the institutions they represent. In the words of Collin Hay (2007), politics has become a "dirty word" and has fed "citizen hatred." Many analysts have tried to explain the reasons for this serious discredit. Turning to J.M. Vallès' (2011) broad readings on the subject, these explanations would have to do with a type of politics that, in the eyes of the citizens, causes deception, rejection and is seen as superfluous. Politics disappoints us because, after promising to meet all of our demands, it finds itself overwhelmed and incapable of fulfilling its promises. In addition, we have witnessed cases of corruption and malpractice that have engendered responses bordering on disgust. And also, from differing perspectives, we feel we can live outside of the political scenario and that, in fact, active disinterest is the best strategy for dealing with a type of politics that can simply be done without.

Thus, at the start of the new millennium we find ourselves faced with a discredited representative



15-M Movement in Puerta del Sol, Madrid, May 2011 © josemariamorenogarcia.es

democracy and with demands for democratic regeneration which generally have to do with calling up ways to facilitate direct citizen participation in decisions that affect them. A body of citizens, more mature and increasingly educated, that demands a voice and wants to directly participate in governing its own interests. This is happening ever more frequently, but has also been trivialized and manipulated by different political forces and social groups.

This article aims to clarify some of the terms in this debate and, in that vein, the first section focuses on what citizen participation is, and why we need it. Defining that allows us to identify two basic aspects of citizen participation: the pedagogical and the inclusive. From this perspective, participation involves both encouraging the education of critical citizens (pedagogical aspect) and fostering the building of a more cohesive society (inclusive aspect).

What is Citizen Participation and Why is it Important?

Before entering into a definition of what citizen participation is and why it is important, we must remember that we are referring to participation occurring in the context of local governments, or more generally speaking, city governments. In these spaces of proximity we encounter the ongoing debate between efficiency and democracy. For J. Bentham, the first to use the term "local government," a city council existed in order to provide services in a more efficient manner. In contrast, in

J.S. Mill's view, precisely what justifies its existence is its contribution to democracy. From this latter perspective, proximity turns the *city* into a privileged space for citizen participation. A space where appropriately educated citizens can understand the public debate and become interested in it. The "participatory democracy" that we have often referred to over the past decade is, in fact, a very local concept.

It is also worth noting that referring to participatory democracy can be redundant, because whatever democratic model we may have in our minds always involves some form of participation: we participate when we vote, we participate when we attend a demonstration, and we also participate when we take part in a workshop. The term "citizen participation" does not sufficiently inform us about the democratic model we are referring to (Held, 2007).

Thus, it is essential to link the recent demands of citizen participation to the deeper demand for a new democracy. A *revived* democracy that, hypothetically, should go beyond the limits of a *representative* and *aggregative* model in order to build a *direct* and *deliberative* alternative. So, there are two dimensions to the demands for citizen participation and democratic innovation:

- One, the distinction between representative democracy and direct democracy refers to *who* is governing: our representatives or we, the people, directly (Sartori, 1987).
- Two, the distinction between aggregative and deliberative democracy has to do with *how* decisions



Upper photo:
Public children's and youth audience of Rivas Vaciamadrid
© City Council of Rivas Vaciamadrid



Lower photo:
Children's forum of Rivas Vaciamadrid
© City Council of Rivas Vaciamadrid

are made: using the vote to determine preferences or debating the issues of collective interest with the aim of reaching a consensus (Mansbridge, 1980).

In this article I will not address the question about *who* makes the decisions but will focus on *how* they are made. It is not about giving more or less importance to one aspect or the other, but rather recognizing that this has been the focus of much of the debate about citizen participation over the past two decades. In populous western democracies we tend to take the representative model for granted and, at the same time, have become interested in how to include democratic innovations in decision-making processes.

From this perspective, citizen participation falls within the deliberative democracy model and, thus, we define it as *a dialogue process intended to have an effect on the decisions made at the public institution level*. So, participating does not just mean voting, demanding, protesting or being in social networks. It means deliberating and dialoguing, exchanging ideas with the aim to influence decisions that people in public positions of responsibility will later have to make.

This is not just an anecdotal question regarding the way in which things are done, but rather, by moving from the collective approach to the deliberative approach, citizen participation becomes the driving force allowing important changes to be made regarding the quality of public decisions. We now enter into the area of the *why* of citizen participation. In this regard, and turning to works written by Barber (2004) and Gutmann and Thompson

(2004), we consider that there are two basic reasons to include deliberation in the decision-making process: to improve the quality of public policies and to solidify the citizenship base.

- Firstly, deliberation infers a tangible improvement both in the content of public policies and in putting them into effect. Dialogue generates wisdom, innovation and, finally, enriches the content of policies that fail when they are couched in the usual technocratic simplifications. Likewise, this deliberative participation leads to commitments and cooperation that make policy implementation more efficient. Finally, citizen participation becomes the essential tool for governing an ever more complex and multi-faceted society.
- Secondly, this same participation creates public spaces where citizens can meet up with each other to discuss issues that affect them as a group. This is a crucial opportunity to learn how to be citizens and build a community. Being a citizen, in political science terms, means being capable of becoming interested in, and participating in, public debate. In contrast, an individual concerned only with his or her own particular interests was, in the times of ancient Greece, known as an *idiot*. Today it seems we have glorified the *idiots*, we have just changed the term: now we call them *customers*. Deliberative participation finally allows us to turn *customers* into *citizens* and, in this same vein, create a *polis*, a space in which to build relationships and a sense of community that has an unquestionable impact on the quality of our lives.

In conclusion, here we have defined citizen participation as a dialogue linked to public decisions and, in addition, established that this participation is basic to being able to govern complex societies with citizens who can contribute in that. These two goals open the way to talking about the inclusive dimension (building cohesive societies) and the pedagogical dimension (shape responsible citizens who are interested in public matters) of citizen participation.

Inclusive Dimension: Building a Society

In exploring the reasons for justifying the resources and efforts that must be put into deliberative participation, Gutmann and Thompson (2004) mention four factors which, in our view, can all be interpreted as a contribution to the ability to govern complex societies. They describe them in the following terms:

- First, given that resources in our societies are limited and the goals are many, deliberation helps in establishing the legitimacy of decisions and, thus, ones with more chances of being carried out. One of the difficulties in governing complex and pressured societies lies in the lack of credibility of public decisions, so that

contributing to reinforcing their legitimacy, through citizen participation, is essential to building a society.

- Second, given that in our societies, and referring to the authors' term of "limited generosity", public deliberation allows us to advance from the simple battle among specific interests to questions of common interest. By participating we are creating a dialogue about what interests *us* and not just *me*, so that we move out of the private sphere and into the collective sphere. This is, once again, essential to building a society.
- Third, given that in our complex societies, contradictory values overlap ever more frequently (for example, conservation and progress), deliberative participation helps us to understand positions taken by others and, therefore, respect them without necessarily sharing them. Perhaps debate doesn't lead to agreement, but it does pave the way to relationships, mutual understanding and, finally, trust. This trust is the foundation, the base, upon which to be able to build a society.
- Fourthly, and finally, given that the reality in which we live is increasingly multi-faceted and out of reach,

deliberative participation encourages knowledge, collective intelligence or, in more fashionable terms, innovative capacity. Governing complex societies requires us to be able to generate complex responses, and these demands come from a position of knowledge involving multiple voices. Today, in contrast to the specialized skills of individual professionals, we need the knowledge that is built up from multiple sources. Again, the capacity to provide answers and build a society with a future depends on the intelligence provided by collective deliberation.

The reasons set out above may seem abstract, but that is only true at first glance. In fact, to our mind, they refer to very specific needs that affect our social models today. We can illustrate this with a couple of examples, the first linked to the educational world and the second focused on local policies of inclusion.

For a start, and until not long ago, professional and technocratic logic predominated in educational policy decisions of those countries considered to be a part of the western welfare state. For example, the curriculum and syllabus, the school calendar, the daily school timetable



were never discussed or debated. We had education experts who informed us on the *what* and *how* of the educational system. Following their criteria, all students received a standard education, with full guarantees of efficiency and equality. It was education decided upon by professionals and received by all under the same conditions.

This technocratic idea, however, is only feasible when applied to relatively simple societies where the great majority of students share cultural references and live in comparable socioeconomic conditions. When complexity is the distinctive trait and society becomes more diverse, educating everyone as though they were all the same becomes an unfair policy, destined to fail. Technical criteria work in homogeneous circumstances, but diversity demands intelligence achieved through deliberation.

It was based upon these premises that the City Educational Projects, were developed, with the understanding that the city was an educating space. Now it's not about offering a technically impeccable and perfectly equal education, but rather about designing different educational projects, adapted to each city. They

are whole education projects that go beyond the strict school curriculum. Above all, they are participatory projects, because the overall concept is based upon being able to build them from different perspectives and with input from different sources.

Supporting this perspective is the real and concrete need to provide education to a diverse and complex society. It is a society that requires deliberative participation because only by joining together the perspectives of the different actors within it (family, associations, government, etc.) are we able to generate the necessary intelligence to create a fitting educational policy. A policy that, I reiterate, is not exclusively in the hands of educational experts, but rather developed through interaction among a network of actors.

Educational policy is a critical ingredient in building an inclusive and cohesive society. Likewise, this policy only makes sense if it is built upon a broad base and thus moving beyond the old simplified idea of single experts. Benjamin Barber expressed that beautifully:

"The author of human language, thought, philosophy, science and art as well as of law, convention, right, authority, and freedom [*here we could add education*] is not Man but men."

Societies, especially if we want them to be cohesive, are not the sum of individual initiatives, but rather the result of a collective effort. An effort that, moving from theory to practice, must involve citizen participation and dialogue among the different actors. As Monedero (2013) reminds us, "Solutions to social tensions are expressed in values taught in school, through the media, through institutions and laws, in neighborhood deliberation and in social forums. There is no democracy without ongoing dialogue."

In keeping with this idea, Catalonia set up the Local Social Inclusion Plans (*Plans Locals d'Inclusió Social* - PLIS). The results are not easy to evaluate, but we can confirm that they provide a new approach to understanding social cohesion and the policies that must encourage that. The PLIS aim to move the focus from the sectorial and technocratic sphere to the transversal and participatory sphere.

The PLIS not only depend upon the participation of the community at large, but also of the different actors in the local administration. In contrast to the traditional assignation of competencies and capabilities to tackle *social problems* to one particular area and the people working within it, the PLIS approach cohesion as a complex and multidimensional concept that can only be addressed through different focuses coming together. Important among these is the educational focus.



Without going into further detail regarding the above two examples, it is worth noting that both share a serious challenge in terms of putting them into effect: how does one give voice to those who, for reasons of age or socioeconomic conditions, with a lack of the force, capacity or recognition to do so? There is no easy answer to that question, but those responsible for public policy must take a pro-active approach, as never before. The point is not just to invite potential participants into the process, but to tap this potential and make it work. That means adapting to ways of communicating and working, being transparent and worthy of trust, and, also, stressing the importance of educating citizens on civic values. The school curriculum and, particularly, subjects such as "Education for Citizenship" are, from this perspective, basic to assuring that we can count on citizens, without whom, the wish to create complex and participatory policies would remain nothing more than a simple wish.

The Educational Dimension: Building Citizenship

Participation enables us to build a cohesive society, and we can do that, because through participation we are also forming the citizens that our society needs. Dialogue and discussion have enormous educational potential, a pedagogical dimension that is essential to acquiring civic values. Thus, participation is closely linked to the educational process.

We can specify the educational potential of collective deliberation by looking at what I call the *do's* and *don'ts* in citizen participation processes:

- To begin with, a participatory process has to explain to the different actors what we *want* to talk about, because without appropriate background information, any debate is pointless. Traditionally it has been said that politics is education, and this statement translates into the need for information and communication prior to any participatory dialogue. Participating calls for prior *knowledge* and spreading this knowledge provides people with the ability to judge, and, therefore, a chance to have an effective impact on public decisions. For the ancient Greeks, a citizen was a person who could go to the *agora* with his particular interests and from there enter directly into a debate about collective interests. This requires a knowledge and understanding of public affairs—an understanding without which the individual could not be considered a citizen. In this respect, schools can play a very important role.
- However, a participatory process must not only convey the notion of what we *want* to talk about. Even more importantly, perhaps, it should guide us in what we *don't* want to talk about. A participatory process that only offers *do's* can easily fall into "clientelism" or, if you will, produce a generation of *spoiled* citizens. The greatest educational potential of participation lies, in my view, in

combining an openness to dialogue with a clear set of limits, acknowledging that not everything is possible. Aristotle defined good citizens as those who "know how to govern and be governed." "Knowing how to govern" meant having the knowledge and judgment to debate issues in a public space, while "knowing how to be governed" implied understanding and accepting the restrictions of community life with its many inevitable conflicts. The educational potential of this approach seems unquestionable and remarkably applicable today. This is particularly true in individualistic, customer-oriented societies which have often generated, if you will excuse the expression, "spoiled nouveau riche individuals" as opposed to "aware, responsible citizens."

The educational dimension is, all in all, one of the main potential areas for citizen participation. By participating, we not only improve our governments' capacities; it also shapes us as citizens who make up a community. This is often a painful learning process because in accepting our relationship with politics we must also accept the frustrations that often come with that.

Therefore, participatory processes could be mirrored in schools. As we see it, schools should offer the knowledge that enables students to understand and position themselves in the world, but at the same time, we are well aware, education also involves recognizing limits and knowing how to respect them. As Josep Maria Vallès stated in his inaugural address for the 2011-2012 academic year at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, this implies that educational institutions must be actively committed to political renewal, because without their contribution we lack the necessary attitudes to sustain a solid democracy.

Accordingly, pressing to depoliticize our schools and universities, reducing them to shells that aseptically provide practical skills and techniques, means turning our back on educating citizens who can contribute to the solid democratic base of our societies. And, as J.M. Vallès points out, that is a short-sighted strategy:

"The memory of our species' collective experiences, with all of its lights and shadows, is what makes us aware of the human capacity to build and to destroy. This knowledge is what makes us accept our condition as citizens who are jointly responsible for shaping the transformed and transforming policies that we demand. Calling for a real democracy while casting aside education in humanistic values may be the result of unacceptable ignorance or a case of gross hypocrisy. I'm not sure which of the two is worse." (Vallès, 2011)

The Magic Triangle

The task of organizing and balancing out our societies, guaranteeing their cohesion and development, can be approached from several different angles. The first is



Voting process to establish the guidelines of the Multiannual Participative Plan of São Bernardo do Campo © Wilson Magao



Citizen participation in the Multiannual Participative Plan of São Bernardo do Campo © City Council of São Bernardo do Campo

that the legacy of the enlightenment has imbued western society with technocracy and, hence, there are many who consider that we must leave it to the experts to provide us with the answers to our concerns. Both citizens and politicians would be unnecessary accessories, and, in fact, their abusive presence would be partially to blame for the difficulties we are experiencing today.

A second approach involves relying on the order that is automatically set by the market. If we replace citizens and politicians with customers and service providers, the problem is solved. This option took hold from the 1980s on and has been the key to understanding a new social order characterized by competition, inequality, and flagrant injustice.

The third option for governing our societies comes from leaders who present themselves as saviors, very often during times of uncertainty and fear. These leaders, who stem from the tradition of Roman dictators, designated temporarily to help overcome specific, exceptional difficulties, shape a variety of brands of populism which, again, deny political solutions to collective problems.

Personally, in keeping with Tzvetan Todorov (2012), I consider technocracy, clientelism, and populism as “the intimate enemies of democracy.” They are false solutions, incapable of generating social order and cohesion. If we wish to build inclusive, fair societies, we have to be capable of doing so together, starting with democratic dialogue. And in order to do so, we have to join this

democratic dimension with the two other angles of an imaginary triangle: education and citizenship. *Democracy, citizenship, and education* are the cornerstones upon which we can build a way of life that, to paraphrase Aristotle, is worth living.

This triangle not only allows us to address the increasing complexity of current societies, but also does so with the intention of building more just societies: ones that support the necessary *redistribution* of resources in order to guarantee cohesion, and that allow for the full *recognition* of all the people who are part of those societies. ●

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Inclusion and Right to the City. Exercising Women's Citizen Rights: The Women's Agenda for Rosario, Argentina

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Urban society has become complex with the emergence of new social behavior, use of time, and means of mobility and communication. Resulting from this we see a peaking of urban violence that affects women's lives in the city in a different way. Poverty, inequality, ongoing gender-based division of labor, domestic and public violence are all critical and important hurdles keeping women from exercising their citizen rights.

Introduction

The Right to the City (Le droit à la ville) (Henri Lefebvre, 1968) provides a political perspective that emphasizes the satisfaction of citizen's needs, and the "rescue of man as the protagonist of the city he has built." Given that concept, David Harvey's question (2008) takes on new relevance: What rights are we talking about? And about whose city? Or perhaps stated in a different manner: Who defines and builds the city? Who benefits from its public goods and different services? (Falú, 2013).

Focusing on questions of inclusion and gender, feminists from various disciplines have been doing research that pays attention to these questions. These efforts have brought to light the subordinate positions and conditions in which women in cities find themselves, that are grounded in a powerful and ongoing gender-based division of labor. Women's place is deemed to be in the private home environment, out of the public eye: "...men linked to productive work-income generators—and women seen as responsible only and exclusively with regard to domestic and reproductive tasks: caring for the children and running the household." (Falú, 1998).

Among the studies and works that have significantly helped to draw women back into the city narrative we can point to, among others, those by Daphne Spain who, in her books *Gendered Spaces* and *How Women Saved the City*, documents initiatives carried out by women in the cities, in the period between the American Civil War and World War II. Also worthy of mention is Dolores Hayden who, in *The Grand Domestic Revolution* documents actions taken by materialist feminists (late 19th century) who questioned gender-based division of labor and put forth the idea of collectivizing domestic work and child care.¹ With regard to more recent contributions which have consolidated the work in this field, are those by Jane Jacobs, Françoise Choay and Saskia Sassen (Velázquez, 2012).

In Latin America², starting in the 1980s, numerous theoretical works focused on the subject of the relationship between women and the cities, adding new arguments to the feminist voices. All of those served to contribute significantly to advances made in the 20th century regarding women's rights, establishing treaties, agreements and commitments on an international

level³ with broad social acceptance, and also promoting commitments on State levels.⁴ Among these were conferences organized by the United Nations towards the end of the 20th century, and the Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Encounters, which over the course of 30 years of building the Latin American feminist agenda, included the right of women in the city and urban environment as a subject on the agenda. These instruments serve to link the agenda of the rights of women within the urban agenda.

This is all taking place in a context of growing change within the cities and in everyday spaces, as a result of different economic, social, cultural and technological factors, influenced by globalization and the rise of neoliberal policies consequently affecting ways of living in the cities. Urban society has become complex with the emergence of new social behavior, use of time and means of mobility and communication. Resulting from this we see a peaking of urban violence that affects women's lives in the city in a different way. Poverty, inequality, ongoing gender-based division of labor, domestic and public violence are all critical and important hurdles keeping women from exercising their citizen rights.

The information presented here is organized in three parts. The first sets forth what the right to the city, in general, represents in the 21st century and what that means for women. The second looks at the main hurdles women face in being able to enjoy their right to the city; it also specifically addresses poverty and inequality linked with gender-based division of labor, with specific reference to urban violence against women and the resulting restriction of rights. The third section addresses the experience of developing the Agenda for Women in the City. Without Fear or Violence (*Agenda Mujeres por la Ciudad. Sin miedos ni violencia*), created within the framework of the Regional Program of Safe Cities for All⁵, in Rosario, Argentina. The text closes with brief conclusions on this subject.

The Right to the City in the 21st Century. Women Citizens

Forty-five years after the publication of the first edition of Henri Lefebvre's influential work on *The Right to the City*, that concept takes on new significance within the



Nighttime walk to detect insecure areas. Program of Cities without Violence towards Women, Safe Cities for All. Rosario, Argentina © Red Mujer and Habitat/CISCSA

urban political and social agenda. His writings touched on both philosophical investigation and the relevance of his political proposals within the context of post-war anti-establishment thinking, and the mobilizing impact of May 1968 events in France. His controversial and committed theories took shape through encounters and debates with thinkers the likes of Jean Paul Sartre, Louis Althusser and Edgard Morin. The right to the city is approached from the perspective of everyday life and within the context of the utopia of change. Lefebvre is an indispensable source for those concerned with changing signs in the cities imposed by globalization and the gaining importance of neoliberal policies.

The rapid globalization process accentuated changes in the territorial structure of cities at a high social cost. In recent decades there appears to have been a consensus regarding the most important results of globalization and neoliberal policies in the non-stop changes in cities, approaches to urban life and, more specifically, how that is planned and managed (Falú, 2009a). Currently, cities in Latin American are undergoing a second revival in response to the pressures and interests of financial capital and real estate investments. That is to say, "globalization of the economy, focused on multinational corporations and the banks" (Sassen, 2001). There is nothing to indicate that this process has contributed to easing the problem of segregation, but rather that it has made it only deeper and more complex (Falú, op.cit).

Various authors (Sassen, Castells, Borja, Burgess, Harvey) refer to how the hegemony of these interdependent factors had a negative impact, widening social gaps and economic inequalities and generating clear territorial fragmentation; segregation that creates a new urban geography and, given the growing violence, in resulting topographies of fear.

While these cities are the driving forces behind the local, regional and also global economy, and some with a higher GDP than the national States—generating work and promoting education and leisure activity—they are, at the same time, places of systematic exclusion, resulting in segregation due to class, socio-economic level, gender, ethnicity, age or cultural and symbolic values.

The importance of the right to the city, which Cuenya (2013) points out in Borja's and Harvey's texts, also surfaces in almost all discussions focused on the democratization of city life; this was evident at the 7th World Urban Forum (Medellín, 2014), where there was not a single presenter who didn't make reference to the right to the city, with most of them citing Lefebvre.

Nonetheless, the difference between the French philosopher's concept, 45 years after the publication of⁵ "*Le droit à la ville*," becomes evident in terms of the different strategies regarding: the active organization of the city's inhabitants, the State's responsibility, and the role played by intellectuals and academics. These are social elements that can be combined, or not, in different ways. While Borja asserts the importance of social mobilization processes and intellectual reflection he also points out that change is not just brought about through urban movements, but also by the State. Picking up on Cuenya's interpretation, Harvey proposes adapting the Marxist proletarian concept to the workers as a whole, where a significant part of the population has been marginalized from work or whose relationship to work is flexible and unstable due to neoliberal policies. In short, Harvey suggests focusing attention on a new category: the precarious city dwellers. Nonetheless, we must include in this reading those who participate in reproducing life, "the first-rate caretakers" of children, and of the sick and elderly; those who look after life in the extensive



Program of Cities without Violence towards Women, Safe Cities for All © Red Mujer and Habitat/CISCSA

poor communities of the region; those who, therefore, participate in reproducing day-to-day life: that is to say, women.

While we may consider that women have always been part of this construction, their presence in the rural or urban settlements has, for the most part, been made invisible, both in terms of planning and policies. It is through organized struggles that women are beginning to find their voices in terms of having rights, and that includes the right to the city. The inclusion of women requires a complex paradigm change in terms of the processes of design, planning and citizen education for the use and enjoyment of public goods and services. This is evident in instruments such as the World Charter for Women's Right to the City (Barcelona, 2004), which establishes a series of conditions and challenges aimed at putting women's right to the city into effect.

Violated Rights, Limited Citizenship: Critical Hurdles and Women's Right to the City

In spite of the structural adjustment and neoliberal policies of the 1980-90s, decentralization processes have played a role in democratic culture and in strengthening local governments. So, in many cases we witness the emergence of *new social standard-bearers*, among them women who draw up and present their agendas, develop and organize their capabilities to pressure the authorities, aim to have a voice in decision making and, sometimes, successfully achieve policy agreements. This brings with it a *symbolic and cultural* change and the active presence of women who play a role in the "area of local political dispute." These processes of dispute repeatedly run up against critical hurdles which impede the consolidation of public policies that aim to advance women's right to the city.

Despite the apparent differences between (and within) countries, there are shared challenges regarding the subject of women's rights. While economic, ethnic and class differences exist among them, they all deserve this right to the city and are potential driving forces in shaping public policy.

There are still many subjects to be addressed on the public level regarding women's rights, among the most important being:

- The need to consider human and universal rights as the framework, applicable to different cultures, religions and movement of peoples around the world.
- The right to live a life without violence, which is not only a persisting challenge but has become more complex both on the private and public level. Fear is a limiting factor in personal freedom.
- The right to decide regarding sexual and reproductive issues. The need for ongoing sexual education and a contraceptive policy to reduce abortion, and also the need for legal abortion, addressing both health considerations and freedom of choice. Respect for sexual and gender choice.
- The right to equal opportunities in every area of life, including the right to live in and enjoy the city.
- The gaps between the rich and poor, suffered clearly by Latin American women, that is not only about economic poverty, but poverty of rights.
- The persistent gender-based division of labor calls for a new social pact between men and women, as well as governmental policies that include the private sector as well, and society as a whole.

Beyond the legislative gains achieved on this front, there remains a glass ceiling with regard to equal opportunities and rights for women.

The Unequal Continent: GINI

Graph 2.1 Regions of the world. GINI coefficient for per capita household income



(a) Poverty and Inequality Suffered by Women, and Continuing Gender-based Division of Labor. Critical Hurdles Within the Region

Perhaps the main issue heightening and affecting the critical hurdles across the board, is that of the high rates of poverty and inequality in the region, where pockets of poverty persist and are considered to be the "urbanization of poverty." In this regard, we could refer to a process of a "feminization of poverty."

Added to that is the prevailing division between public and private space which is primarily rooted in gender-based division of labor. In this regard, and as reflected in Doreen Massey's works (1991), the symbolic importance of space is connected with gender and the construction of gender relations, with strong implications in women's everyday lives.

Although women are steadily moving forward in the public arena, in the areas of labor relations, the economy and politics, this historically established distinction is still evident in Latin American countries. Data collected from time-use surveys shows a clear overload of women's responsibilities and tasks and a lack of economic autonomy. This has to do with unpaid work, not considered as work, done by women at home and in their communities.

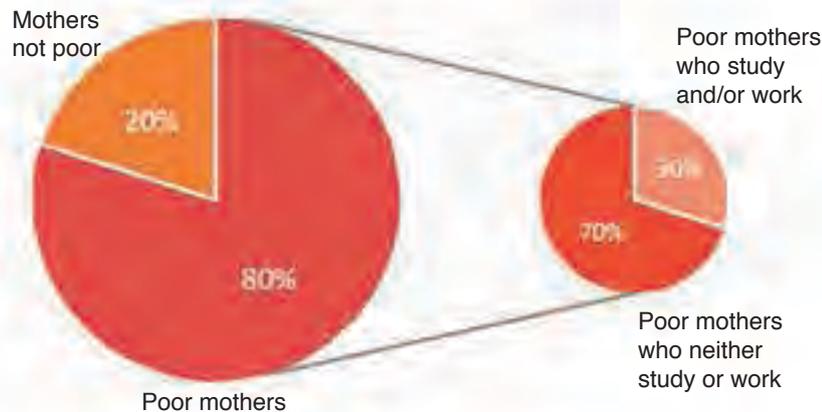
We must keep in mind that women spend more time than men doing non-remunerated work, and that men earn more in paid jobs, while it is the women who are looking the hardest to find work. In addition, the responsibility for work at home, including caring for children, and elderly

or ill family members, falls on the shoulders of women, and the poorer the woman's family is, the more intense the job. In sum, women dedicate more hours to work in general (both paid and non-paid). (ECLAC 2012: 44).

Women's work overload creates a paradox: the more they work, the poorer they are. Between 1990 and 2008 women's participation in the work force increased by 21% (more than 100 million women in the region), while the region registered economic growth and a decrease in poverty. Nonetheless, these poverty levels do not decrease among women, but quite the contrary; there is a larger proportion of women among the poor and the poorest. So, in 2002, the correlation of numbers in the region was 109 poor women to 100 poor men, and in 2012 the number of poor women rose to 118. In keeping with this, according to 2010 data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean-ECLAC (*Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe-CEPAL*), in 1990 the region registered 41.4% of people living in poverty, while in 2009 the number dropped to 27.8%. When we look closely and analyze what has occurred in the cases of women in comparison to men, we see that the female urban poverty rate in 1990 was 107.7 and by 2009 had risen to 114.3, just as the female urban indigence rate was 115.4 in 1990 and grew to 124.2 in 2009.

In linking questions of poverty with age, education and reproduction, the Argentine Institute for Social Development (IDESDA) has found that 8 out of 10 young women with children in Argentina, are poor (statistics

Situation of mothers between the ages of 15 and 24



Source: IDESA, based on the INDEC (National Census Institute) EPH Home Survey, Second Quarter, 2011

from 2011). This is an issue that feminists have been addressing at various international conferences, pointing out the lack of education in general, as well as lack of specific education on sexuality and reproduction, and elevated school drop-out rates as a result of adolescent pregnancy and early motherhood in poor homes. (Source: 06/11/2011 - IDESA).

While the 20th century brought with it significant advances with regard to rights, in spite of⁷ what was accomplished, the fact remains that there are millions of Latin Americans and, in particular, a great majority of women, who are unaware of their rights. The freedom to exercise citizen's rights is still fragile, partial and unequal, involving much exclusivity.

It is worth noting that women with a higher education level (10 years or more) earn just 70% of their male equivalents (ECLAC, 2012). We must look at the way women's work overload ties in with the "feminization of poverty;" and also take into account their economic contribution to generating goods and services in the home, in community activities and in providing care that requires their time and talents in spite of that not being considered paid work.

In sum, the gender-based division of labor plays into the ongoing masculine dominance of productive public and domestic spaces, and influences how policies are shaped. In this sense, the question arises regarding for whom, and with what prospects, public policies are designed, which then leads us to ask what type of subjectivity plays into state programs addressed to women. The *maternalistic* approach continues to predominate in the region's main programs, leaving women without a voice and recognized only as mothers, wives and neighborhood women.

A good example of this is the group of Conditional Income Transfer Programs (*Programas de Transferencias Condicionadas de Ingresos*) that have been implemented in the poor areas of the region. There are 18 conditional income transfer programs currently in operation in 19

Latin American countries, with 8 others already carried out. These are programs that, with varying outreach and intensity, reach approximately 25 million homes, amounting to 113 million people, or 20% of the region's total population. They are considered to be "feminized" programs that indeed offer advantages, yet it is the women who receive the income, in keeping with the idea that they do not have their own rights, but rather rights as mothers of children and adolescents. (ECLAC, 2012).

(b) A Particularly Critical Hurdle: Women's Rights to Safe Cities

Although with slight differences, citizen (in)security and violence in public spaces which form part of day-to-day life, is one of the main challenges currently facing Latin American and Caribbean countries. Thus, the governments have raised security costs to a level of between 8 and 10% of the GDP (UN-Habitat, 2009).

One important aspect of women's right to the city is the *right to safe cities for women*. That involves the need to design public policies regarding urban security that address the issue of violence towards women and girls in public spaces, on the street and on transport services. Policies with a preventative rather than repressive focus, that include various different social sectors and, at the same time, make urban security an integral part of the physical space in city planning. It also requires educating people; promoting campaigns to heighten awareness of the issue and draw in different forces, particularly the educational community and the communications media in their roles as important opinion shapers.

Different subjective data⁶ show that a lack of a sense of security is the problem that citizens cite as most important, giving it higher priority than the income issue.⁷ The objective data reflect an increase of different types of crimes in the region, including homicide, the rate of which grew by 11% between 2000 and 2010, while in other areas of the world it dropped or stabilized. The same is true with

robberies, which have tripled in numbers over the past 25 years. (PNUD, 2013).

Within this context of violence acts, fear forms part not only of citizens' daily lives, but also plays into the rules of society (Kessler, 2008). It is about citizens of fear (Rotker, 2000) which leads to the idea of another threat, generally associated with individuals or groups who are stigmatized by social class, race, ethnicity, or other factors.

It is also about violence and fear that are not perceived equally by the population at large but rather are specifically characterized by class, territory, age, and gender, among other factors. Different studies carried out by institutions within the Latin American Women and Habitat Network,⁸ point to the particular ways in which violent acts affect women, who experience everything from verbal hostility to sexual harassment and abuse in public squares, parks, on the street and on public

transport systems, which make them more fearful than men in terms of moving around the city. Fear, as a factor in women's socialization, inhibits women's access to public spaces from early childhood on (Román Rivas, 2009), imposing restrictions upon them and greater permissiveness on the part of males regarding the use of that space. It is about permissiveness that has to do with a different perception of danger, and which includes the fear of sexual aggression towards little girls.

This range of violent acts against women in public spaces can be loosely described as follows:

- Male violence—primarily occurring in public spaces—taking place among men and generally having to do with organized crime-linked groups. Violence against women in public spaces, on the other hand, tends to be random and could affect any woman, regardless of class, education, age, ethnicity or place of residence. (Kessler, 2008; Falú, 2009a)

March for the Safe Way for Women: Program of Cities without Violence towards Women, Safe Cities for All. Rosario, Argentina © Red Mujer and Habitat/CISCSA



- Women are more aware of possible risks in their everyday lives than men.⁹ This is true to the extent that the risk of fear is higher than the actual growing crime rate.
- With regard to the above, there are certain aggressive acts that generate extreme fear among women. These are linked with the male-female power balance, specifically affecting women: sexual aggression and couple-related aggression. On any given day in Latin America, 460 people suffer the consequences of sexual violence and most of those are women.
- This fear increases at certain hours of the day when the public streets, squares, and recreational areas are quieter, with less social interaction in general.

The above-noted points all fall under the category of a *continuum of violent acts* (Falú, 2009), which show that, both in public and private spaces, violent acts against women share the same roots: the power of one sex over another, expressed through masculine violence that exists in our societies. In an attempt to confront this violence and the associated fears, women develop individual or group strategies that allow them to overcome the obstacles and participate in the social, work and political life of the city. The alternative would be to withdraw from the public space, seen to be threatening, even to the point of not resorting to it at all, with the consequent personal and social impoverishment that comes with that choice.

So, we are referring to fear that limits the right to enjoy the public space and take part in it, which basically has to do with women being seen and considered as objects. This violence against women, sometimes resulting in death—bodies considered as “property” just by virtue of being female—leads to the coining of the phrase “femicide.”¹⁰ It is a concept that aims to turn the idea of subjugated bodies into “bodies endowed with social and political value.” The statistics reflect the gravity of these situations of violence against women in the region; between 2004 and 2009, of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide in the world, 13 were in the region.¹¹

To enjoy the city one must be able to make it hers, and necessarily be comfortable in one’s own body to be able to operate with confidence in the home, the neighborhood, and on collective, political and economic ground. In this regard, the ongoing violence against women in the public sphere, the growing violence in cities with the associated fear works to block the rights achieved by women, creating hurdles in being able to achieve a sense of belonging to the public space. Stated differently, women’s fear towards moving around the city and freely enjoying it turns into “distancing” from the public space. In the meantime, and contrary to what statistics show, private space continues to be considered safe.

Ideas put forth supporting women’s potential for freedom (Amorós, 2005), and the need for risk

taking (Pitch, 2008) are essential in overcoming the oppression which women experience and serve as ways of questioning and moving beyond that which is imposed by a male-dominated power structure. Only by breaking down the paradigms of submission, can women proscribe the femininity myth and acquire and exercise new rights.

Agenda for Women in the City, Without Fear or Violence. City of Rosario Experience (Santa Fe Province, Argentina)¹²

Women Committed to the Problems in their City. Aims and Objectives of the Experience

The Agenda for Women in the City, Without Fear or Violence grew out of cooperation among organized managers, experts and women in the communities of the northeast, western and southern Districts of the City of Rosario, Argentina. Drawing up the Agenda brought to the fore these women’s political decision to include within it demands and proposals seen as essential to living in safer cities and with inalienable rights, thus creating an instrument with political and governmental impact.

The Agenda’s aim was to bring the issue of violence against women to light and move forward on the issue of equal opportunities for women. In this regard, the Agenda served as a learning tool within the negotiation process among various players in the political sphere, resulting in consolidating women’s neighborhood organizations, systematizing their demands, and addressing questions of citizen education and training.

The process involved participative feedback in identifying the causes of violence in the respective areas. Among the methodological tools applied were: walks through neighborhoods, focus groups, and on-the-street and home surveys.

The Process

Several meetings were held to establish the Agenda’s aims and intentions. Priorities were established, focusing on the need for preventive action, attention to, and control of, violence against women—including that against lesbians and within work contexts—as well as reviewing budgetary questions. In addition, actions were taken to have a voice in the electoral platforms of various political candidates.

Thus, the demands and proposals were as follows:

- Create the means and budget to give visibility to, and promote, women’s action groups.
- Demand neighborhood play centers for children that encourage women’s active involvement.
- Heighten social awareness of violence against women and encouraging media coverage of the subject.

The Agenda for Women in the City set forth the following:

1. Respect for a violence-free life in the city.
2. Put into effect National Law 26.485 regarding Comprehensive Protection to prevent, sanction and eliminate violence against women.
3. Strengthen the city council's program aimed at addressing and preventing issues of gender violence in neighborhoods.
4. Implement Equal Opportunities Plan III.
5. Include gender and safety questions in urban planning.
6. Increase decentralization of social/cultural activities to make public spaces more accessible.

Brief Conclusions

For women to play a role in their cities' story and be productive participants in that, requires a paradigm change that needs a close examination of the theoretical coordinates that place them in the position of objects and the creation of a network of actions and public policies established between the government level and society at large. Women's right to the city is a key factor in the development of a real citizen democracy, allowing women to express their aspirations, needs and demands and simultaneously enjoy full use of the city's public goods and services.

Addressing and removing the critical hurdles set forth here requires a symbolic and cultural transformation and involves a change regarding both formal and non-formal education: alter the ongoing gender-based division of labor, inequalities, unfair work conditions for women (particularly with regard to non-visible caretaking and childrearing) and violence against women. With regard to the last point, though the issue has been addressed on a public level, it remains the primary thorn in the side of women's lives, both at home and outside of the home.

The Women's Agenda experience and its associated methodology is part of this change geared towards education and training leading towards active citizenship. That is not based only upon the words and actions of experts on the subject, but also upon raising the voices of women who live this experience on a daily basis and are "expert voices to be heard." They must become active and committed participants in improving the conditions of life in their neighborhoods, and not simply recipients of interventions and planned actions by specialized teams. While commitment to the issue and intellectual reflection are necessary (Borja, 2013), there must also be motivation and action on the part of citizens, as well as an investment on the issue by those in power who are in the position of taking action. In this regard, we have turned to the joint action taken by specialists, local authorities and women in the community, taking into consideration their knowledge of the neighborhood, the city, their spaces,

and the streets and transport systems to which they need to have access. Not only is freedom of movement in the neighborhood important, but so is attention to health and education issues, and social services for the elderly. In sum, addressing all of the tasks and experiences that women take on. This agenda is based upon all of these factors. ●

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1. In Peru in the 1980s groundbreaking work was done by SUMBI-Urban Services and Women with Limited Resources, led by Maruja Barrig and Amelia Fort.

2. Mention must be made of contributions from Latin America by: Janine Anderson, Maruja Barrig, Cecilia Blondet, Amelia Fort (Peru); Alejandra Massolo (1992), Elizabeth Jelín and María del Carmen Feijoo in the 1980s through CLACSO (Latin American Council of Social Sciences); Ana Falú (Argentina); Alejandra Valdés, Raszinski and Serrano (1992) in Chile; through the Women and Habitat Network: Josefina Huamán (Peru), Ana Falú and Liliana Rainero (Argentina) and Olga Segovia (Chile); researchers and activists including Marisol Dalmazzo, Morena Herrera, Lucy Cardona, Maite Rodríguez Blandón, Maite Rodigou, among others. Maria Arboleda (Ecuador) through the Women and Local Government Program (PMGL), and the PMGL Study Group with Jeanine Anderson and Ana Falú.

3. Conferences and Summit Meetings leading to commitments on the part of States, resulting in some binding Conventions and Pacts. One example of this is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), established in 1979.

4. Examples: the IULA's Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Governments (Harare, Zimbabwe, 1998); the Founding Declaration of United Cities and Local Governments (Paris, 2004); the World Charter for Women's Rights to the City (Barcelona, 2004).

5. The Latin American regional program "Cities without Violence against Women, Safe Cities for All," UNIFEM-United Nations Development Fund for Women (today, UN Women) with headquarters in Brasilia (2004), put into effect, between 2006 and 2012, specific programs in Argentina, Colombia, Chile, El Salvador and Guatemala, creating the Women and Habitat Network of Latin America, in conjunction with the governments of the cities of Rosario, Bogota, Santiago, Suchitoto and Guatemala, and the participation of Lima, Recife and other cities in the region with specific activities such as public campaigns focused on violence against women. This program received financing from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).

6. We must stress that this subjective data regarding the sense of insecurity, do not necessarily reflect levels of criminal activity.

7. The percentages range from 20% for Peru to 61% for Venezuela. In countries such as Mexico and Argentina, 35% and 41% place more importance on the issue of insecurity and problems of violence than on income. (Latinbarómetro, 2008-2012)

8. Latin American Women and Habitat Network (Red Mujer y Hábitat de América Latina): comprising institutions in countries of the region that are committed to women's rights to the city. www.redmujer.org.ar.

9. Cfr. Boletín 1. Observatorio Regional Ciudades, Violencias y Género (Regional observatory: Cities, Violence and Gender). www.ciudadesygenero.org/?p=158, Latin American regional program "Cities without Violence Against Women, Safe Cities for all", Latin American Women and Habitat Network, UN Women/AECID

10. Marcela Lagarde, Mexican anthropologist and member of Parliament, investigated the subject as a member of the Special Commission Against Femicide, finding that approximately 15,000 women were murdered over the course of ten years. Lagarde defines Femicide as: "Misogynous crimes allowed by an enormous social tolerance of gender violence in which the State is actively implicated and contributes to its impunity," adding that "the subject of impunity is severe." <http://portalseguridad.org/articuroduzcan%20estos%20crimeneslos/marcela-lagarde-los-femicidios-son-la-punta-del-iceberg-de-todas-las-formas-de-violencia>

11. Small Arms Survey Research Notes. Issue 14. February 2012. http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-14.pdf

12. Within the framework of the program Cities Without Violence Against Women, Cities Safe for All carried out by UN Women, Women and Habitat Network, AECID. In cooperation with CISCESA (Southern Cone Service and Exchange Center), Women and Habitat Network, and the Women's Section of the Department for Social Support, City of Rosario, Santa Fe Province, Argentina. (2010)

Experiences



Bologna: Between History and Innovation. The Zanardi Houses Project

Inti Bertocchi

Don Paolo Serra Zanetti Institute for Social and Community Inclusion, City of Bologna (Italy)

Zanardi Houses (*Case Zanardi*) is a social innovation policy that aims to create a network of stakeholders, both public and private, to tackle social needs, provide job and training opportunities to citizens at risk of poverty or social exclusion, and promote the reduction of waste and a more sustainable and responsible way of life.

The Municipality of Bologna is one of the most important business cities in northern Italy, mainly because it is a crossroads of goods and people, thanks to its role as a “mobility hub.”

According to January 1, 2014 data, Bologna has 384,502 inhabitants with a steadily growing foreign resident population (52,473) representing more than the 13.7% of the total population, and with an increasing number of elderly people (26% of the population), especially women.

The significant presence of Associations in the city is a reflection of the strong, effective and active citizen participation in Bologna (1400 associations, 400 of which are related to social and health issues). They are directly and/or indirectly supported by the Municipality and represent a relevant resource for social policies.

In recent years, Bologna, like so many other European cities and towns, faces the consequences of a growing socio-economic crisis that affects a large segment of the population—both men and women—who until recently, given their family history and/or their life plans, thought they were safe from the risk of poverty. Over the last few years circumstances changed, such as employment downturns and decreases in the quality and quantity of consumption. Many families now experience situations of material deprivation, difficulties and isolation. Such are the “new poverties.”¹

Over a long period, Bologna—together with the whole Emilia-Romagna region—with its services and its lay and Catholic volunteer network, was a model for social

initiatives aimed at fighting poverty, that were quite effective and greatly admired, at home and abroad. However, for some time Bologna has been seemingly unable to deal with the increasingly pressing requests addressed to its service sector. Most likely, the city’s past efficiency on this front, with a well-established connection between the organization of services and social activities, has proven inadequate to answer today’s new needs, precisely because such services were too tied to models that had become fixed over time. The service sector was thus urged to consider the issue, and to find and try innovative ways to confront the new situations of poverty that they are able to spot and assess.

Map of Zanardi Houses



1. “Vedere la povertà - Una ricerca sulle nuove povertà a Bologna” (Seeing Poverty - Research on new poverties in Bologna) - Emilia Romagna Gramsci Foundation, Scientific coordinator: Matilde Callari Galli

In this framework, the Don Paolo Serra Zanetti Institute for Social and Community Inclusion (*Istituzione per la Inclusione Sociale e Comunitaria Don Paolo Serra Zanetti*) was founded in 2007, within the Municipality, to create an observatory on poverty, develop communication activities, and support the creation of innovative policies to fight poverty and overcome social exclusion.

The occasion for a first relevant initiative in this field has come from the Bologna City Government which, in its 2013 budget, assigned 4.5 million Euros to the creation of an anti-crisis fund: one million for the housing problem, three million for projects aimed at creating employment, and half-a-million to the welfare sector for work inclusion.

With reference to the latter, the Don Paolo Serra Zanetti Institute for Social and Community Inclusion suggested an original project that, like many innovations, is based on the rediscovery of historical roots; on the re-appropriation of one's own identity as citizens, and on the ability to

provide supportive responses, both of which form part of Bologna's history.

The Zanardi Shops served as the inspirational model. One of the main achievements of the first Socialist City Government of Bologna, under Francesco Zanardi, was the Local Consumer Board (*Ente Autonomo dei Consumi*). The initiative emerged as a spontaneous reaction to the staggering increase in prices immediately after the outbreak of World War I, in the summer of 1914. Zanardi, after verifying that price ceilings did not work, decided to open a shop in a municipal venue under the portico of the Palazzo del Podestà, where some City Hall janitors began selling grapes at cost price, with a tiny supplement for operating costs. Grapes were followed by other foodstuffs: bread, flour, rice, apples, and so on. By 1919 there were 21 shops in operation, allowing the city to face the war without starving.

A century later, the Bologna City Government has again put forward a similar model of supportive action, in the form of the Zanardi Houses project. It does not merely offer opportunities to fight the economic crisis and create new employment inclusion. The project, in fact, uses the crisis as an occasion for change, as a chance to bring all social actors—public and private, profit and non-profit—together in endorsing a “solidarity pact” and in joining the common search for new inventive solutions to the crisis. The idea is based on a shared assumption of social responsibility in fighting unemployment and social exclusion, with an additional commitment on the part of the citizens' community: reducing waste and promoting supportive and eco-sustainable living.

The Zanardi Houses project began with a public call for planning proposals focused on three main issues:

1. the fight against “work waste:” initiatives meant to create information and job-orientation points, supporting new forms of employment (also fostering entrepreneurship), especially in the areas of eco-sustainability, information and communication technologies, social cohesion and solidarity.
2. the fight against the waste of food and non-food goods: initiatives meant to promote the collection and distribution of foodstuffs to people in difficult situations, and the establishment of a regular system of barter/exchange and recycling/re-usage of non-food goods for free-of-charge distribution, to round out the actions taken in the fight against “work waste.”
3. the fight against “relations-related waste:” initiatives meant to support the implementation and enhancement of social capital, that are to be connected and integrated with the above-mentioned initiatives, to fight isolation and social exclusion; to promote solidarity, mutual aid, and education on well-informed and responsible lifestyles; and also work in cooperation with the relevant social-assistance service sectors.

Panoramic view of Bologna



Thirty-two project proposals were collected, with the participation of over 100 parties (social cooperatives, volunteer associations, training institutions, public authorities, banks, and several exponential actors). The announcement was not aimed at selecting a single proposal, but rather at encouraging the emergence of local ideas and resources. Therefore, all projects were taken into consideration; none of them was excluded a priori, although they were quite diverse. Proposals went from fair-trade markets to a rickshaw factory, from community gardens for home grown food to multi-ethnic catering, involving various actors who were used to working with a range of quite different methods and goals.

Co-planning workshops were the tools employed to carry out the integration of all proposals. All of the associations and economic actors joined together in working towards this common goal and committed themselves to cooperating through integration and coordination of skills, experiences, resources, ideas. The whole process resulted in ten general projects, with one communication plan shared by all projects. In the meantime, adequate "containers" had been found: unused and run down public areas that could be restored to host project activities.

In December, when the co-planning stage was almost completed, the idea arose to apply for the PROGRESS (VP/2013/012) competition, for experimental social policies in support of social investments. This proposal was put forward with the Zanardi Houses project in mind, both for effective monitoring and in order to improve the outlined procedure with additional innovative features, with an eye towards a better connection with local social services.

The project submitted for consideration, known as S.I.A. (Social Inclusion Agreement), aspires to test an innovative model of city welfare, by establishing and strengthening the Zanardi Houses public/private support network, which can offer a varied range of services to the weakest segments of the population through a procedure also involving active social inclusion of the recipients.

The project is mainly designed for socially vulnerable families with economic difficulties, for whom economic support is already planned through the national Italian "social card" program. However, such financial allowance alone does not resolve the problems from which such situations of poverty arise. The purpose of SIA is to study a holistic support model to optimize each person's skills through an individual itinerary comprising training and a process fostering the assumption of responsibility. Thus it aims to encourage people at risk of social exclusion to take an active role as citizens, through enhancing their abilities and providing training and work inclusion programs. This model of cooperation is ratified by an "agreement for active inclusion," designed to directly involve recipients in monitoring and assessment stages, and in Zanardi Houses activities.



Participative process



Food Bank



Awareness-building to promote a solidary and eco-sustainable lifestyle

The project includes the creation of one or more “one-stop shops,” that is, places where a wide range of services to all citizens would be gathered. Moreover, in the case of social-card holders directed to the project by social service authorities, it provides for “customized” support actions involving public and private actors, in order to direct people towards autonomy to prevent loneliness and loss of confidence. The whole procedure requires a

systematized relational approach, including the following aspects: health, housing, employment, micro-credit, food bank, etc.

More specifically, the cooperation with the Zanardi Houses network will aid in more effectively addressing the unemployment problem by supplying all groups with vocational training and apprenticeship programs, as well as solid support in the active search for jobs. ●

Culture as a Mechanism for Social Integration: The Experience of The Oriente Arts and Trades Factory

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The Oriente Arts and Trades Factory (*Fábrica de Artes y Oficios de Oriente*, known as *FARO de Oriente*¹) constitutes a cultural reference model that operates under the aegis of Mexico City's Department of Culture. The Oriente FARO is both a cultural center and a training facility which, through its teaching model, has become a hub of artistic creation, an ideal space for art-focused dialogue, and a forum for diverse and important cultural expression.

In 1997, with the support of the first democratically-elected government of the Federal District of Mexico, led by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas Solórzano, and through what was then the Institute of Culture—now Department of Culture—various initiatives were generated with the aim of meeting the cultural needs of the population at large. Among these was the consolidation of specific cultural projects, including the Oriente Arts and Trades Factory, based on the conviction that quality education and cultural development are the best tools for maintaining a sound social foundation.

From the start, the *Oriente* FARO found the support necessary to develop on all fronts, which allowed it to grow in the short, medium and long term. Artists from various disciplines were consulted, as were cultural promoters and managers and members of the community. Once the project received approval, construction began on this innovative art/cultural center located in the outskirts of Mexico City.

The *Oriente* FARO is a cultural space that is open to the public free of charge and includes three art galleries, a theater facility, the Alejandro Aura library, a play center, a film club and a Clubhouse;² in addition, it houses an arts and trades school. It is the only space of its kind in the eastern section of Mexico City and the surrounding metropolitan area with a mission designed to meet the

needs of the community in which it is located. It aims to build self-esteem and sense of identity among the citizens living there, encouraging greater self-sufficiency through the services it offers.

This facility is located in the eastern Iztapalapa borough of Mexico City, a poor and highly marginalized area. According to the National Institute of Statistics, in the year 2000 when the cultural center opened, this area that is approximately 117 km² in size, had a population of 1.8 million inhabitants, making it the most populated borough in the country and the fifth most densely populated area of Mexico D.F. Fifty-six percent of its inhabitants lived in overcrowded conditions, sixty-eight percent subsisted on incomes below the two minimum wages, and the average education level was no higher than sixth grade. Thus, the high rates of delinquency, malnutrition, domestic violence and early pregnancy were not surprising, and that area came to be known as the "City's poor backyard."

In addition to the neighboring boroughs of the Federal District it also shares borders with other parts of the Mexican state. The *Oriente* FARO is located three streets away from the town of Nezahualcóyotl, an area with an extremely poor quality of life due to its peripheral location both with regard to Mexico City and the central states. Although under different territorial jurisdiction, it falls within the cultural center's area of influence.



Cardboard and figurine workshop



Performance of the Tiayacaopan band inside the Oriente FARO

Given that the population in the Iztapalapa borough is primarily young and socially underprivileged, the FARO began with a focus on the youth population, but the surrounding community insisted that the needs of other segments of the population should be taken into consideration as well. As a result a broader-based and more inclusive project was developed that is addressed to a wide range of people.

The *Oriente FARO* has two main focuses: firstly, as a cultural center that offers art exhibitions; concerts ranging from Cuban *trova*, to rock, folk and classical music; dance and theater performances; storytelling; children's events; films; book presentations; cultural festivals; and large-scale events. Secondly, it serves as a school that links art with specific trades and skills, with workshops in music (bass, electric and acoustic guitar, musical composition), performing arts (modern, folk and African dance, street theater, comic opera), communication (photo journalism, community journalism, fiction writing, poetry and graphic design), visual arts (drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, etching), artisanry skills (papier-mâché and folk art sculpture, costume design, set design, metal furniture design, stained-glass work), among others. The workshops have grown and developed in keeping with student demands.

Initially there were only 30 arts and trades workshops and 6 children's arts workshops. The current offer includes sixty-five workshops for young people 17 years and older; twenty-two art workshops for children from ages 6 to 16; ten human development workshops for infants and children starting at 3 months of age and for the elderly; and four environmental workshops for the general public. Likewise, the *Oriente FARO* promotes a range of different artistic events directed to a community that had previously been excluded from activities of

that nature, thus belying the idea that art and culture is reserved for the elite. Today the FARO's public is one that has developed greater cultural sensitivity through establishing an artistic relationship with its own social environment. In addition, the goal is that through education and acquired experience those individuals can develop their own forms of artistic and cultural expression that will open up new doors to new audiences.

Over the course of these fifteen years, the Department of Culture, through the *Oriente FARO*, has brought cultural and artistic activity into lives of people in the community of the eastern section of Mexico City and not just as spectators of the programmed activities, but also as creative forces themselves through the free workshops which are offered. This has led to viewing this area of the city as a cultural reference point, proving that it is not simply a conflictive zone, as repeatedly labeled by the media, but that there are hundreds and thousands of creative, enterprising people in that community with interests in and aptitudes for music, theater, visual arts, literature, communication and trades.

The FARO has created a change, not only in the increased awareness of people in the community that they can enjoy or directly participate in the cultural process, but also in terms of the physical surroundings, as people demand that more attention be given to the area. Currently, the central City government has rehabilitated public spaces, and through efforts by the municipal district government, parks have been created as well as public play centers, outdoor spaces for activities and community centers. This indicates that the *Oriente FARO* has served to heighten the community's sensitivity to its own needs and encourage the governing bodies to improve cultural and social conditions in the eastern section of our city. Fifteen years later, the central City



Concert in the *Oriente FARO*

government is listening to what people are saying, thanks to the current situation in our country.

In 2005, basing its actions on the principles of fairness and free education, together with a desire to rehabilitate public spaces, Mexico City's Department of Culture created three additional spaces, leading to, in 2007, the creation of the FARO Network. The idea was to take this high-quality cultural and non-formal education project to other peripheral areas of the city, not only as an artistic concept, but also as a model for community development from a cultural perspective, strengthening a sense of personal identity and of belonging to their community.

Today, the Network comprises the *Oriente FARO*, the *Tláhuac FARO*, the *Milpa Alta FARO* and the *Indios Verdes FARO*, together offering over 1,535 artistic and cultural activities to over 350,000 individuals a year. This includes 150 workshops offered quarterly in the areas of art, trade and child development, with 10,000 registered participants, in addition to more than 200 community activities which bring in new participants and demonstrate that an education in art and culture is one of the most powerful tools in the battle to give voice to a society that has been silenced by the majority of neo-liberal governments. It reflects the fact that violence is not the

answer but rather that we must promote a fairer, more equal and just society where all individuals who turn to our facilities feel that they belong to the FARO, all the while building their self-confidence and developing their creative sides; just by being there they are changing their environment, their community and their city. The impact of this project has been so successful that very soon the fifth Factory of Arts and Trades, the *Aragón FARO*, will get underway.

The FAROs have proven to be some of the most successful models for cultural policy in Mexico and in Latin America in general. The project has received international recognition in over 30 countries, including the Coming Up Taller Awards presented at the White House; the Club House Computer Center created by the Boston Science Museum, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Intel; and the Spanish Cultural Center in Mexico that supports cultural exchanges through art residencies established with the FARO Network. Thanks to the commitment and work done by students and groups to promote their projects, they have been received in cities around the world, among them Marseille, Nagoya, Boston, Berlin, Bogota, Barcelona and Quebec, and have taken part in festivals within Mexico, offering the Network ever-broader outreach. ●

1. Further information at: <http://farodeoriente.org/>

2. A space offering access to computers and multimedia technology in combination with art.

The CoTRE, a Participatory Committee at the Service of Non-EU Foreigners

City Council of Toulouse (France)

In 2009, the City of Toulouse witnessed the opening of a new space for people to gather and gain access to information: the Toulouse Council of Foreign Residents (*Conseil Toulousain des Résidents Étrangers*, CoTRE). This council enables those who do not have a voice in the political arena to participate and be represented.

The CoTRE is the result of a municipal effort to join a national movement of French municipalities, to enable the foreign residents of Toulouse who do not have the right to vote in the municipal elections to express their views, and to give them the power to question the local authorities in terms of the fight against discrimination and the promotion of equal rights and diversity.

This council, led by the Mayor and delegated to the Deputy Mayor in charge of equality and diversity, includes about forty members of over 30 different nationalities—proof of the importance of demographic diversity in Toulouse. The council is made up of individual members as well as representatives from associations and qualified

people chosen for their representativeness as regards the diversity of the foreign population of Toulouse. Their participation is based on volunteer work and their term of office is three years.

In 2012, and in agreement with the first council, the decision was made to open the CoTRE up to foreign residents of Toulouse from EU countries as well. The CoTRE members wishing to join this municipal organization presented their candidacy to a panel composed of elected members and human rights associations. A council office was elected and has since been implementing the decisions made by the plenary assembly.

Shows from the Toulousans from Elsewhere Festival © Tranc-dac-Phat



The CoTRE's aim is to shed light on the cultural, social, economic, and political contributions made by the foreign residents of Toulouse who are unable to vote in the local elections. This participatory democratic platform is organized in several different committees (economic and social, culture and education, community associations, co-development and international relations). A series of objectives for improving municipal services provided to non-EU foreigners has been defined since 2010. The implemented efforts include the following:

- Sending the Deputy Mayor in charge of equality and diversity a list of complaints reflecting the social and cultural needs of foreigners in Toulouse, particularly in terms of the fight against discrimination.
- The organization of a local referendum for access to voting rights for non-EU foreigners.
- An important event has been held at the end of each term of office: the International Week of Peoples, which has changed its name and is now known as the Toulousans from Elsewhere Festival (*Festival*

Toulousaines, Toulousains d'ailleurs). The event, which brings together thousands of Toulousans, offers an opportunity to promote the equal rights and cultural heritage of the foreign residents of Toulouse, aiming to highlight their social and economic contribution. Lectures, debates, film screenings, photo exhibitions, theater, and storytelling events have borne witness to the vitality of Toulouse's cultural diversity, with support from the City Council and of guest organizations and experts.

- A CoTRE information journal is published biannually. With a circulation of 3,000 copies, it is produced by the organization's members with the support of a journalist. It takes stock of the situation of foreigners' rights, presents their local agents, supports local initiatives, and promotes related efforts.
- In addition, the City of Toulouse has published a welcome guide for recent arrivals from foreign countries. The guide is available in several languages. The City Council has also supervised training of its municipal staff and

Events from the Toulousans from Elsewhere Festival © Najet Benalla





Events from the Toulousans from Elsewhere Festival © Frederic Maligne

encouraged specific counseling in raising awareness of discrimination.

- The CoTRE is also concerned with the situation of retired immigrants and their living conditions as well as the defense of their social rights. As this matter is beyond the scope of municipal responsibilities, the City Council has expressed its concerns to the different institutions in charge of elderly care.

The CoTRE plays an important role in fighting discrimination and in welcoming and integrating new residents; it acts as an advisory council of the City of Toulouse.

Considerations of the issue are coordinated by the City of Toulouse Equality mission. This crosscutting municipal service implements the municipal plan for preventing and fighting discrimination.

Today, the CoTRE, which was initially an extra-municipal local committee, participates in a network of councils of foreign residents named COFRACIR (French Council for Residence-based Citizenship—*Conseil français de la citoyenneté de résidence*) that was created in Toulouse.

This network has implemented an awareness-raising policy and lobby to advance foreign citizens' voting rights in local elections. In addition, the network is regularly invited to discussions and consulted by French and European representatives.

After signing the European Charter for Human Rights at the local level, the City of Toulouse is carrying out an ambitious policy regarding equal rights and the fight against discrimination, jointly with the European Coalition of Cities against Racism, over which it presides. ●

Lifelong Learning in Gunsan

Moon Dong Shin

Mayor of Gunsan (Republic of Korea)

Since its designation in 2007 as a Lifelong Learning City, Gunsan has developed a lifelong education system and put into place a variety of projects to provide equal education opportunities to all, as a tool for social inclusion.

Gunsan is 115 year-old port city located on the central-western coast of Korea, with a population of 280,000 and a land area of 680.76㎢ that includes its historic downtown, the urban section of the city and its rural outskirts. It is a rapidly growing city with a burgeoning economy and is the Korean city in closest geographical proximity to China.

Gunsan's lifelong learning programs summarized below show the commitment of the City to provide equal education opportunities to all its inhabitants.

Literacy Education

In the rapidly changing 21st century, literacy has come to mean not only the ability to read, write, and do simple arithmetic, but also to understand, interpret, and create various forms of texts, both digital and on paper. The definition of literacy has grown to include lifelong learning that helps individuals to achieve their goals and develop their potential, which in the long run contributes to the development of the local community as well as the world at large. Literacy education has been recognized as a key factor in eradicating poverty and is part of the international agenda for human development.

Gunsan's literacy education project began in 2008 when the City of Gunsan established a consortium in cooperation with lifelong education professionals, the Ministry of Employment and Labor, and the Ministry of Education, thus forming a private-public partnership for social integration. The City brought to the project budget resources, human resources, and venues, and also provided regular training courses for literacy teachers in order to assure quality teaching.

The most important feature of literacy education in Gunsan is that the local government has been at the forefront of this region-wide project. In order to

offer a sustainable learning environment and monitor educational quality and students' progress, the literacy educational program carried out by each local government subdivision¹ in conjunction with various organizations working on this subject, came together to form the "Gunsan Evergreen School" in 2009, which has been in operation since then.

In 2008 there were 528 students in the program, which has grown to 725 participants in 2014. Fifty-four courses are offered at 46 learning sites, with 31 teachers providing two-hour literacy classes three times a week, Monday to Wednesday. The classes are mainly taught at public facilities such as senior centers or community centers, and provide training in reading and writing in the Korean language (Hangul), as well as basic mathematics and English language studies. In addition, various courses

Calculation class





Literacy class



Laughter therapy

(health, culture, hobbies) selected through a survey of learner needs and interests are offered for one hour every Thursday, and are also open to local residents. Thus, it contributes to a broader outreach of the lifelong learning concept.

Gunsan's achievement in literacy education is attracting attention at home and abroad. It is important to share mutual experiences and establish a solid policy so that high-quality literacy education can be offered within the larger context of lifelong learning.

Classes-on-Request

The Classes-on-Request program is a consumer-oriented education service. If more than 10 people ask the City to offer a given class, it is provided at no cost. The classes are given in public venues, primarily senior centers, schools, village halls or cultural spaces in community areas of apartment complexes.

Priority is given to more vulnerable groups and areas within the city that have relatively less access to lifelong learning opportunities, thus opening doors to their participation, and offsetting polarization in education. Most participants are the elderly and housewives. The classes-on-request program began operating in 2009 and, to date, a total of 2,635 people have taken part in it.

As of the first half of 2014, the following courses have been held: singing class, qigong exercise, yoga, physical exercise, knitting, ribbon craft, POP (Point of Presence), Korean painting, line dancing, basic Internet usage, and humanities, among others. The most popular courses have been on health-related subjects, followed by singing classes, together accounting for 62% of the total. The students are primarily elderly learners, who prefer health exercises as a way of managing their bodies in older age, and singing classes to ease mental depression. The institutions that most frequently request these classes are senior centers, thus making it easier for elderly and/or physically challenged individuals to attend.

Community Centers

Community centers offer the advantage of allowing local people easy access to lifelong learning programs at a place close to their residence. Community centers are under the supervision of the Eup and Myeon city-affiliated offices, and the residents themselves operate the lifelong learning programs offered there.

The City of Gunsan has twenty-seven community centers, which run more than 180 programs offered both during the day and in the evenings. These programs range from hobby programs such as yoga, folk games, songs, and dance to cultural programs including foreign language learning, public speaking, sketching, foot care, POP, and Korean paper art. In 2013, more than 3,000 people participated in these classes.

Thanks to the relatively inexpensive tuition cost (10,000–30,000 Korean Won, equivalent to ₩7–21), the program is accessible to lower income individuals as well. Most community centers allow individuals over the age of 65 to participate in classes free of charge. Participants are primarily housewives but evening programs also offer working people the opportunity to take part.

Gusan's Lifelong Learning Center

The City of Gunsan opened its Lifelong Learning Center in October 2012. This facility, 224 m² in size, offers classes on subjects such as magic, harmonica, guitar, drawing, napkin art, French embroidery, hand and ear acupuncture, wildflower plants study, poetry studies, Eastern medicine & health, and photography therapy, among others, with the participation of 268 citizens in the different activities during the first half of 2014.

Classes are offered twice a week in morning, afternoon and evening hours for adult students. The number of students varies between 15 and 30 per class and the tuition fee is 10,000 Won (₩7). Through a city ordinance amendment dated February 15, 2013, the City of Gunsan has been able to offer free classes at the Lifelong Learning Center to the more socially vulnerable citizen



Gunsan Science



Saemangeum Academy

population (the disabled, the elderly, veterans, welfare recipients, immigrant women, etc.) at no cost. In 2013, 21% of the students were able to participate in the lifelong learning activities free of charge, reaching 26% of the students in the first half of 2014. This indicates that the participation rate from the socially vulnerable segment of the population has risen in comparison with last year, with the lifelong learning programs playing an important role in promoting social integration among different generations and social classes.

In order to be able to have a lifelong learning center accessible for the disabled and to supplement the currently operating center with additional specialized classes for citizens, Gunsan is working to create a new and larger 1,500㎡ space, currently in the design stages and expected to be completed by 2015.

Gunsan Science

The Gunsan Science program is a regional studies initiative through which people learn about Gunsan's history, culture, economy, industry, and famous names through lectures offered by local experts as well as through associated field trips. It is designed to allow citizens to broaden their knowledge of the region, encourage a sense of local identity, and stimulate individual capabilities.

This lecture program comprises 20 classes per year, and has graduated 224 students since its start-up in 2012. The lectures are conducted in cooperation with the City of Gunsan and Kunsan National University's Industrial-Academic Cooperation Group. Attendees are primarily tour guides or members of regional science-related clubs, however, government officials, office workers, and housewives also participate in this program.

Saemangeum Academy

The Saemangeum Academy, in operation for 14 years, is one of Gunsan's leading cultural initiatives. Through this program, well-known national experts from different sectors provide free lectures to the citizens of Gunsan.

It began in 2000 as an Autonomous University of Citizens. As of the end of 2013, it had offered a total of 186 lectures, with a total of more than 90,900 program graduates. Lectures are held once a month on various subjects including culture, health, self-development and the humanities and take place at the City Hall Auditorium, which can accommodate 500 people.

The talks mainly take place during the day, making it difficult for people with full-time work schedules to attend. As a result, most participants are retirees and housewives, ages 50-70.

Lifelong Learning Village

The lifelong learning village project aims to create a balanced lifelong learning city by constructing learning communities at the grassroots level that: encourage local residents to become involved in self-directed learning; ease the inter-regional differences in educational opportunities; allow local residents to tap their own resources; and extend a local lifelong learning culture throughout the city, thus building a lifelong learning network.

It began on an experimental basis in 2010, and currently three lifelong learning villages are in operation: Jochon-dong (urban area), Wolmyeong-dong (downtown) and Oksan-myeon (rural outskirts). They are run by local residents in cooperation with the districts' Lifelong Education Units which develop and operate various programs. This provides residents living in the same area with the opportunity to get together and take part in various activities to improve their quality of life and contribute to the public good.

Following are examples of the activities being carried out in the three areas: Jochon-dong has been making positive changes by launching campaigns for neighborly behavior, including greeting each other, offering complements, using good manners, attending to safety norms, and maintaining clean community spaces in apartment complexes. Wolmyeong-dong was formerly a center of

rice cultivation during the years of Japanese occupation, which is why residents from there are now working to transform their community into the "Peace Village," to offset that sad chapter of history. Within this context, they have created a performance piece, "Gusan Arirang," featuring actors selected among local residents, which reflects the pain and sorrow of Gusan's recent cultural history. Finally, Oksan-myeon was provided with a range of programs including ocarina classes, music therapy, art therapy and hula dancing.

Final Remarks

The various lifelong learning initiatives set up in Gusan play a very important role in bringing about positive social, cultural and economic changes. They serve to encourage social integration, allowing participants to become active members of their community through learning.

Literacy education offers those who did not have the opportunity to receive formal education, to now achieve self-fulfillment. The classes-on-request program offers a learning opportunity for senior citizens and housewives who may be part of educationally vulnerable groups, and provides both equal educational opportunities and improved quality of life.

The Gusan Science program opens doors to citizens to heighten their civic awareness and awaken an interest in regional growth and the potential of change through an accurate historical and cultural study of the city of

Gusan and its surrounding area. In addition, the Lifelong Learning Village Project helps to foster a sense of community belonging, thus strengthening regional unity and empowering local residents.

The Lifelong Learning Center is a unique space in the city that promotes learning opportunities providing specialized classes. On their part, the community centers play a social integration function as they foster civic community awareness and serve as regional learning hubs. And lastly, the Saemangeum Academy encourages democratic citizenship through lectures by experts in a broad range of fields.

In addition to the above-mentioned projects, the City of Gusan puts out a public call for projects each year to broaden the outreach of lifelong learning initiatives by funding various consumer-oriented programs and creating a network of organizations and clubs working on the same field.

The City of Gusan will continue developing its lifelong learning policy both in qualitative and quantitative terms. Efforts will be put into the ongoing development of initiatives that meet community needs and are operationally flexible, with the aim of providing equal lifelong learning opportunities to those who are most in need of this support. In addition, the City of Gusan will focus on the dissemination of these programs in order to reach as many citizens as possible and engage them in lifelong learning activities. ●

Study of wild plants



¹ The local government is divided into smaller administrative sub-divisions called *eup*, *myeon* and *dong*, that latter being the smallest administrative sub-division.

Santa Maria da Feira's Creative Orchestra

Emídio Sousa

Mayor of Santa Maria da Feira (Portugal)

In the contemporary art scene, the Creative Orchestra (*Orquestra Criativa*) of Santa Maria da Feira stands out as an innovative, distinctive and identity-forging experience, an orchestra that does not set limits or conditions to people's participation. It achieves high-quality artistic and aesthetic results thanks to its creative method based on the emotions and sensibilities, and on the knowledge and know-how of its participants, thus enabling the organic construction of music, not only in its compositional phase, but also in its performative phase. All can take part: students, parents, musicians, academy students, brass bands and orchestras, cultural, sporting and recreational organisations and senior citizens from social organisations, from different socio-economic backgrounds. They all come together to form a dynamic mosaic, rich in colours, emotions and sounds.

Music by All and for All

The Creative Orchestra is like a public square. A place where people can meet. A very special square: you can sing there, you can always play an instrument, and there people feel like they are on their own doorsteps and, at the same time, they are on a very important stage. In this space, children, teenagers and adults from the ages of 8 to 80 years old move freely. They come from different community parts of Santa Maria da Feira—living proof that everyone one can add to the process of musical creation in their own way.

At its core, the Creative Orchestra is a community-based project, where different musical communities – with between 50 and 100 members – play a leading role. Generally, in all orchestras with people of different ages, it is the adults who teach pieces of music to the children and teenagers, the musicians teach the non-musicians. In this orchestra, exactly the opposite happens: a playful moment, or a child's shy song can be transformed into a piece of music performed by a huge orchestra.

All the pieces of music are created during the improvisation sessions, with children, teenagers, adults and senior citizens without any kind of musical education and/or experience. Afterwards, these are sent in written form to the musicians, who play an important supporting

role in this creative process.

The orchestra is always different. This turns the stage into evidence of the orchestra's plurality, where different forms of art, lives and concepts intersect, where social groups with different realities take part, alongside amateur and professional musicians, making this an artistic-communal project that remits to innovative performative universes, and art-crossing shows.

Highly diverse both musically and visually, the orchestra combines the use of instruments made from everyday recycled materials with conventional musical instruments. Electrical installation pipes, traffic signs, bottles, cans and buckets among others, share the stage with cellos, violins, guitars, clarinets and French horns.

Raison d'être

The Creative Orchestra of Santa Maria da Feira is a place of musical creation and improvisation which allows the development of a socio-educational and artistic process with an important social, cultural and educational impact, with the intention of making music accessible to all.

It started in 2008, in the context of the Imaginarius Street Theatre Festival, with the name Unstable Orchestra (Instável Orchestra), supported by the City of Santa Maria da Feira, through its Departments of Social Action and

Education, and by local social support associations, the school community, brass bands and other music groups. Throughout this journey, the Creative Orchestra has been a consistent process, with a strong social, educational, artistic and cultural dimension, presenting previously unheard works to the Imaginarius Festival each year.

In these six years of activity, around 10,000 people of all ages and from different social and economic backgrounds have passed through the Creative Orchestra, either directly and on a permanent basis, or occasionally.

For this reason, the Creative Orchestra can present itself as a good practice in the area of social inclusion and education through art, made possible by the local government and the involvement of the local community.

In this project there is always a very strong innovative component, needed to create alternate forms of music using new languages, expressions, rhythms, sounds and texts, in a clear deconstruction of conventional paradigms.

The formation of an orchestra is the challenge presented to the participants, through sessions that do not require



formal music knowledge, which are accessible to all who wish to explore alternative processes of musical expression in a group format. This collective brings children and teenagers from schools, senior citizens from nursing homes, people with special needs, and amateur and professional musicians to the stage.

A Look at the Territory

Santa Maria da Feira, with its 21 districts and a resident population of 139,312 inhabitants is a dynamic municipality

with a strong social associative and educational involvement developed by its almost 500 cultural, sporting and recreational associations, 50 private social welfare institutions, and 9 school groups, that have been contributing to the promotion of local social development, so that they can improve the quality of life in these communities.

The municipality is currently undergoing socio-economic changes, mainly the increase in the unemployment rate, which currently affects 9,683 individuals. In this regard,





we have seen an increase in the number of lower-middle class families, an increasing number of elderly people in poverty, single parent families, isolated individuals, young unemployed people, long-term unemployed people and children and young people in vulnerability. This shows that action at a local level is needed to enable communities to solve their problems in innovative ways.

The Creative Orchestra Today

The Creative Orchestra is active throughout Santa Maria da Feira. As a community-based project, it has spread its practices to different districts in the municipality, with diversified audiences and organisations, that take part in the project each year, coming from social and educational areas.

In 2014, 5 districts are directly involved, with 100 people of different ages and from different backgrounds: 14 at-risk teenagers and two adults (13-50 years old); 12 teenagers and adults with special needs (24-50 years old); 25 children from the 1st cycle of elementary education (8-10 years old); and 6 teenagers from the 2nd cycle (11-12 years); 11 senior citizens from institutions (65-80 years old); 5 adults and a teenager from a neighbourhood with social housing (12-80 years old); 8 seniors from the community (70-80 years old) and 16 young percussionists (13 to 22 years old). They are accompanied by 14 professionals (teachers, animators, social workers and psychologists), and by the artistic director of the project who goes to the different rehearsal halls: social centres, schools, neighbourhoods and cultural spaces.



This year, the collective consists of eight different groups with three new groups having been added to the initial musical formation.

Each year, a theme is decided on or a story is chosen, which guide the “improvisation workshops” from which the themes and original repertoires are drawn. They take place every fortnight, in the different locations and individually with each group, depending on the timetables which best suit the participants. Each month a general rehearsal takes place. Local groups are invited to the preparation of a public show: choirs, musicians and other artists are invited to take part in this living mosaic, which is always a great party when it hits the stage.

Expansion and Social Transformation

The Santa Maria da Feira municipality, which has intense cultural activity, invests in the formation of a critical and participative audience. It therefore considers it to be its mission to involve the educational community and the most disadvantaged parts of society in different experiences. The Creative Orchestra is the face of this goal, as a model of social inclusion, due to the fact that it includes the accomplishments of people with limited or even non-existent access to enriching musical experiences.

After six years, some results can be seen, which prove the positive impact of this experience, in terms of community development and the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups. These include:

- an increase in the self-esteem and self-worth of the participants.

- the strengthening of intergenerational relations; the contact and the energy of the meeting between different generations are the driving force behind the orchestra.
- a change in the teenager’s attitudes and behaviours, which translates into comprehension and mutual respect, an improvement in their ability to concentrate; a special care in the choice of language among peers; and a decrease in aggression in interpersonal relations.
- a greater feeling of identity and belonging to a group and a territory, in the sense that it allows people from different places from a large municipality to meet, enabling new friendships to develop and social interactions of great social value.
- a greater exercise of citizenship, mainly among women from neighbourhoods with social housing, through “making with” activities.
- the choice of low-cost or recycled materials to make the musical instruments, which makes the work accessible to a larger group of participants.

Based on these tenets, the Creative Orchestra is creating a new reference point for the community, building a “micro-tradition” with a high intrinsic value, showing that temporary projects can persist, and promoting the idea that an experience with a positive outcome can become into a method with a precise social and educational function. ●



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**Ajuntament
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"If we wish to build inclusive, fair societies, we have to be capable of doing so together, starting with democratic dialogue. And in order to do so, we have to join this democratic dimension with the two other angles of an imaginary triangle: education and citizenship. *Democracy, citizenship and education* are the cornerstones upon which we can build a way of life that, to paraphrase Aristotle, is worth living."

Quim Brugué