



EXPERIENCE

Community Art Laboratory

CO-CREATION ART PROJECT

Sant Boi de Llobregat is a municipality in the metropolitan area of Barcelona, located on the right bank of the Llobregat river delta, very close to the port and the airport. With a population of over 83,000 people, the city is known in Catalonia since the nineteenth century for its two large psychiatric hospitals.

The City of Sant Boi considers Mental Health a strategic axis of municipal policies, from a transversal and multidisciplinary perspective. The Community Art Laboratory (CAL) was born in this context with a twofold objective: working to break the stigmas suffered by many vulnerable groups and, secondly, facilitating access to culture and creative processes for many people who are not normally users.

To this end, art workshops are proposed through the implementation of non-directive methodologies, which enable the emergence and sustainability of co-creative educational experiences. The idea of the project is to combine mixed work teams, so that people get to know each other, understanding diversity as a potentiality and different abilities as opportunities. Added to this is the will to give a voice to these socially vulnerable groups and to make them visible outside of their usual contexts, from an approach of art and creativity.

The Community Art Laboratory aims at fighting against the stigmas and clichés suffered by vulnerable groups, by offering them access to contemporary art and by fostering their creativity as a tool for empowerment and learning at an individual/group level.

The richness and quality of the project is the result of taking into account all perspectives, points of view and capacities. The role of the artist is more that of a facilitator than an expert,



using the approach of a horizontal hierarchy.

The CAL is an ongoing project carried out all year round. It begins with various working sessions with the artists and contact persons from the different social groups participating: patients in the city's psychiatric hospitals, school and high school students, elderly people in geriatric centres, families at risk of social exclusion who attend day centres, people with intellectual disabilities who participate in the city's social clubs, etc. The groups are distributed according to their different capacities and interests, and a general conceptual framework that gives coherence to the different proposals is also defined. Then the creative process is carried out, where each artist works with the various groups to decide what they are going to work on, how they are going to carry out the project, and make an artistic project proposal. Whenever possible, joint sessions are proposed in which the different groups that collaborate with the same artist can share some working sessions. Finally, the assembly of the artistic proposal is carried out, with the participation of all the groups who have worked on the different projects and the exhibition is inaugurated.

After working on over eight editions with these communities on an ongoing basis, it has been observed that many participants are now users of the art centre. It should also be noted that some of these people now form part of the team as regular collaborators. The experience could be said to be in a moment of expansion. Moreover, a new modality has recently been incorporated to include participation in the project on an individual basis: by means of a prescription from some public health care centres in Sant Boi. The Department of Health of the Government of Catalonia has drawn up a map of health assets that includes the CAL, since it is considered that it can contribute to improving people's health.



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EDITORIAL

IAEC International Congresses are a unique opportunity for cities to meet and further explore some of the principles included in the Charter of Educating Cities. They are eagerly awaited by member cities' political and technical staff because they give them a first-hand insight into the host city's best practices. What is more, they are a chance to draw inspiration and reflect, thanks to the keynote speeches and debates in which prestigious international experts take part. Added to this is the desire to share information and report on how cities are tackling specific challenges, which takes place by means of workshops designed for the exchange of experiences between participating cities. Unfortunately, in 2020 we were not able to meet as planned, but we hope to be able to meet soon.

Therefore, we are pleased to announce that the preparations for the next Congress are gaining progress. As you know, the **16th International Congress of Educating Cities** will be held in **Andong** (Republic of Korea) from 25 to 28 October 2022, with the theme: **"Shaping the future of education in the city: innovation, tradition and inclusion"**. The goal will be to reflect on how to build sustainable Educating Cities where the past, present and future coexist. The three core axes of the debates and exchanges are:

1. Traditions and identity: learning from the past.

Based on a critical understanding of the past, this theme will explore how cultural heritage and traditions can act as a bridge to build the present and future of our cities, which is a process of continuous creation that needs to include all citizens.

2. Inclusion: building a city for all through education and values.

This theme will reflect on and share experiences of lifelong education for people and groups at risk of exclusion with the aim of leaving no one behind. Cities will also share programmes to foster harmonious living, cooperation and empathy to bolster community ties, solidarity and care for the common good.

3. Technology and social innovation: promoting a human-centred and sustainable city.

The debates of this cornerstone will focus on the role of education in fostering technology and social innovation to help build more inclusive, fair, green, healthy and habitable cities of the future for everyone.

The **Congress website** is now available and the call for the presentation of experiences will be opened soon. Study visits, inspiring conferences, city-to-city dialogues and much more await you.

Don't miss out on this opportunity!

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DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- More than 60 cities from 8 countries on 3 continents have submitted bids to the fourth edition of the **Educating Cities Award**, which is focused on underlining the importance of care to create better cities for all people and other living beings. The award ceremony will take place at the upcoming International Congress in Andong.
- 170 cities from 12 countries on 3 continents scheduled events under the slogan **"The Educating City leaves no one behind"** on 30 November 2021 to commemorate the sixth edition of the **International Day of the Educating City**. Watch [here](#) the video of the joint event organised by the Secretariat, which featured a conference by Prof. Yayo Herrero and the presentation of best practices from Rennes, Rosario and Gothenburg.
- The latest **Focus experiences of the special 30th Anniversary** edition, which feature particularly relevant issues of the latest update to the Charter of Educating Cities, are available [here](#).
- The IAEC contributed to the **VI GOLD Report**, a benchmark document to highlight the work of local and regional governments in the localisation of the 2030 Agenda. The IAEC's contribution focused on the importance of educational action based on the ethics of care to neutralise the ever-growing socio-spatial inequalities in cities. You can read the document [here](#).
- Available the **Debate Journal No 6 of the Latin America Delegation**, reflecting on the challenges of inclusion in educating cities, in **Spanish** and **Portuguese**.
- The new IAEC **promotional brochure** is at your disposal.
- On 3 February, the **Mexican Network** held a coordination meeting attended by the city of León, the Latin American Delegation and the IAEC Secretariat. The aim of the meeting was to lay the foundations for the work planned for the next few months.
- With the slogan **"Consolidating the Educating City"**, the 15th Meeting of the **Spanish Network** of Educating Cities was held on 17 and 18 March, in a hybrid format, with the participation of more than 110 registered cities.



INTERVIEW

Mr. Gorka Urtaran Agirre

MAYOR OF VITORIA-GASTEIZ



You are proud to have been born and bred in Vitoria.

What are the characteristic features of this city?

It is a very special city. A city which, thanks to its size, is also one big community that you feel part of... with countless possibilities to enjoy nature both inside and outside the urban limits.

A comfortable, accessible, medium-sized city where it is easy to get around on foot, by bike or by public transport. It is a benchmark city in environmental matters with a wide and affordable range of quality public services.

What are the main challenges facing your city?

Possibly the biggest challenge that we are facing as a city and as a planet is the climate crisis and everything that this implies in terms of changing our way of life. But there are also other challenges such as social cohesion and an ageing population.

We are experiencing changes in the production model and major adaptations in industry. As a result, the city council is working closely with local companies to streamline their adaptation strategies. What is more, we are creating an innovation ecosystem.

Another challenge is the energy model, which affects transport, households and the manufacturing industry. In this sense, we need to make a key change in order to improve energy efficiency, use renewable sources and create carbon sinks to achieve carbon neutrality, which is key to offsetting the effects of climate change. That said, the number one project is taking part in the European Commission's objective of 100 climate-neutral cities by 2030.

The transformation of urban mobility, like in other cities, is undergoing major changes. For this, in Vitoria-Gasteiz we are improving our bike lane infrastructure, which already stretches more than 170 kilometres. What is more, we are continuing to enhance and expand pedestrian areas and focus on high-capacity electric public transport.

Another major challenge is social cohesion. We are working on values such as harmonious living, equality, diversity and human rights.

In 2012, Vitoria-Gasteiz was named European Green Capital and in 2019 Global Green City. What aspects and initiatives helped the city win these awards?

In both cases, we should talk about a joint effort. Institutions and citizens are key to achieving a city like ours. Maybe the green belt is the most significant project, but I think that it is all our initiatives, the green infrastructures, our water management system, our extensive network of bike paths, our urban mobility policies, our projects to improve public spaces.

Vitoria-Gasteiz has seen major changes in urban mobility. How was this change in behaviour achieved?

They are gradual changes. We have been using a four-yearly survey to measure mobility in the city for more than a decade now. As I mentioned, citizen engagement helps, because they

are the people who ultimately decide to leave their cars at home.

For our part, the city council has to provide the resources and, sometimes, make bold decisions that lead to major changes.

We live in multicultural cities. What can local governments do to build more welcoming and inclusive cities?

We have a key role to play. I sincerely believe that multiculturalism is a huge plus for cities. For their culture and for their economy, as well as to enrich the city's social capital, which is ultimately the main value for the construction of our identity and our future.

The institutions have at least two distinct but complementary responsibilities. On the one hand, from a political level we have the responsibility to educate and defend all the positive aspects of multiculturalism.

What is more, this discourse should go hand in hand with the political agenda. What is or is not **that** agenda, and its priority level, is in our hands. In our case, we have incorporated it into the Agenda Vitoriana (our mandate plan), which include harmonious living policies as a cornerstone.

The city is currently leading the Spanish Network of Educating Cities, hosting its fifteenth meeting. What does organising this event mean for the city?

Our coordination of the Spanish Network of Educating Cities for the 2020-2022 period reflects the commitment and the conviction that we can only build an Educating City based on cooperation between the different stakeholders involved, and on an attitude of learning and collaboration with other cities that share the same goals.

That is why the fifteenth meeting is a forum for the city's socio-educational stakeholders to meet with their counterparts from other member cities. And it is also an opportunity for Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council to show citizens its commitment to municipal education policies and the consolidation of our municipality as an Educating City.

>> More information at www.edcities.org.



EXPERIENCE

Life Paths in the School Environment

CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES AT THE HEART OF MUNICIPAL EDUCATION POLICIES

Besançon is a municipality with 116,775 inhabitants located in eastern France, in the department of Doubs. The city has a total of 8,229 children enrolled in municipal schools: 4,943 across the city's 27 primary schools and 3,169 in the 37 nursery schools.

In 2019, the city of Besançon decided to undertake an evaluation of its education services aimed at families and children, both within and outside of schools, in order to gain an overall picture of their experiences as beneficiaries of these services. To this end, the City launched the “Life Paths in the School Environment” initiative. It forms part of a broader approach developed by the City of Besançon, which aims to test a new way of designing and implementing municipal public policies, by including the voices of their beneficiaries and the institutional and social actors involved.

Firstly, families and professional teams were asked to identify the different education-related processes experienced by families and children both within and outside of school. This led to the creation of two pathways: the “academic year” pathway, aimed at families, and that of the “school day”, aimed at children. They were invited to share their experiences and opinions linked to these two pathways. Then, a multidisciplinary team of professionals developed a “pedagogical toolkit” consisting of a tool to gather the opinions of children aged 6 to 11 years old, and a specific method to facilitate this process. Finally, actions focused on mobilising and training a team of facilitators; organising more workshops to test the pedagogical toolkit further, and fine-

The aim of the project is to identify the difficulties encountered by families and children in their school pathway in order to co-construct solutions that can improve the municipal educational services.



tune the prototype. At the same time, a questionnaire about the “academic year” pathway was tested and adapted with a group of volunteer parents prior to distribute it to all families. This questionnaire asks about the processes to access to school and the educational and leisure opportunities available within the city, in order to detect possible areas for improvement.

Despite the containment measures imposed from mid-March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, over 90 children were interviewed during the engagement sessions and, taking into account their opinions, special attention will be paid to the issue of road safety close to schools. Regarding the families, in 2021, the questionnaire was distributed by e-mail to around 9,000 families and, in a bid to encourage their participation, the municipal teams carried out awareness-raising activities through various public events held in the municipality. As a result, 850 responses were received.

One of the strengths of the approach employed is that it places families and children at the heart of the process to improve municipal education policies. Since they are the only ones who have a global experience of the schooling process, and are those who have to interact with different administrations and actors, they can detect areas for improvement and propose changes. It should also be noted that children are invited to express their opinions on the services they receive on an equal footing with their families. This contributes to educating them within the framework of active citizenship from a very early age.

The long-term objective is to consolidate the “Life Paths in the School Environment” as an ongoing process, as a kind of barometer of educational well-being in the city, regularly updated with the feedback from children and their families.

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