

# Unlocking the Potential of Urban Communities

## Case Studies of Twelve Learning Cities

Edited by Raúl Valdes-Cotera,  
Norman Longworth, Katharina Lunardon,  
Mo Wang, Sunok Jo and Sinéad Crowe



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



For all cities that promote lifelong learning in order to achieve individual empowerment, social inclusion, economic development, cultural prosperity and sustainable development, the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) is the world's top international policy-oriented network. As a source of inspiration, know-how and best practice in developing learning cities, the UNESCO GNLC is underpinned by the expertise of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and its partners.

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Published in 2015 by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), Hamburg, and the National Institute for Lifelong Education of the Republic of Korea (NILE), Seoul



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Design by Christiane Marwecki  
(cmgrafix communication media)

Front cover images by Melton City Council, Zaqueu Proença, Gao Weidong (BASE), Bahir Dar University, Suomen Ilmakuva, Cork City Council, Raed Asfour, SEDU, City of Ybycuí, Balanga City Management & Information Services Offices (MISO), Namyangju Institute of Lifelong Education and Swansea University

ISBN 978-92-820-1195-9  
TR2015-3

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## Foreword

A growing number of urban communities around the world are recognizing that lifelong learning can be a driver of social, cultural, economic and environmental development. They are therefore developing inclusive and sustainable learning cities to enrich human potential, foster life-wide and lifelong personal growth, promote equality and social justice, maintain social cohesion, and create sustainable prosperity and economic growth.

The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), which was initiated in 2012, is an international platform that enables cities to share expertise in advocating and enhancing lifelong learning for all. The coordination team at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning has compiled this collection of case studies. By illustrating best practice and lessons learned when building learning cities, *Unlocking the Potential of Urban Communities: Case Studies of Twelve Learning Cities* aims to enrich the exchange of experience and good practice.

I would like to express my appreciation to Ms Youngwha Kee, President of the National Institute for Lifelong Education of the Republic of Korea (NILE), for supporting this publication in collaboration with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

I hope that this collection of case studies, which is the first of its kind, will be a source of inspiration to mayors, city councils, education experts, researchers, stakeholders and citizens alike.

Arne Carlsen  
Director  
UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

## Acknowledgements

Many people from a variety of institutions have been involved in producing this collection. We are extremely grateful to all of them for their support.

We wish to thank in particular the National Institute for Lifelong Education of the Republic of Korea (NILE) for its financial and logistical contribution to this publication. We also greatly appreciate the valuable input provided by the participants of the 1st and 2nd International Expert Meetings on Preparing the 2nd International Conference on Learning Cities.

Special thanks also go to Seung Yeon Ha from NILE; Constanza Farina and Nuria Roca Ruiz from the UNESCO Office in Amman; Patricia Escauriza Butterworth and Dania Pilz from the Organization of Ibero-American States; and Tesfaye Shiferaw from Bahir Dar University for their help in coordinating the compilation of the case studies.

We are grateful to the following city contacts for their contributions: Denis Barrett, Peter Blunden, Yuan Dayong, José Simões de Almeida Junior, Rodolfo H. de Mesa, Kristiina Erkkilä, Enrique Figueras, Joet Garcia, Juan Carlos Freyre Pinto, Liza Gimenez, Abiy Menkir Gizaw, Serene Huleileh, Judith James, Jong-sun Kim, Kati Moisió-Imbert, Tina Neylon, Jéssica Pedrosa, Jean Preece, Chris Sivers, Monica Graciela Solorzano Soto and Leone Wheeler.



# Introduction

Enabling people to continue learning throughout their lives has become a priority for communities the world over. This is largely due to a growing awareness that lifelong learning – a holistic, inclusive and sector-wide approach to learning – is crucial not just for individuals' well-being, but indeed for the future of society. With their high population densities and complex infrastructures, cities offer particularly favourable conditions for making lifelong learning opportunities available to all of their citizens. Enhancing and expanding such opportunities is at the heart of the learning city approach. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) defines a learning city as:

a city which effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education; revitalize learning in families and communities; facilitate learning for and in the workplace; extend the use of modern learning technologies, enhance quality and excellence in learning; and nurture a culture of learning throughout life. (UIL, 2013b)

The benefits of building a learning city include more empowered citizens, improved social cohesion, increased economic and cultural prosperity, and more sustainable development (UIL, 2013b). Thus more and more urban communities are adopting the learning city approach as a means of unlocking their potential.

UNESCO established the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) to encourage the development of learning cities. By providing technical support, capacity development and a platform where members can share ideas on policies and best practice, this international exchange network helps urban communities create thriving

learning cities. The GNLC coordination team compiled this collection of case studies, which aims to share insights into successful lifelong learning practices and policies in a wide range of cities. It is hoped that *Unlocking the Potential of Urban Communities: Case Studies of Twelve Learning Cities* will enhance capacity development, communication and cooperation between urban communities around the world, giving city authorities, citizens and all stakeholders across sectors a better understanding of the learning city approach.

This publication brings together the diverse experiences of twelve cities as they work towards the target of providing lifelong learning for all: Melton (Australia), Sorocaba (Brazil), Beijing (China), Bahir Dar (Ethiopia), Espoo (Finland), Cork (Ireland), Amman (Jordan), Mexico City (Mexico), Ybycuí (Paraguay), Balanga (Philippines), Namyangju (Republic of Korea) and Swansea (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). Thus all of the five UNESCO regions (Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean) are represented. The learning cities demonstrate great diversity in terms of size, population and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. As they are also at very different stages of development, the case studies give insights into varying points of the journey towards becoming a learning city. Notwithstanding these differences, all the cities have made significant progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration on *Building Learning Cities* (UIL, 2013a) and the *Key Features of Learning Cities* (UIL, 2013b), two guiding documents outlining UNESCO's recommendations for developing and maintaining learning cities.

## Envisioning a learning city

These case studies demonstrate that there is a wide range of possible motives for adopting the learning city approach. However, certain objectives predominate. These include facilitating personal fulfilment and promoting individual well-being; equipping citizens with the skills and knowledge they need to adapt to a rapidly changing world; stimulating entrepreneurialism and economic growth; tackling social exclusion; building a stronger sense of community; and preserving unique urban cultures in the face of globalization and the encroaching homogenization of city life. Arguably, however, cities' strongest motivation for becoming learning cities is that it enables them to develop local responses to local issues.

## Implementing the learning city concept

Certain fundamental conditions must be in place for learning city visions to be realized. These include strong political will and commitment, governance and the participation of all stakeholders, and the effective mobilization and utilization of resources. With regard to political will and commitment, the learning cities described in this volume operate within very different national legislative contexts. Whereas some cities are supported by national policies devoted to creating learning societies, other countries currently have no national legislation on lifelong learning. Nevertheless, all cities have demonstrated great creativity, both in creating learning city initiatives that engage diverse stakeholders, and in mobilizing and

utilizing resources. As learning budgets tend to be tight, learning cities around the world are tapping into alternative sources of funding from the private sector, tuition fees, in-kind support, grants, public-private partnerships and international projects. They are also making effective use of human resources, relying heavily on the talent, ideas, knowledge, skills and energy contributed by members of their communities.

## Reflecting on progress made in building learning cities

Establishing a learning city is a gradual and continuous process. It requires determination, patience, imagination and assistance from others. The efforts made by the cities in this collection were rewarded by widespread citizen engagement in learning city initiatives and by growing local government support for the promotion of learning opportunities for all. Many of the case studies note that exchanging ideas, experiences, expertise and best practice with other learning cities is also very beneficial. Furthermore, many of the case studies attest to the fact that learning cities can have a positive impact far beyond the city limits, inspiring other cities to adopt the learning city approach and prompting national governments to give greater consideration to lifelong learning in their policies. As time goes by, we can expect even more remarkable results from learning cities' investments in a better future. New tools, techniques, partnerships, research and learning technologies are emerging all the time, as are exciting ways of engaging citizens and promoting active citizenship.



### **Structure of the case studies and purpose of the guidelines for building learning cities**

All of the case studies gathered in this collection follow the same structure. They begin with some general introductory information about the city. This is followed by an overview of motives and objectives along with an explanation of the city's interpretation of the term 'learning city'. After summarizing the legislative framework, governance mechanisms and partnerships, the case studies discuss implementation of learning city programmes, monitoring and evaluation, and the mobilization and utilization of resources. In addition, each case study highlights one example of innovation or good practice. The case studies conclude with insights into impacts, challenges faced and lessons learned.

The twelve case studies provided a partial basis for the development of the *Guidelines for Building Learning Cities*, which can be found at the end of this publication. Devised in collaboration with international experts from all five UNESCO regions, the guidelines aim to help cities wishing to promote and implement lifelong learning for all to put their visions into action. The six key actions described in the guidelines will further encourage and facilitate the process of building learning cities.

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# Melton

Australia

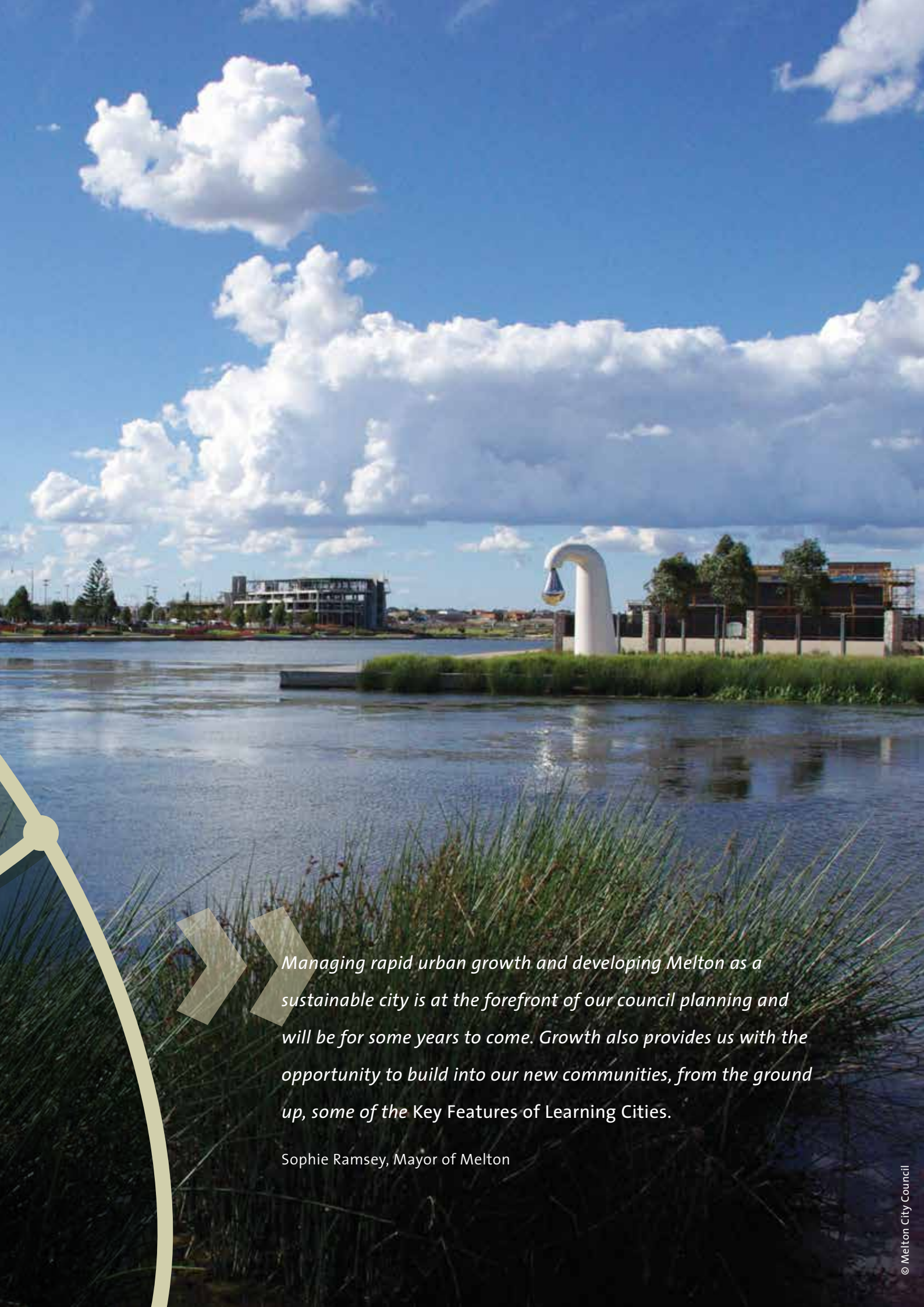
## Profile

Total population of the city*	130,451
Urban population density* <i>inhabitants per square kilometre</i>	233
Total area of the city* <i>in square kilometres</i>	527
GRP (gross regional product) per capita* <i>in US dollars</i>	17,337.82
GDP per capita of the country* <i>in US dollars</i>	67,458.07
Age structure* <i>in per cent</i>	
0–14	24.8
15–24	13.4
25–59	51.3
60+	10.5
Average number of years of schooling completed by people aged 15 and above*	
Men	11
Women	12
Average life expectancy at birth in the city* <i>in years</i>	
Men	78.3
Women	82.3

\* most recent available data







*Managing rapid urban growth and developing Melton as a sustainable city is at the forefront of our council planning and will be for some years to come. Growth also provides us with the opportunity to build into our new communities, from the ground up, some of the Key Features of Learning Cities.*

Sophie Ramsey, Mayor of Melton

Lifelong learning is an effective means of nurturing sustainable personal, social, cultural, economic and environmental development in the community – now and into the future. Sustainability is a priority for Melton City Council in its planning, particularly as the City of Melton is growing fast. This growth presents citizens with many exciting opportunities along with some major challenges. In order to best meet these challenges and take advantage of the opportunities, it is essential that learning takes place right across the community. As the following case study demonstrates, there is a strong political commitment to building a learning city in the City of Melton, and the city as a whole is benefitting from the learning city initiatives that have been implemented to date. As such, the city already demonstrates some of the *Key Features of Learning Cities*.

*Melton believes that being involved with the Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) will expose the city to current research and provide opportunities to share learning and best practice.*

## Introduction

### General overview

The City of Melton is a western suburb of the City of Melbourne in the state of Victoria, Australia. The City of Melton consists of several townships and communities and is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia: the city's population more than doubled between 2001 and 2014, and it is expected to reach more than 241,000 by 2031 (forecast. ID, 2015). The city is targeted by the Victorian State Government as an urban growth area under the Plan Melbourne strategy.

### Main issues to be tackled

Unfortunately, Melton's high population growth has not been matched by a corresponding growth in employment. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data revealed that in 2011, Melton had only one job for every 2.9 white-collar workers and one job for every 3.7 blue-collar workers (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). This was the worst ratio of local jobs to residents of all of Melbourne's growth areas. The city has an overall unemployment rate of 7.2 per cent, but this rate reaches more than 10 per cent in certain suburbs. Youth unemployment is 13.6 per cent across the city as a whole, but more than 20 per cent in some suburbs (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

Approximately 82 per cent of residents travel out of the City of Melton for employment, 65.8 per cent to known destinations and another 15.8 per cent to unknown destinations (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). This has significant social, economic and environmental repercussions. For example, residents who spend more time travelling to work have less time for their families and spend more money outside the municipality. The high





number of commuters, meanwhile, leads to traffic congestion and increased motor vehicle emissions. Thus creating local jobs is a priority for the City of Melton.

Another worrying development that needs to be addressed is children's increasing disengagement from school. A recent study revealed that 14.7 per cent of 10-year-olds and 22.7 per cent of 16-year-olds are not in school (Morton, 2014).

### **Motives for becoming a learning city**

The city's Community Learning Board (CLB) has long believed that access to quality lifelong learning opportunities improves people's lives and the community's social and economic well-being. Furthermore, the City of Melton and its CLB recognize the value of aligning their goals and strategies to developments in other Australian and international learning cities. Melton believes that being involved with the Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) will expose the city to current research and provide opportunities to share learning and best practice. This will make it possible to make further improvements to Melton as a learning city.

*Melton Library and Learning Hub provides library services and offers lifelong learning opportunities*

# Learning city policies and strategies

## Definition of a learning city

The CLB’s 2015–2018 Community Learning Plan defines a learning city as one that generates ‘lifelong learning opportunities to grow our community’s social, cultural, economic, environmental and personal well-being’ (Melton City Council, 2015).

In her foreword to *Melton a Learning City: Community Learning Plan 2015–2018*, the mayor of Melton, Cr Sophie Ramsey, stresses the importance of taking a place-based approach to community development, building infrastructure around community hubs with shared facilities and open spaces, providing learning and community spaces and entering into public-private partnerships.

## Vision and objectives

Melton City Council’s Council Plan 2013–2017 states its objective of fostering ‘a proud community growing together’ (Melton City Council, 2013, p. 18). There is a clear intention to create conditions ensuring that everybody in the community can feel empowered, confident and connected.

Every three years, a Community Learning Plan is developed by the CLB to implement the City of Melton’s learning city strategy. The City of Melton’s 2015–2018 Community Learning Plan is its sixth since 1998. Its priorities are shown in the table on the left.

## Legislative framework

There are no specific regulations about lifelong learning for city or local government bodies. However, city governments are responsible for community strengthening, and policies about lifelong learning are generally linked to this area of council planning. Responsibility for regulation and governance is shared between the Australian Government and the state and territory governments. There is a range of legislation covering early childhood education, the school years, and post-compulsory and adult education. This section focuses on important legislation with regard to post-compulsory and adult education.

Vocational education and training (VET) is regulated by several Australian state and territory laws. These include the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011, which established the Australian Skills Quality Authority. The Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2012, meanwhile, ensure nationally consistent high-quality training and assessment services.

### Community Learning Plan priorities 2015–2018

#### Economic development

Education and training provide citizens with the knowledge and skills necessary to gain employment and to develop, strengthen and attract businesses locally.

#### Social inclusion

All members of the community have equal access to learning and opportunities to enjoy its benefits.

#### Children

Families provide a supportive learning and developmental environment for children up to the age of 5 years.

#### Youth

All young people have support and opportunities to plan and pursue career pathways from school to vocational education, training, higher education and employment.

#### Adults

Adults in the community actively access learning for self-development, employment, leisure and social activities.

#### Advocacy

Learning plan and learning city infrastructure priorities are resourced.

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA) established TEQSA to, among other things, provide national consistency in the provision of higher education.

The federal government has a ten-year strategy – the National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults – to address issues of functional literacy and numeracy among Australians of working age.

The 2008 *Ministerial Declaration on Adult and Community Education (ACE)* highlights the importance of ACE as a pathway for ‘second-chance’ learners.

In 2011, the State Government of Victoria published the Victorian Tertiary Education Plan, which investigates key issues such as increasing participation, improving equity and ensuring a diverse, high-quality system that meets industry needs. The plan emphasizes the importance of community education in providing a pathway to tertiary education (Dow et al., 2009). However, the emphasis is on employment outcomes rather than lifelong and lifewide learning as such.

Australian cities are part of local government systems and are regulated by local states and territories. The main roles of local governments include planning, community development, service delivery, asset management and regulation. Governing bodies (generally known as ‘councils’) determine service provision according to local needs and the requirements of state or territory local government legislation.

In the state of Victoria, the Local Government Act 1989 provides the purpose, objectives and functions of councils. Councils are required to have council plans. These plans link to other key documents such as strategic statements, operational planning, community plans and municipal public health plans.



*Building Melton  
Together participants  
learn about safety as  
they assess a building's  
fire hoses*

In 1997, the City of Melton decided to develop a lifelong learning plan for the municipality. The first Community Learning Plan was published in 1998. In 2014, the city decided to lead the development of Melton as a learning city.

## Governance and partnership

Responsibility for lifelong learning is shared across all three levels of government: federal, state and local government. At a national level, the Australian Department of Education runs the national education system and National Disability Coordination Services. Vocational Education and Training (VET), which is designed to deliver specific workplace skills and knowledge-based competencies, is an integral part of the Australian education system. The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) underpins the national system of qualifications in Australia. It covers higher education, vocational education, and training and schools. Adult Learning Australia (ALA) is a national body that promotes lifelong and lifewide learning in Australia. The federal government funds ALA as well as adult education programmes such as Adult Learners' Week.





*Building Melton Together enables Joanne, a building industry liaison consultant, to gain experience in the building and construction industry*

*The City of Melton established the CLB to provide a governance mechanism that gives communities and organizations a direct influence on designing and overseeing lifelong learning strategies addressing social and economic issues.*

The Victorian Department of Education and Training (DEAT) is the state government department responsible for providing educational services for all Victorians from birth to adulthood.

The City of Melton established the CLB to provide a governance mechanism that gives communities and organizations a direct influence on designing and overseeing lifelong learning strategies addressing social and economic issues. Members of the CLB are appointed for four years or for the duration of a Community Learning Plan. Current members of the CLB include leaders from the following sectors: business and industry; non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and not-for-profit organizations (NPOs); employment services; state and independent primary and secondary schools; universities and vocational education providers; adult education; mature age learning; early learning; the health sector; disability education providers; community representatives; and the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. A Melton city councillor, council's chief executive officer and key council managers and personnel relevant to the implementation of Community Learning Plan goals are also members. The CLB is currently chaired by the mayor.

Brimbank Melton Local Learning and Employment Network provides school and career pathways for disadvantaged 10- to 19-year-olds. It is an active member of the CLB, the Economic Development and Lifelong Learning (EDLL) working party and the Social Inclusion and Lifelong Learning (SILL) working party.

Wesley Mission provides services such as disability support and employment services to disadvantaged groups in the community. Wesley is a member of the CLB and SILL and is active in the Work's 4 Me Partnership, which promotes a collaborative approach to post-school transition for young people with disabilities.

# Implementation

The Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network's Community Transition Support initiative provides careers advice for people with intellectual disabilities and delivers the Ticket to Work programme, which aims to ease the post-school transition of young people with disabilities. The Community Transition Support team is a member of SILL.

Djerriwarrh Community and Education Service is a registered training organization that provides training, adult learning and community services. It is a founding member of the CLB and a member of SILL and EDLL. Djerriwarrh Community and Education Service supports a broad range of CLB activities.

YouthNow provides pathways, career services and work experience for schools and young people. It is also an adult learning provider. YouthNow is a member of the CLB, SILL and EDLL and is active in the Work's 4 Me partnership. It was also a project manager in Building Melton Together, a project that connects employees, jobseekers, subcontractors and other stakeholders in the City of Melton to employment opportunities in the building and construction industries. Building Melton Together is described in more detail as an example of innovation and good practice.

The University of the Third Age (U3A) provides active ageing and learning programmes. U3A is a member of the CLB.

Federation University delivers higher education programmes out of the city's library and learning hubs. It is a member of the CLB and EDLL and is a Western BACE consortium member.



*Participants in a youth engagement project enjoy a community activity*

## Provision of lifelong learning

Lifelong learning activities coordinated by the CLB are delivered to meet community needs identified in Community Learning Plans. Building Melton Together, for example, was implemented to address local employment issues by linking training to employment in the city's growth industries. The Work's 4 Me Partnership was designed to improve the participation, engagement and transition of people with disabilities into training and employment.

The CLB supported all of the city government's primary and secondary schools in implementing the Developmental Management Approach to Classroom Behaviour (Lewis, 2008). This was done to address high levels of expulsions and disengagement of young people from schooling. The schools report positive outcomes, including improved student-teacher relationships and fewer expulsions.

The CLB also supported the schools in establishing Community and Learning Melton (CaLM), a programme that aims to

## Example of innovation or good practice

*The CLB publishes a Learning Directory four times a year to advertise lifelong learning activities in the municipality. Learning providers, individuals and groups can advertise their formal, semi-formal, informal, leisure and social learning courses free of charge.*

create an alternative educational setting for young people who are disengaged from traditional schooling. CaLM has an annual enrolment of approximately fifty young people.

Several other initiatives are being supported by CLB, including youth engagement projects and homework clubs for indigenous people and refugees. These programmes are designed to keep young people in school, as a disproportionate number of indigenous and refugee young people disengage from schooling early.

The CLB publishes a *Learning Directory* four times a year to advertise lifelong learning activities in the municipality. Learning providers, individuals and groups can advertise their formal, semi-formal, informal, leisure and social learning courses free of charge. The *Learning Directory* is available on the council's website and is distributed in council facilities and by certain community organizations. It is also inserted into a local newspaper, which enables it to reach 34,500 households. Each edition of the *Learning Directory* carries an average of 154 advertisers and 485 courses.

### Building Melton Together

#### Background

Building Melton Together (BMT) was developed by the Economic Development and Lifelong Learning Party of the CLB. The initiative was launched to address unemployment, particularly youth unemployment. Local research and consultation with business and industry along with education, training and employment service providers revealed a great mismatch between the training opportunities offered in the city and the skills that are actually needed in the industries where jobs are available. Given the City of Melton's rapid housing growth and the fact that it is a targeted growth area by the Victorian State Government, construction was a logical industry in which to start linking training to the available jobs.

#### Objectives

The chief objectives of BMT are:

- to increase local employment in the City of Melton;
- to align vocational training and skills development to industries where job opportunities exist in the city;
- to assist the building and construction industry in identifying its skill and recruitment needs;
- to assist builders and subcontractors in recruiting local skilled employees; and
- to help local building and construction industry subcontractors get contracts from volume builders.





© Melton City Council

*Community Learning Board members and community partners provide feedback on the city's new Community Learning Plan*

## Main target groups

BMT takes a holistic, cross-sectoral approach in brokering relationships between jobseekers (especially young jobseekers), employment service providers, volume and domestic builders, building subcontractors, education and training providers, and relevant NGOs and NPOs.

## Main activities

A working group was formed with key organizations that had the relevant expertise and an interest in leading the implementation of the BMT initiative. Melton City Council, Burbank Australia (a volume builder), YouthNow (a youth services provider), Brimbank Melton Local Learning and Employment Network, Tracy the Placement People, consultants from the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), Lend Lease and Victoria University were the key partners in the implementation group. This group designed BMT and gained funding from the DEEWR to implement the first two phases. YouthNow, a not-for-profit organization, was selected as project manager due to its expertise in careers advice and skills assessment.

The implementation of BMT involved three phases. Phase 1 had two key objectives. The first was to increase awareness of employment opportunities in building and construction. The second was to broker jobs. During Phase 1, jobseekers received

career counselling along with any necessary training before being referred to employers. In total, seventy people gained building and construction jobs in just eight months, and thirty young unemployed people returned to education or training.

Phase 2 focused on helping local subcontractors achieve preferred subcontractor status and gain contracts with volume and domestic builders. In addition, a business essentials training package providing guidance to tradespeople wishing to establish their own business was placed on the BMT website. As a result of Phase 2, forty-seven tradespeople were referred to builders, twenty young tradespeople completed the BMT training package and ten participants established their own subcontracting businesses.

The goal of Phase 3, which will be implemented between 2015 and 2018, is for BMT to become a regional initiative funded by local government together with the building and construction industry. Also during this phase, fledgling building and construction businesses will be incubated in the Western Business Accelerator and Centre for Excellence (Western BACE). This facility will be a training centre and will facilitate research into sustainable urban development, business attraction and business development, focusing on the building and construction, digital and services industries. BACE provides office spaces, workshop and warehouse spaces, shared training and meeting rooms, and IT infrastructure for fledgling businesses.

# Mobilization and utilization of resources

*Melton City Council provides one staff member to strategically coordinate lifelong learning and to act as executive officer to the CLB.*

The CLB, Community Learning Plan and Community Learning Directory are partly funded through Melton City Council's recurrent budget. However, as this budget does not cover all costs of implementing Community Learning Plan strategies, other funding and resourcing sources have to be sought. Over the last three years, funding in excess of 15,000,000 Australian dollars has come as a result of grant applications made by the CLB to state and federal government and philanthropic organizations. Another 21,000,000 Australian dollars were awarded as a result of city applications for a new library and learning hub. The CLB has also supported other organizations in gaining funding for initiatives that meet Community Learning Plan goals and priorities. It is estimated that in excess of 250,000 Australian dollars in funding and in-kind support has been realized for these organizations.

A number of Community Learning Plan projects share strategic objectives and resources with partner organizations. For example, the Work's 4 Me project is delivered as a collaboration between the following organizations: Merrimu Services, Wesley Mission, YouthNow, Djerriwarrh Community and Education Service and Melton City Council.

CEOs of seven organizations have directly given at least one working day a month to the CLB and its projects. Another sixteen CLB and working party members at the manager and coordinator level have devoted one day a month to delivering learning plan strategies (more if they are working on a joint project).

Melton City Council provides one staff member to strategically coordinate lifelong learning and to act as executive officer to the CLB. The executive officer to the CLB is responsible for progressing Melton as a learning city. Administrative officer support is allocated to the coordinator, the CLB and its working parties.

Other City of Melton departments provide staff to work on learning city matters relevant to them. Departments that share goals with the CLB include Learning Communities, Community Planning, Economic Development, Children's Services, Community Care and Inclusion, Family Services and Youth Services.

## Monitoring and evaluation

A participative action research methodology was taken by the CLB to evaluate the 2011–2014 Community Learning Plan. The evaluation report *Melton a Learning City: Community Learning Plan Evaluation* (2014) summarizes findings from the past four years and makes recommendations for the 2015–2018 Community Learning Plan.

A recent review of how the City of Melton has undertaken its monitoring and evaluation of its learning city initiative demonstrates that the evaluation methodology has evolved over time (Wheeler et al., 2015). In 1998, for example, learning plan evaluation consisted mainly of some very basic consultation. In 2006 and 2010 the CLB began to measure the strength of its partnerships. In 2011, not only partnership strength but also the collective impact of those partnerships was measured.

A valuable addition to the evaluation process has been the development of the Measuring Collective Impact tool. This has been designed to measure and track the impact of the delivery of Community Learning Plan goals and strategies that utilize community and business partnerships. The tool measures the strength of partnerships and the level to which measurable goals have been met, and it plots the impact level on a graph.

# Impacts and challenges

## Impacts

Building a learning city has had three main impacts. Firstly, spaces have been created where lifelong learning can take place close to where residents live. Secondly, people and organizations are available to provide lifelong learning activities that residents can readily access. *The Learning Directory* informs residents of Melton that these lifelong learning opportunities are available and accessible. Over the next four years, the city plans to gather baseline data on actual participation rates in the activities offered. Thirdly, community organizations are collaborating with the city to address long-term social issues through learning. One goal identified for children in the Community Learning Plan 2011–2014 was to increase the proportion of kindergarten enrolments from 85 per cent to 90 per cent within three years. There was an increase in kindergarten participation from 85.6 per cent in 2009 to 91.8 per cent in 2012. The percentage of young people entering higher education, apprenticeships, training and employment improved by 0.27 per cent. This fell well short of the city's target of 3 per cent a year from 2011 to 2014. Work will continue in this area in the 2015–2018 Community Learning Plan.

## Challenges

The lack of employment opportunities, lower-than-average education levels, comparatively low socio-economic levels and high population growth still combine to create significant economic and social challenges for the City of Melton. The 2015–2018 Community Learning Plan will seek to remove some of the consequent obstacles to full civic participation by focusing on certain priorities. Firstly, the city needs to secure state and federal government funding for schools, kindergartens and community infrastructure in a timely manner. Given Melton's growth, it requires approximately two primary schools to be built every three years. Secondly, the City



Two apprentices with a builder and a liaison consultant in the Building Melton Together project

of Melton needs to provide facilities to deliver higher education and employment skills and business development. Thirdly, the city needs to enhance young people's opportunities to plan and pursue career pathways from school to vocational education, training, higher education and employment. Fourthly, it wishes to improve access to learning for all adults, but in particular Indigenous Australians, refugees and people with disabilities. Other priorities include building new and upgraded community infrastructure that incorporates learning, play and opportunities to meet; increasing families' capacity to provide a rich learning and developmental environment for their children; and developing council policies that articulate across all council departments what it means to be a learning city.



## Lessons learned and recommendations

*Strategic leadership must ensure that plans are implemented, that growth can be accommodated and that community relationships and partnerships are nurtured.*

The continued support of the city's decision-makers is critical. Strategic leadership must ensure that plans are implemented, that growth can be accommodated and that community relationships and partnerships are nurtured. The city council, its councillors and the executive leadership team steer the direction of the city and require high-quality evidence and information on which to base decisions. The CLB provides a governance structure and gives the community a voice with regard to learning city matters. It is essential that it is maintained as an advisory committee to the city's council.

Successful Community Learning Plan initiatives may grow and require expansion. This has implications for staffing, budgets and decisions about who takes operational responsibility. These implications must be identified early and planned for in order to ensure sustainability.

Maintaining relationships with stakeholders and being able to broker and manage partnerships in order to achieve agreed community objectives is essential.

Evaluation needs to be ongoing. A participative action research approach has been adopted as a key element of evaluating the delivery of the Community Learning Plan. There needs to be a good evidence base to inform decision-making and to evaluate success.

Lake Caroline, Caroline Springs, City of Melton







Work's 4 Me Partnership participant Tommy with his community mentor, Marie

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# Sorocaba

Brazil

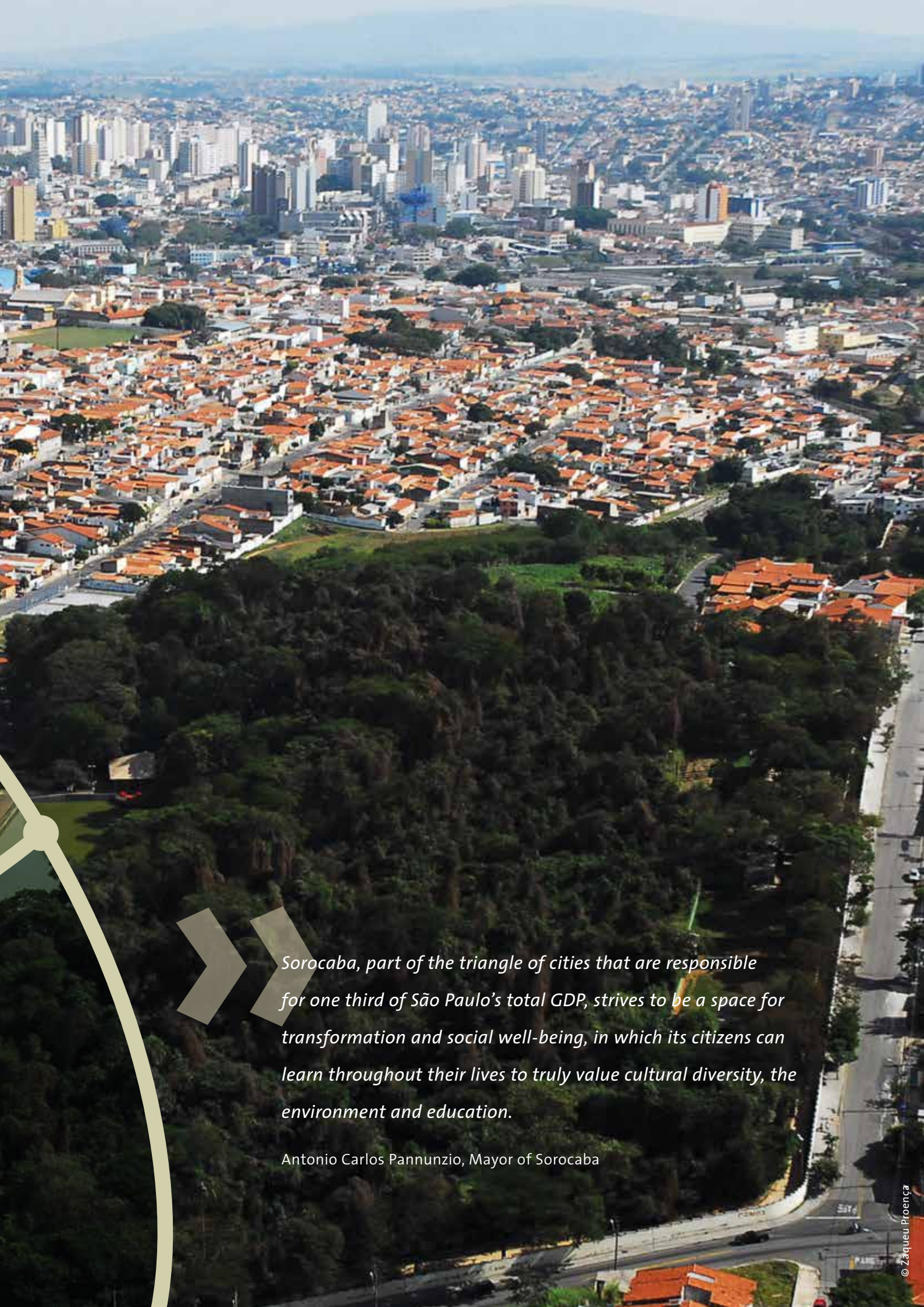
## Profile

Total population of the city*	637,187
Urban population density* <i>inhabitants per square kilometre</i>	1,304.18
Total area of the city* <i>in square kilometres</i>	449.804
GDP per capita of the city* <i>in US dollars</i>	15,494.01
GDP per capita of the country* <i>in US dollars</i>	10,787.37
Age structure* <i>in per cent</i>	
0–14	20.07
15–24	17.42
25–59	51.40
60+	11.11
Percentage of people aged over 14 years who have completed*	
neither primary nor secondary school	38.4
primary school only	18.0
secondary school	30.7
higher education	12.9
Average life expectancy at birth in the city* <i>in years</i>	77.2

\* most recent available data







*Sorocaba, part of the triangle of cities that are responsible for one third of São Paulo's total GDP, strives to be a space for transformation and social well-being, in which its citizens can learn throughout their lives to truly value cultural diversity, the environment and education.*

Antonio Carlos Pannunzio, Mayor of Sorocaba



This case study reports upon the strategies and programmes adopted by Sorocaba's Municipal Government between 2013 and 2016. These strategies are aimed at creating a 'human and educational' city in Sorocaba that fosters a sense of community and provides a better quality of life for citizens. A human and educational city encourages residents to respect and appreciate cultural diversity. It turns public spaces into educational spaces that promote exchange and the continuous development of citizens of all ages.

## Introduction

### General overview

Sorocaba is one of the oldest and most important municipalities in the state of São Paulo. Together with the cities of São Paulo and Campinas, Sorocaba forms part of what is known as the 'Golden Triangle' of the state of São Paulo. Sorocaba and Campinas are responsible for one third of the total GDP of the state (Cruzeiro do Sul, 2013a). With a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.798, Sorocaba has one of the highest levels of human development in Brazil (Cruzeiro do Sul, 2013b).

Sorocaba has four strategic goals: to become a 'human and educational city', an 'alive and beautiful city', a 'modern city of opportunities', and a 'city with an efficient management' (Prefeitura de Sorocaba,

*Members of a club for older adults go on a cycling tour*



2014a). Learning plays a key role in realizing all of these goals. The city's Department of Education is responsible for the planning, coordination and supervision of educational activities that aim to offer an inclusive and high-quality education for all, from early childhood through primary and secondary school to adult education.

### Main issues to be tackled

Lifelong learning can play a role in addressing the following development challenges, which are among the focal points of Sorocaba's strategic planning: increasing access to and the quality of basic education; enhancing teacher training; increasing the number of available preschool places; reducing

violence and social disadvantage; reducing unemployment and enhancing the skills and qualifications of employees; improving environmental awareness and protection; enhancing Sorocaba's cultural, sports and leisure amenities; and upgrading the city's technological infrastructure as well as citizens' ICT skills.

### Motives for becoming a learning city

Sorocaba's main motive is to harness the potential of lifelong learning to make the city more egalitarian and improve its citizens' health and quality of life. All of the learning city programmes have an emphasis on reaching Sorocaba's most vulnerable groups, so that learning opportunities are equally accessible to all citizens.

*Sorocaba's main motive is to harness the potential of lifelong learning to make the city more egalitarian and improve its citizens' health and quality of life.*

*Citizens of all ages participate in a recycling activity*



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# Learning city policies and strategies

*The city recognizes that learning can take many different forms, that it can occur in diverse settings and that learning opportunities must be made available to all citizens in order to improve their quality of life.*

## Definition of a learning city

Neither Brazil nor the City of Sorocaba has an official definition of the term 'learning city'. However, as stated above, one of the municipality's strategic goals is to create 'a human and educational city'. This envisions the city as a fair and welcoming place where the welfare of the community is everyone's concern and where vulnerable people have adequate protection in terms of health, education, housing, income and employment. Moreover, a human and educational city respects differences. As a 'human and educational city', Sorocaba sees learning as an ongoing process that takes place across the whole lifespan. Furthermore, the city recognizes that learning can take many different forms, that it can occur in diverse settings and that learning opportunities must be made available to all citizens in order to improve their quality of life.

## Vision and objectives

The city's main learning city objectives are to improve early childhood education; to enhance pedagogical practices in education for young people and adults; to make the management of education more democratic by encouraging greater involvement from citizens; to enhance the professional development of educators; to develop and implement educational programmes that promote diversity and inclusion; to expand and improve human resources, learning materials and the learning infrastructure in general; to ensure equal access to learning; and to increase the digital literacy of citizens and education professionals.

## Legislative framework

The Brazilian Government has laws covering the provision of learning opportunities for young people and adults who left school early. There are also national laws in Brazil that deal with 'integral education' for schoolchildren. Integral education goes beyond the content of the traditional school curriculum by integrating different fields of knowledge and diverse dimensions of child development into the child's experience.

The policies of the City of Sorocaba are guided by national legislation. However, the city has also developed municipal legislation for integral education and the education of young people and adults. The city is currently working on drafting legislation for the establishment of a learning city.

## Governance and partnership

Various departments of the city government have developed programmes that contribute to building a learning city. Sorocaba's Municipal Council of Education provides advice on technical, pedagogical and administrative aspects of education. The Department of the Environment publishes educational materials, runs socio-environmental campaigns and offers environmental education in the city in the form of exhibitions, workshops and guided tours of the city's parks. The Department of Culture promotes cultural activities in the city, providing spaces and programmes that allow people to access and learn from these activities. The Department of Social Development promotes social inclusion and provides assistance to vulnerable





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*Citizens visit an outdoor exhibition organized by one of Sorocaba's museums*

people, ensuring that they have access to essential services. One of the projects developed by this department is called Território Jovem (Young Territory), which offers a variety of courses and leisure and culture opportunities to people aged between 12 and 29 years.

The following non-governmental organizations are involved in learning city initiatives in Sorocaba: the Associação Internacional de Cidades Educadoras (AICE – International Association of Educating Cities), Cidade Democrática (Democratic City), Mathema and Comunidade Educativa (CEDAC – Educational Community). The AICE is a non-profit organization bringing together local governments committed to the Charter of Educating Cities (International Association of Educating Cities, 2013). Cidade Democrática is a platform for political participation that aims to use collective intelligence to find innovative solutions. The city government of Sorocaba works with Cidade Democrática

on the Sorocaba Colaborativa (Sorocaba Collaborative) project. This project encourages the city's secondary schools to participate in implementing the educating city concept. Cidade Democrática is also currently developing an 'ideas competition', which invites young people to submit their ideas on how to make Sorocaba a better city to live in. The winners will be invited to discuss their ideas with the mayor and the city council at the city hall. Mathema is a research and training organization. It disseminates knowledge, methodologies and materials that contribute to the improvement of public and private educational systems. CEDAC works with Sorocaba's Department of Education on the training of performing arts, visual arts and music teachers.

Sorocaba's Department of Education has also received support from the multinational corporation IBM, which helped the department to develop its strategic planning and guidelines for the years 2014 to 2016.



# Implementation

## Provision of lifelong learning

Sorocaba City Hall through the Department of Education runs many different programmes related to lifelong learning. The Programa Escola Saudável (Healthy School Programme) plans and promotes health education in Sorocaba's schools. The Programa Escola da Escola (School of the School Programme) promotes the continuing education of professionals in municipal schools. Câmara de Conflito (Chamber of Conflict) trains school staff on dealing with conflict. The main objective of the project is to minimize the effects of violence in municipal schools

through dialogue. The Programa Escola Digital (Digital School Programme) is a digital literacy programme for staff and students of Sorocaba's municipal school system. The Programa Professor Aprendiz (Teacher Apprentice Programme) enables undergraduate education students to gain initial teaching experience under the guidance of a qualified teacher. Alfa Vida provides literacy courses for young people and adults. Sabe Tudo (Know it All) is a digital literacy centre with free access to computer courses and the internet. The project also provides spaces for reading newspapers and magazines.

*A boy plays in an orchestra as part of the Escola Viva programme*



## Example of innovation or good practice

### Escola Viva (Living School)

#### Objectives

The Escola Viva programme aims to enable citizens to explore the cultural, social and environmental richness of Sorocaba by opening up learning spaces throughout the city.

#### Main target groups

The main target groups are preschool, primary and secondary school students as well as adults.

#### Main activities

The Escola Viva programme consists of a number of projects. Oficina do Saber (Workshop of Knowledge) promotes integral education by creating learning situations outside the regular classroom. The focus is on literacy, numeracy, science, physical education and the arts. Thirty-three of the city's forty-six primary schools are currently participating in this project. Roteiro Educador (Educator Tour) organizes educational tours of the city for children, students and educators. Musicalização (Musicalization) promotes music education. Sala de Leitura (Reading Rooms) promotes primary school children's appreciation of books. Bebeteca provides preschool children and their families with reading areas and talks on literature. The Clube de Escola (School Club) opens up schools to adults on Saturdays and offers various sports and cultural activities.

## Mobilization and utilization of resources



Visitors at an exhibition in the Botanic Gardens on the 360-year history of Sorocaba

Sorocaba has a healthy and sustainable economy, and is therefore able to cover much of its learning city expenses itself, though it receives some federal funding too. The city also relies on the work of city hall employees, teachers, interns, volunteers and the community in developing its learning city programmes. In addition, the partnerships with non-governmental organizations and corporations discussed above are an important source of funding, human resources and expertise.

### Monitoring and evaluation

The Department of Education prepares quarterly and annual reports for tracking and monitoring its programmes and projects. These reports are guided by indicators presented in its guidelines for the years 2014–2016 (Secretaria da Educação, 2014). Examples of such indicators include the creation of local partnerships between civil society and the government; the number of children, young people, adults and families who participate in programmes; the continuing education of professionals; and inclusion strategies.



# Impacts and challenges

## Impacts

Learning city initiatives have had an impact on a great number of Sorocaba's citizens. For example, 3,365 education professionals have participated in various Escola da Escola training programmes. As part of the Programa Escola Saudável, 47,514 children have received oral hygiene kits and training; 21,277 children have planted vegetable gardens in fifty-three schools; and 260 children and parents have taken part in organized walks. As part of the Escola Viva programme, 20,986 citizens have participated in the Clube de Escola, while 57,211 children have participated in the Roteiro Educador project.

## Challenges

The challenges for Sorocaba include expanding learning opportunities for citizens and communicating with all segments of society to identify demand, report on actions and ensure the necessary engagement of citizens. Mobilizing staff at all levels within the Department of Education and ensuring efficient coordination between various teams are also significant challenges. Finally, greater investment in the training of technical staff is needed to speed up the implementation of projects and services and solve problems efficiently.

*The Department of Education prepares quarterly and annual reports for tracking and monitoring its programmes and projects.*



*Ceremony for graduates of a computer course*

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## Lessons learned and recommendations



Children go on a guided tour of the zoo as part of the Escola Viva programme

In the process of implementing the learning city, Sorocaba has come to recognize the importance of learning rather than just educating. It is important to appreciate local knowledge, encourage the participation of various segments of society and share knowledge.

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# Beijing

China

## Profile

Total population of the city\* 21,148,000

Urban population density\* 1,289  
*inhabitants per square kilometre*

Total area of the city\* 16,400  
*in square kilometres*

GDP per capita of the city\* 15,052  
*in US dollars*

GDP per capita of the country\* 6,807  
*in US dollars*

Age structure\*  
*in per cent*

0–14 9.5

15–59 76.6

60+ 13.9


Average number of years of schooling  
completed by people aged 15 and above\* 11.6

Average life expectancy at birth  
in the city\* 81.5  
*in years*

\* most recent available data

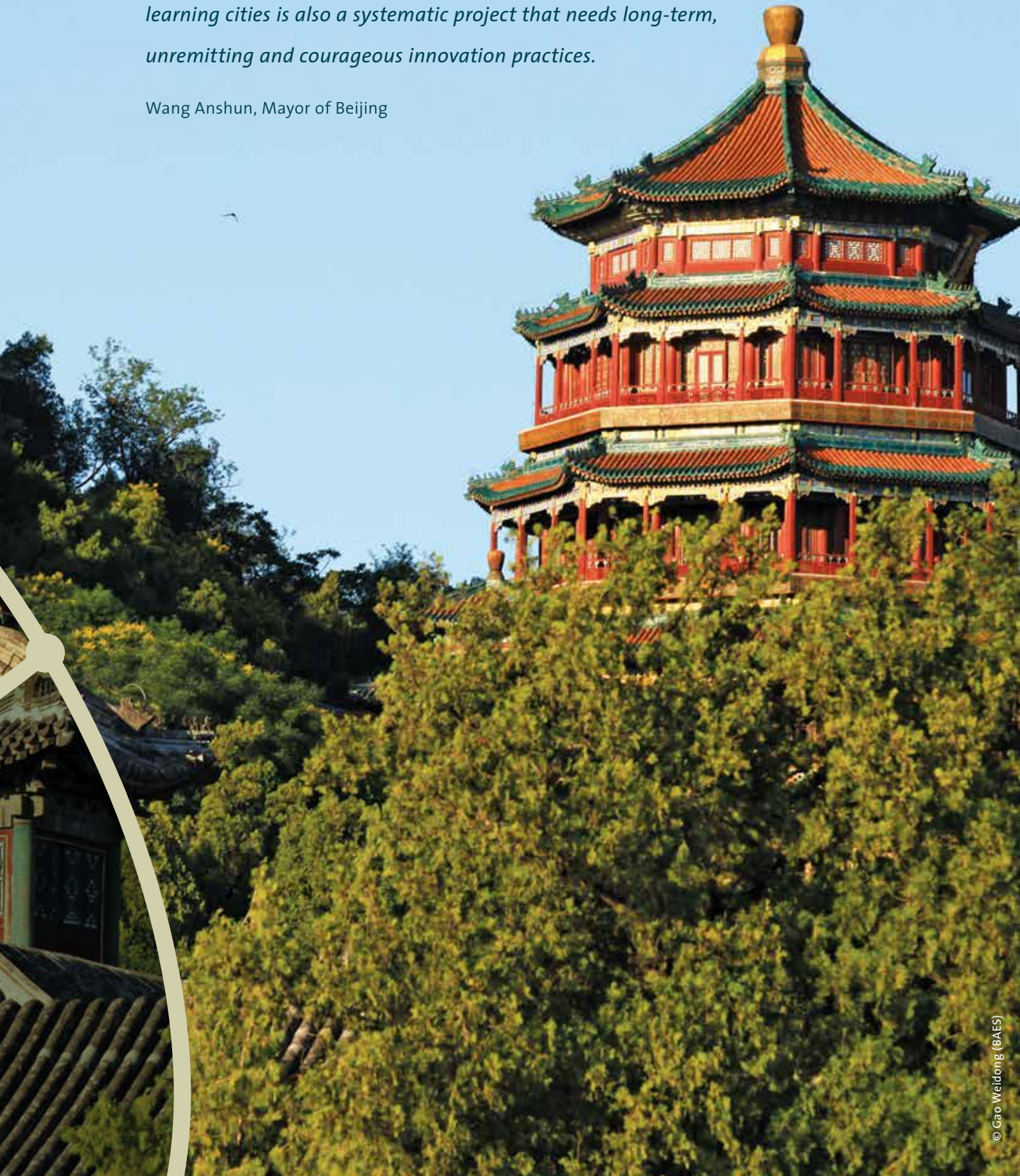






*In practice, we have realized that building learning cities has very vital significance in improving the scientific and cultural qualities of all citizens, promoting people's all-round development, and promoting social harmony and sustainable development. Meanwhile, building learning cities is also a systematic project that needs long-term, unremitting and courageous innovation practices.*

Wang Anshun, Mayor of Beijing



Beijing, one of the most populous cities in China, officially launched its learning city agenda in 1999 in order to promote innovation, sustainability and inclusiveness in the city in preparation for the 2008 Olympic Games. Beijing City Council's official report *The Decision to Vigorously Promote the Construction of a Learning Beijing in the Capital City* (2007) states that the overall objective of building a learning city in Beijing is to achieve sustainable and scientific development. (Scientific development is one of the guiding socio-economic principles of the Communist Party of China. Its goals centre on the promotion of scientific socialism, sustainable development, social welfare, a humanistic society, increased democracy and a 'Socialist Harmonious Society').

The Beijing Municipal Government, which has played a key role in systematically establishing a lifelong education system, has set up a lifelong learning team within the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education. The strong leadership provided by the government has led to the strengthening of adult and further education, the promotion of community education and the creation of websites that serve as lifelong learning platforms for citizens. The Learning Beijing initiative has grown rapidly over the last fifteen years. Having successfully hosted the first International Conference on Learning Cities in October 2013, Beijing is now entering a new phase in its development.

## Introduction

### General overview

Beijing looks back on a history of 3,000 years as a city and 800 years as a capital city. It is a centrally administered municipality and is divided into fourteen districts and two counties. At the end of 2013, the population of Beijing was 21.148 million. The Beijing economy has been growing fast, increasing by 7.7 per cent between 2013 and 2014 alone.

To accompany ongoing reforms, the introduction of more liberal policies and the rapid development of China's economy and society as a whole, the Chinese Government began to promote lifelong learning and the building of a learning society from the late twentieth century onwards. The Beijing Municipal Government responded by developing a proposal to build a learning city in 1999. In that year, the Beijing Municipal Government's report *Deepening Education Reform and Promoting Quality Education* officially put becoming a learning city on the government agenda.

### Main issues to be tackled

Beijing launched its learning city agenda as a response to the economic, environmental, demographic and social challenges arising from rapid urbanization and economic development. Beijing has achieved an impressive increase in GDP over the past two decades. However, traditional industries are leaving Beijing, and so the city must now ensure that it has a 'soft landing' by finding other, sustainable ways to achieve economic growth. A second challenge centres on finding solutions for the severe environmental damage that has been caused by Beijing's dramatic economic development. A third significant challenge involves managing population growth and finding solutions to the problems already caused by overpopulation in the city.



## Motives for becoming a learning city

Hosting the 2008 Olympic Games was the main catalyst for becoming a learning city. Beijing not only had to prepare stadiums and other facilities for the Games, it also had to train the people who would provide the support services. Many learning initiatives were launched for this purpose in the years leading up to the Games. On 10 November 2007, the Beijing Municipal Government launched the Lifelong Learning Day, which centred on the theme 'Welcome the Olympic Games'. Also in 2007, the Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Government convened an important conference on building a learning city, publishing a policy document entitled *The Decision to Vigorously Promote the Construction of a Learning Beijing in the Capital City*. This document highlights the important role played by the learning city in rising to the challenges of the knowledge-based economy and adapting

to globalization. The document also states that being a learning city enhances the competitiveness of Beijing and improves its capacity for innovation.

Beijing's main motives for becoming a learning city are therefore to promote innovativeness, sustainability and inclusiveness. A well-designed lifelong learning system within the Learning Beijing structure is the best way to continuously enhance the quality of the workforce. Highly qualified workers can support the sustainable development of the urban economy and improve Beijing citizens' quality of life. Furthermore, many Learning Beijing projects address social problems by targeting specific disadvantaged groups, such as older people, women and people with disabilities. These projects aim to enrich the lives of participants by developing their skills and thereby helping them to find jobs.

*Beijing's main motives for becoming a learning city are therefore to promote innovativeness, sustainability and inclusiveness.*

Guozijian (Imperial Academy)



# Learning city policies and strategies

The government is playing a leading role in developing Beijing into a learning city and has made several key policy decisions over the past years.

## Definition of a learning city

The Beijing Municipal Government has not explicitly defined the term ‘learning city’. Nevertheless, it is clear from official reports that Beijing sees a learning city as one that can respond to the demands of the globalized world by fostering citizens’ all-round development, in particular their ability to innovate. It is also clear that Beijing believes a learning city should not rely solely on the Ministry of Education; government departments, public institutions and the private sector should all work together to achieve learning city goals.

## Vision and objectives

As already indicated, *The Decision to Vigorously Promote the Construction of a Learning Beijing in the Capital City* (Beijing City Council, 2007) states that the overall objective of building a learning city in Beijing is to achieve sustainable and scientific development. More specifically, the construction of the learning city will pursue the following objectives:

- to build up a lifelong learning structure;
- to mobilize educational resources;
- to create a learning atmosphere;
- to establish good conditions for learning; and
- to attract experts with an innovative and dynamic spirit.

## Legislative framework

At the national level, there are several official documents and policy papers on the development of learning cities in China. The latest and most important one is *The Outline of China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development (2010–2020)*. This paper, which sets out a clear policy for building a learning society, states that the chief goals

of the education reforms it proposes are ‘to basically modernize education, bring a learning society into shape, and turn China into a country rich in human resources’ (Ministry of Education of China, 2010, p. 9).

The Beijing Municipal Government believes that developing a learning city is important for the overall development of the region. The government is playing a leading role in developing Beijing into a learning city and has made several key policy decisions over the past years. In 2002, the strategic goal of ‘building a learning society and promoting the modernization of education in Beijing’ was accepted by the ninth Congress of Party Representatives of Beijing. In 2004, the Beijing Municipal Educational Conference announced the strategy for developing education in Beijing and positioned the city to take the lead in modernizing education for the whole country. It proposed building the learning city and set 2010 as the target for nationwide modernization. *The Advisory Report on Implementing the Eleventh Five-Year Plan for the National Economy and Social Development of Beijing* was published in 2005. It proposed building a lifelong education system and promoted building a learning city. The Municipal Party Committee and Government convened a conference on building a learning city in 2007 and published *The Decision to Vigorously Promote the Construction of a Learning Beijing in the Capital City*. The *Twelfth Five-Year Plan for Building Beijing as a Learning City* was published in 2011; this provided a systematic design and plan for the next five years.

## Governance and partnership

The Communist Party of China (CPC) is responsible for regulating municipal government. This includes issuing administrative orders. The Beijing Communist Party of China and the Beijing Municipal Government act as the local



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*The Popular Internet Campaign enables older citizens to explore the internet*

government of Beijing City. The strong leadership of the CPC and the Beijing Municipal Government is crucial for maintaining momentum in building the learning city.

All Learning Beijing activities, the Beijing learning city website, other learning resources and the evaluation of the learning city are under the supervision of the Beijing Municipal Government. The Beijing Municipal Government has also created a lead learning city team headed up by city leaders and comprising twenty-nine government departments and other third-sector organizations. This team submits work plans and summaries of learning city work each year and supports Beijing Learning Week, a national celebration of lifelong learning. The team also organizes an annual working conference. Parallel to this and using the same model, the districts and counties in Beijing all set up their own leadership management systems and operating mechanisms to coordinate the work involved.

The role of non-governmental institutions is mainly one of follow-up and support. Public institutions such as universities and research institutions contribute to research work. In 2011, Beijing established three new research centres: the Beijing Capital Learning Institute (based in Beijing Normal University), the Beijing Learning Organization Developing Research Centre (based in Renmin University of China) and the Beijing Learning School Research Centre (based in Capital Normal University), all of which contribute to learning city research. The Beijing Learning City Research Centre, which is based in the Beijing Academy of Educational Science, has the longest history of research and practice in learning city development. It is responsible for organizing a team of experts for assessment and auditing. The Beijing Learning City Research Centre provides many other services too, such as organizing training sessions and workshops and providing various districts in Beijing with research support.



# Implementation



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Farmers learn about the latest farming technologies at agricultural lectures

*Eight districts in the city have already established their own lifelong learning and community education websites, and some have also created digital libraries.*

## Provision of lifelong learning

Beijing has developed four kinds of adult and further education support systems. These are:

- a community education and training network headed by a community college (some 80 per cent of neighbourhoods have founded community education centres based on this model);
- a college network composed of twenty-six adult colleges that is directed and managed by the Beijing Municipal Government;
- a network for enterprise education and training geared to the needs of industry and state-owned enterprises; and

- a training network led by various third-sector organizations that is mainly concerned with providing vocational, social skills and cultural training.

By the end of 2011, community colleges in Beijing's urban districts had established more than forty programmes. Each year, a total of around 200,000 sessions of further education, on-the-job training and training for vocational qualifications take place. Around half of the participants complete their courses successfully and are awarded certification.

Developing community education has entailed pooling resources from local schools and colleges and opening them up to the wider community. This has strengthened links between primary and secondary schools and their communities so that local people now have access to teachers, classrooms and equipment. More than 60 per cent of educational institutions in Beijing offer their local communities lifelong learning opportunities.

Furthermore, the city has assigned over 1,000 full-time teachers to work in local neighbourhoods, where they are building relationships between colleges and their communities. Learning opportunities for older people are also increasing rapidly. There are two municipal universities for older people and sixteen universities offering courses designed especially for older people, such as singing, dancing and drawing courses. There are also schools for older people in other parts of the city.

There are more than 700,000 visits to the Beijing learning city website ([www.bjlearning.gov.cn](http://www.bjlearning.gov.cn)) every year. Eight districts in the city have already established their own lifelong learning and community education websites, and some have also created digital libraries. More than 300 distance learning facilities have been provided in more remote suburban districts.

## Example of innovation or good practice

Full use is being made of the latest technology to launch distance education in rural areas. In addition, each government department in the region has created its own digital learning space.

To give impetus to the plan to develop community education, enterprise education and further education, Beijing has established learning organizations in urban districts, towns and local neighbourhoods and within enterprises and schools. Thousands of learning organization pilot projects have been launched, and all of these have been successfully evaluated.

Civic education activities have been established to promote healthier and higher-quality lifestyles in the city. Activities include education on social behaviour, including politeness and etiquette. The Beijing Municipal Commission of Education holds a range of citizen lectures, the Municipal Bureau of Press and Publication has implemented a project to improve reading habits and the Women's Federation has developed projects on learning families.

Beijing has also launched Learning Brands – quality seals that it awards to excellent learning products and services – in order to encourage people to participate in lifelong learning activities. Learning Stars are awarded to outstanding individual learners. The Learning Brands and Learning Stars are announced during Beijing's annual Learning Week Festival, during which free learning activities are offered across the country in order to inspire adults to take the first steps back into learning.

### **Shougang Group: a learning organization integrating individuals and enterprise**

#### **Objectives**

Shougang is one of China's largest steel producers. In February 2005, Shougang relocated for environmental reasons. This move, which involved relocating 100,000 employees, provided an opportunity to turn Shougang into a learning organization. The company's main objective was to promote learning in order to ease employees' transition, enhance their skills, improve product quality and ultimately build an innovative, environmentally sustainable and technologically advanced enterprise.

#### **Main target groups**

The target group was the company's employees. Shougang organized a range of learning and training exchanges to introduce employees to the advanced technology in the new steel plant. For example, the corporation established a strategic partnership with well-known enterprises at home and abroad as well as institutions of higher learning and research. Shougang also put together professional research and development teams, established a group of first-class experts from home and abroad, and took part in major science and technology projects.

Relocation rarely happens without personnel problems. Shougang's approach was to turn the relocation into an opportunity for staff to develop personally and professionally. Some staff went to the new steel factory and some left the company, but almost all were able to use the situation to their advantage.

Citizens develop their literacy skills by writing on the ground in Taoranting Park



© Beijing Municipal Commission of Education

The corporation even managed to ride out the financial crisis of 2008 at the exact moment of relocation and restructuring. It saw the financial crisis as another opportunity to reinforce the learning organization and expand its vision. The learning organization became a way to tackle key problems together. This helped to reduce risk and enhance the competitiveness of the enterprise.

### Main activities

**Group learning:** The Shougang headquarters holds annual seminars on innovation, creating excellence and the experience of start-ups. Seminars focus on a different theme each year and provide opportunities for interaction between senior and middle management.

**'Happy' learning:** Shougang works hard to ensure that employees are eager to learn and that early resistance ('They are making me learn') gives way to a desire to learn ('I myself want to learn'). This is achieved partly by the way in which training materials are presented: care is taken to distil learning material into easily assimilated packages. For some purposes, for example, staff are

offered 'ten little tips' about how to do something or 'ten little things that can lead to ten changes'.

**Focusing on realizing people's potential:** The training aims for self-actualization and encourages people to go beyond what they think they can achieve. Several Shougang staff members have won awards for being model employees, and through the learning processes offered by the corporation, many have achieved positions well above those that their initial qualifications would normally have merited.

### Impact

The success of Shougang's learning organization programmes is attributable to two things: the involvement of senior management and the training process itself. The Party Committee Secretary, the Chairman of the Board of Shougang Headquarters and the General Manager led the teams designing the learning activities. They designed a scheme that linked learning outcomes to remuneration. Based on learning outcomes and merit, more than 30 per cent of employees are promoted and awarded a salary increase.



## Mobilization and utilization of resources

The initiatives of Learning Beijing always have sufficient funding, not least because the Municipal Finance Bureau is a member of the learning city leadership team. Indeed, funding for Learning Beijing is increasing. In 2013, the municipal government awarded 22 million yuan (about 3.6 million US dollars) to seventeen learning city projects, and funding will rise to 35 million yuan (about 5.7 million US dollars) in 2014. Some extra funding is provided by various local governments.

The municipal government places great emphasis on human resources and publications to support the learning city. The City of Beijing provides a team of experts, researchers, practitioners and volunteers, and, as well as maintaining the Learning Beijing website, it publishes a weekly magazine entitled *Learning in Beijing*. The Beijing Learning City Research Centre also publishes annual reports and research articles. All these materials are shared during the annual Learning Week.

### Monitoring and evaluation

The Beijing Municipal Commission of Education organizes a group of experts to conduct the whole assessment process. With the experts' help, Beijing has created an evaluation index to monitor performance. The Beijing Evaluation Index, which in recent years has included some changes to incorporate the *Key Features of Learning Cities*, covers factors such as policy, legislation, media coverage, organization, management, funding, human resources, research, innovation and implementation across all levels, from preschool to education for older people, immigrants and disadvantaged groups. The region under assessment receives guidance from experts and training on how to understand and use the index before undergoing a formal assessment. The regional government leaders then perform a self-assessment and write a progress report describing results and sharing innovations. Finally, the experts give their feedback.

*The Beijing Evaluation Index, which in recent years has included some changes to incorporate the Key Features of Learning Cities, covers factors such as policy, legislation, media coverage, organization, management, funding, human resources, research, innovation and implementation across all levels.*



*The Smart Weaver Workshop upskills unemployed women*



# Impacts and challenges

Evaluation is key to maintaining the quality of a learning city.

## Impacts

Building a learning city has had a remarkable impact on Beijing over the past fifteen years. Learning Beijing has enriched the theory of lifelong education; promoted adult and further education; facilitated connection and communication between different types of education at all levels; established new learning organizations; opened up schools' educational resources to the wider public; expanded community education institutions to all citizens; and created websites providing information and learning materials.

More and more citizens have become involved in learning city initiatives. More than 8 million people attend various further education courses annually, and nearly 200,000 people a year attain

vocational certificates and diplomas after completing training courses. More than 100 community education activities have received Learning Brands, and nearly 500 people have been awarded Learning Stars.

## Challenges

As Beijing enters a new phase of innovation and development, the environment is replacing the economy as the government's top priority. The learning city therefore needs to develop a strategy for educating citizens about environmental protection. Another challenge is ensuring that Beijing adapts to a new era by providing learning programmes that meet citizens' changing needs.

Young people learn at a mobile planetarium



© Beijing Municipal Commission of Education

## Lessons learned and recommendations

The government should play a central role in developing and implementing learning city strategies. With strong support from national and local government, the learning city initiative can have enough funding and policies to ensure it stays on the right track.

Systematic structural design is the foundation for a good learning city. As a megacity, Beijing designed and put into practice various levels of community education and learning organizations.

Evaluation is key to maintaining the quality of a learning city. The municipal government in Beijing started the evaluation process as soon as it launched its learning city strategy. To ensure that practitioners understand the objectives of their efforts, the *Key Features of Learning Cities* need to be incorporated into the Beijing Evaluation Index.

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# Bahir Dar

Ethiopia


## Profile

Total population of the city*	288,200
Urban population density* <i>inhabitants per square kilometre</i>	931.9
Total area of the city* <i>in square kilometres</i>	28,660
GDP per capita of the country* <i>in US dollars</i>	632
Age structure* <i>in per cent</i>	
0–14	28.4
15–24	28.2
25–59	39.2
60+	4.2
Average life expectancy at birth in the city* <i>in years</i>	64

\* most recent available data







*The mission of Bahir Dar City is to build a competent citizen by expanding formal and non-formal education programmes and training. The city will work in collaboration with other concerned stakeholders to realize this mission.*

Muluken Ayehu, Head of Bahir Dar City Administration Education Office





Bahir Dar's development as a learning city is being spearheaded by Bahir Dar University, which has launched the Learning Community Programme. This programme, which is at a very early stage of development, aims to bring together the currently isolated and uncoordinated learning initiatives run by the city's various organizations. It is hoped that becoming a learning city will help Bahir Dar to tackle some of its major challenges, which include poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, gender and socio-economic inequality, and a lack of environmental awareness. The Learning Community Programme's current priorities include informing citizens about the learning city concept, encouraging stakeholders to become actively involved, and finding innovative ways of mobilizing resources to realize the learning city ideal in Bahir Dar.

*Bahir Dar seeks to become a city where citizens can live peacefully, and where their gender or social, economic, ethnic and religious backgrounds do not affect how they are treated.*

## Introduction

### General overview

Bahir Dar is located 565 km from Addis Ababa in Amhara National Regional State in north-west Ethiopia. The major economic sectors of the city are horticulture, agro-industrial processing, urban agriculture, manufacturing and diverse service industries. Bahir Dar is also one of the leading tourist destinations in Ethiopia; attractions include the nearby Lake Tana and Blue Nile River. The city is known for its wide avenues lined with palm trees and a variety of colourful flowers. Bahir Dar has a remarkable mix of cultures. The main ethnic and religious groups are the Amhara and Orthodox Christians, but Bahir Dar has a vibrant mix of other cultures, too, including the Agaw, Oromo and Tigre people. Islam and Protestantism also have a large number of followers in Bahir Dar.

Bahir Dar has several state and private kindergartens, forty-seven primary schools (twenty-six public and twenty-one private) as well as eleven secondary schools (seven public and four private). In addition, the city has twelve higher learning institutions, nine of which are private and three of which are public. One of these is Bahir Dar University, one of the oldest public universities in the country. With eight campuses all over the city, nearly 40,000 students and nearly 6,000 academic and administrative staff, Bahir Dar University is the biggest institution in the city.

### Main issues to be tackled

Critical issues to be tackled include poverty, inadequate early childhood care and education, adult illiteracy, youth unemployment, inadequate services for people with disabilities, gender inequality,



*Blue Nile (Tis Abay) Falls, one of the major tourist attractions near Bahir Dar*

socio-economic inequality, inadequate awareness of diversity issues, inadequate engagement in sport and fitness, insufficient access to affordable ICT tools and services, and a lack of awareness of environmental issues.

### **Motives for becoming a learning city**

Bahir Dar is becoming a learning city as part of its efforts to address the issues outlined above. The aim is to build a better city where all levels and forms of learning are promoted and valued at all times in peoples' lives and in all contexts. Bahir Dar seeks to become a city where citizens can

live peacefully, and where their gender or social, economic, ethnic and religious backgrounds do not affect how they are treated. The city also wishes to enhance its citizens' employability and entrepreneurial skills in order to ensure that its citizens remain physically and mentally healthy, and to help them protect the environment and their culture.

# Learning city policies and strategies

## Definition of a learning city

Neither the city nor the country has yet developed an official definition of a learning city. However, the understanding of a learning city by some of its major stakeholders, such as Bahir Dar University and the city administration's education office, is that it is one of the practical applications of the concept of lifelong learning. In the context of Bahir Dar, the learning city concept is one that brings together and enhances the currently isolated and uncoordinated efforts of the various organizations that are trying to find solutions to the city's problems.

## Vision and objectives

The city itself has not yet proposed a concrete vision or objectives. However, Bahir Dar City Education Office wishes to help build an entrepreneurial community with democratic values that respects, protects and contributes to its social, cultural and natural environment. The goal of Bahir Dar University, which is spearheading the city's Learning Community Programme, is to become one of the ten premier research universities in Africa. The university is working towards bringing about positive change in the city and the lives of its citizens. Its nine research centres and various faculties and departments conduct research focusing on the challenges of the city and its surroundings. These units also provide various community services.

*Participants of the You Go Girls project graduate from a writing skills course*







© Bahir Dar University

Amhara Development Association Building

### Legislative framework

At present, there are no laws or regulations in Ethiopia or Bahir Dar that promote lifelong learning. In collaboration with other stakeholders, Bahir Dar University will work towards the creation of such laws and regulations. Through intensive advocacy and lobbying, it is hoped that these laws will exist in three to five years.

With regard to education in general, the country’s constitution, education and training policy, education strategy documents, and Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) pursue the objective of providing all citizens with access to a high-quality education. Providing free primary education in the native language and creating formal and non-formal learning opportunities are important elements of Ethiopia’s education policy.

### Governance and partnership

The main governing body for general education in the country is the Ministry of Education and its affiliate organizations. The Ministry of Education has structures down to the local level that oversee the proper implementation of the nation’s educational policies and strategies. However, the Ministry of Education is not the sole provider of education and training services for the citizens of the country. Various government ministries, including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry for Children, Youth and Women’s Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Sports, and the Ministry of Defence carry out their own sector-specific education and training activities for staff and citizens. Numerous private and non-governmental organizations also provide education and training.



Street parade on Bahir Dar University's 50th anniversary

To date, the planning, implementation and evaluation of learning city policies and activities have mostly been carried out by Bahir Dar University. However, other organizations, including the city administration, the Amhara National Regional State administration, NGOs, civil society organizations, community-based organizations, religious institutions and educational institutions at all levels, are expected to join the university in promoting and implementing the learning city concept in due course. In addition, Bahir Dar University is planning to work with interested bodies at national and international levels. The diaspora is also expected to be part of this endeavour.

Bahir Dar University has established seven units, each with four university staff members, dedicated to building a learning

city. These units are Research; Intervention; Institutional Linkage; Mobilization and Events; Implementation; Monitoring and Evaluation; and Communication and Promotional Affairs. These units, which were inspired by the *Key Features of Learning Cities* (UIL, 2013), are financed by the university and external sources.

Continuous capacity-building activities for project staff have been implemented in order to create awareness of the concepts of lifelong learning and the learning city, informal and non-formal learning, adult learning, and building and enhancing communities of practice. Moreover, the university has initiated a needs-assessment study that will identify gaps and resources.



# Implementation

## Provision of lifelong learning

Several programmes and activities have been offered by different institutions in the city that in one way or another promote lifelong learning. Examples include book fairs, concerts, community development activities, cultural events, annual sports events and different types of training offered by various providers.

Several public and private training institutes in Bahir Dar provide lessons in local and foreign languages, music, driving, computer skills, martial arts, sport and fitness, cooking, acting and study skills. Tutorials are also provided for schoolchildren and university students in order to give them academic support. In addition, children may take part in extracurricular activities based on themes such as literature, film, dance, debating, sport, environmental protection, HIV/AIDS prevention, gender and reproductive health. Bahir Dar is currently expanding the number of clubs offering such activities.

Nationwide community education programmes are organized, financed and provided by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture. For example, the Health Extension Programme is a non-formal education activity aimed at creating a healthy society through the provision of education and training for individual households in communities. It is unique in that the health extension workers go to citizens' homes instead of members of households going to a central location.

The Integrated Functional Adult Literacy programme is run by the Ministry of Education. Its target groups are youth and adults older than 15 years. It is different from previous literacy activities offered by the ministry in that it has a functional approach, integrating literacy and

numeracy components that learners need in their daily lives. Activities take place in locations that are convenient for learners.

Nations, Nationalities and People's Day is an annual event celebrated across the country on 8 December. The day is organized by the Ministry of Federal Affairs. It is a day of festivity and learning on which citizens celebrate the many different cultures in Ethiopia.

*Activities take place in locations that are convenient for learners.*



*Continuous professional development training at Bahir Dar University*



## Example of innovation or good practice

### **Bahir Dar University's 'Dengel' (Papyrus) Protection and Development Project**

#### **Objectives**

This project has a number of environmental objectives. These include purifying the water that goes into rivers and lakes; preventing soil erosion and silting in lakes, dams, and other water bodies; protecting fish by reducing harmful invasive seaweed; and creating and expanding green, clean and attractive spaces. The project's learning objectives include enhancing community awareness on environmental issues; providing skills training for unemployed citizens of the city by teaching them how to craft various household utensils out of papyrus; and creating job opportunities through the sale of these papyrus products.

#### **Main target groups**

The main target groups include communities that live next to bodies of water and unemployed citizens.

#### **Main activities**

The main activities in the papyrus protection and development project include consultations with city and local administrative bodies and members of the local community; identification and preparation of planting areas; recruitment of unemployed individuals to participate in the project; planting of papyrus seedlings; provision of craft training; and promotion of the project and raising of environmental awareness.

# Mobilization and utilization of resources



© Bahir Dar University

Primary school children learning at Sebatamit School

Education and training offered by public institutions at different levels are financed by the federal government. For participants, such services are either free or are covered by a long-term loan scheme. The majority of learning programmes provided by private operators must be paid for by learners. Non-governmental and charity organizations cover the costs of some education.

All the costs to date of the Learning Community Programme have been borne by Bahir Dar University. However, the university's Mobilization and Events unit intends to develop innovative ways of mobilizing human, technological, financial and intellectual resources. These will include organizing fundraising events, mobilizing the diaspora, stimulating active citizenship and volunteering, and networking with other cities.

## Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation in public institutes are carried out by special units organized to carry out these activities by the specific government institutions delivering learning opportunities. For example, the Ministry of Education and its structures to the local level have a monitoring and evaluation unit tasked with this specific activity. The same is true for the non-governmental organizations delivering learning opportunities for the citizens of the city or country. However, as for the Learning Community Programme in Bahir Dar, as already mentioned, the university has set up a Monitoring and Evaluation unit. This will ensure that all activities are carried out as planned, that all the required resources are delivered and utilized as planned and that identified institutions contribute what is expected of them. It will also collaborate with the Research unit to conduct continuous evaluations of the project activities.

# Impacts and challenges

*Bahir Dar is becoming safer, greener, fairer, friendlier, more democratic, more tolerant and more entrepreneurial.*

## Impacts

The educational and training opportunities offered in Bahir Dar are helping individuals to become more knowledgeable, skilled and democratic as well as more concerned for their environment and their fellow citizens. Citizens are trying out new technologies and are finding it easier to adapt to change. Another impact of the various educational and learning opportunities is that individuals are learning that they are interconnected and that they are part of a global society. This is giving them more mobility, enabling them to realize their potential and helping them to find employment. In general, Bahir Dar is becoming safer, greener, fairer, friendlier, more democratic, more tolerant and more entrepreneurial.

## Challenges

One major challenge is that while most of the governmental departments that could support Bahir Dar University in building a learning city have demonstrated political will, they are insufficiently staffed. As a result, it is very difficult to get their full cooperation.

A second challenge is that the concepts of lifelong learning and the learning city are relatively new to most of the actors involved. This requires awareness-raising events tailored to a diverse range of stakeholders.

Thirdly, there is a lack of lifelong learning and learning city policies at national and city level. Lobbying for the design and enactment of such policies requires a special kind of expertise and coordination among national and international organizations and stakeholders.

*A Sunday street market in Bahir Dar*





## Lessons learned and recommendations

It is becoming apparent that the university has to find innovative ways of ensuring the active involvement of stakeholders in the implementation of the learning city. This might involve attending various events hosted by stakeholders and using these opportunities to promote the learning city concept and activities. Approaching the key decision-makers informally could also prove successful. Media exposure is another possible way of bringing various actors on board.

Awareness-raising events on lifelong learning, the learning city and other related concepts need to be organized and delivered for various organizations in the city. This will enable organizations to see beyond their own specific goals and recognize that they are working towards the bigger goal of creating a learning community in Bahir Dar.

The support of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and other organizations working towards the promotion of adult, lifelong and non-formal learning is also highly important when lobbying for the enactment of lifelong learning and learning city policies at national level. This support can take the form of capacity-building, lobbying, networking, partnership formation and material provision.

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## Profile

Total population of the city\* 260,753

Urban population density\* 835  
*inhabitants per square kilometre*

Total area of the city 528  
*in square kilometres*

GDP per capita of the country\* 49,146.6  
*in US dollars*

Age structure\*  
*in per cent*

0–14 19.5

15–24 12.6

25–59 49.4

60+ 18.5

Average number of years of schooling  
completed by people aged 15 and above\*

Men 12.9

Women 13.1

Average life expectancy at birth  
in Finland\* 80.9

*in years*


Men 77.5

Women 83.4

\* most recent available data







*I have realized that whatever we do together with the residents is worthwhile. The strongest asset that Espoo has is its active people, enterprises, associations and communities. The goal is to build a sustainable future for well-being in everyday life. This is what being a renewable and learning city is all about.*

Jukka Mäkelä, Mayor of Espoo



Learning city initiatives are playing an important role in the City of Espoo's efforts to ensure the well-being and inclusion of its citizens. While Finland's school system has long been admired internationally, Espoo nonetheless faces some significant challenges in ensuring that all of its citizens avail themselves of lifelong learning opportunities. These challenges include a tight budget, a lack of suitable learning spaces and dramatic demographic and technological changes. The city has established numerous programmes that are addressing these challenges. The ultimate aim of these programmes is to foster competent and creative residents with a learning spirit who can function in an uncertain future.

*Espoo aims to equip learners with twenty-first century skills*



## Introduction

### General overview

The entire municipal structure is currently being reorganized in Finland. Largely due to economic factors, many municipalities are merging into larger units. This has stimulated debate on the future shape and size of Espoo, a city that is growing by around 4,000 inhabitants a year. Espoo has a relatively good framework for providing services to citizens, even though economic conditions are becoming more difficult there, as they are elsewhere in Finland. The national education system is well-established but is constantly undergoing reform.

### Main issues to be tackled

Espoo's main aim is to enable all its citizens to fulfil their potential by providing them with opportunities to follow consistent learning paths. At the same time, however, Espoo is struggling with finances, and so it needs to do more with less money. This involves becoming more creative in finding cost-effective ways to provide quality education that will meet future needs.

Espoo wants to promote the well-being of its young people and ensure that they prosper in the city's schools. Learning results in the city have been consistently good. Schools in Espoo rank among the best in Finland, according to PISA and other performance studies. However, Finnish children say that they do not enjoy school. One current problem in Espoo is school buildings, some of which are a health risk. More than 3,000 students and staff have been relocated from unsafe schools this year. Safe buildings are essential for creating environments in which students can experience the joy of learning. In addition, the real-life relevance of education needs to be improved. Making sure that no young person drops out of the education system is also extremely important.

Another priority is Espoo's growing number of older people. The city aims to keep these citizens mentally and physically active and healthy for as long as possible, to enable them to live in their own homes and to encourage them to play an active role in society. Several programmes are in place to make life more meaningful and enjoyable for older people. A growing sense of loneliness among older people in Finland is another problem that needs to be addressed.

Digitalization brings new challenges for all age groups. Older people, in particular, need to develop the skills that are essential for living in the digital world. Small-scale workshops in which young students teach older people how to use ICT tools have been organized in city libraries.

Our society is becoming more multicultural and diverse. This is a rather new phenomenon in Finland, and its impact

tends to be most immediately apparent in metropolitan areas. Multiculturalism has influenced the city's services, which have become more flexible and accessible to immigrants. Espoo's lifelong educational services have a special role to play in helping newcomers settle into this society while maintaining their own cultural identity.

### Motives for becoming a learning city

According to *The Espoo Story*, a document that sets out the city's strategy in a narrative form, Espoo's goal is to be a good place to live, learn, work and do business in, and to be a place where residents can have their say. Ensuring the well-being and inclusion of all its citizens is therefore a key objective. Providing every citizen with opportunities for lifelong learning plays an important role in achieving this objective.

*Espoo's lifelong educational services have a special role to play in helping newcomers settle into this society while maintaining their own cultural identity.*

*By providing consistent and fluid learning paths, Espoo wants to enable everyone to fulfil their potential*



© Dynamo

# Learning city policies and strategies

*It is important that residents can participate in developing the city's education and learning services, and that these services are flexible and adjustable.*

## Definition of a learning city

Espoo does not have an explicit definition of a learning city. However, the city places great emphasis on encouraging an active life for all citizens no matter what their age. Lifelong learning can play a major role in this regard. Lifelong learning in the City of Espoo is understood to mean all learning that takes place over the course of an entire lifetime. The purpose of learning is to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies that an individual needs across all facets of life. The city aims to ensure that everyone feels secure enough to try new things without being afraid of failure. It is important that residents can participate in developing the city's education and learning services, and that these services are flexible and adjustable.

## Vision and objectives

The Espoo Local Development Plan for Education 2020 states that Espoo aims to be a competent municipality known for its fairness, its commitment to residents and clients, and its pioneering yet responsible approach. However, these goals can only be achieved together with Espoo residents who are fulfilling their own personal goals.

The goals of the Espoo Local Development Plan for Education 2020 are to promote:

- competent and creative residents with a learning spirit who can function in an uncertain future;
- consistent learning paths for all learners to follow throughout their various life stages in harmony with the environment; and
- responsible leadership involving individual and shared responsibility for the realization of common goals.

## Legislative framework

Lifelong learning is very much embedded in most Finnish educational legislation, beginning with the Basic Education Act. In many parts of Finland, lifelong learning is thought to refer to learning after formal education. However, more and more bodies are using the term to refer to the whole life course. Finnish legislation reflects this interpretation. It also encourages cities to take an active role in implementing lifelong learning. Finnish cities have broad responsibility for the provision of basic services such as education for their residents. Cities are quite independent and establish their educational policies themselves. Some cities have drawn up a specific policy document on lifelong learning.

Youth Guarantee is a national scheme ensuring that all people under the age of 30 are offered a high-quality job, further education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. Youth Guarantee is an outcome-focused approach that aims to enhance the employability of young people with a view to long-term labour market integration.

*The Espoo Story* portrays the past, present and future of Espoo. It also identifies the city's greatest challenges. These challenges are being tackled through the following cross-functional development programmes:

- Vitality for Older People;
- Sustainable Development;
- Competitiveness, Innovation and Entrepreneurship;
- Youth Vitality; and
- A Participatory Espoo.

The City of Espoo has shown its commitment to lifelong learning in the Espoo Local Development Plan for Education, which is an implementation of *The Espoo Story* on education. It was devised in 2013 by a large number of stakeholders,



and was part of the Espoo City Council 2014 strategy process. This development plan guides all educational activities in Espoo.

Espoo has recently made a decision to concentrate central education services for adults in an Adult Learning Services Centre. This centre unites Espoo Community College, Espoo General Upper Secondary School for Adults, Omnia Apprenticeship Training Centre and Omnia Vocational Adult Education Centre. The idea is to provide all services under one roof in order to help learners follow a personal lifelong learning path combining professional and leisure goals.

### **Governance and partnership**

The bodies responsible for lifelong learning policies in Finland at the national level are the Ministry of Education and Culture, the National Board of Education and the National Evaluation Centre. The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment promote lifelong learning regionally. The Ministry of Education and Culture has nominated the Council for Lifelong Learning to deal with the relationship between education and working life as well as the prerequisites for lifelong learning and adult education policy. All these bodies can give recommendations for promoting lifelong learning at a local level.

The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities comprises the cities and other municipalities in Finland. The association's goal is to promote opportunities for local authorities to operate and cooperate, and to enhance their vitality and viability for the benefit of residents. The task of cultural and educational services in municipalities is to promote citizens' skills and competence in accordance with the principle of lifelong learning. Local authorities finance and provide education through a network of educational institutions from preschools

to universities of applied sciences. The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities supports the cities in this regard.

Finland has a long tradition of NGOs that, due to government resources being tied up in the provision of formal education for the nation state, have adopted lifelong learning as part of their agenda. Today they work together with cities in their endeavours.

The Finnish Lifelong Learning Foundation offers expertise and services to support learning and build a society of learners. The foundation, which was established in 1874, cooperates with a wide variety of adult education stakeholders in Finland and internationally. It seeks to influence education policies in order to improve non-formal adult education in Finnish society. The foundation is known for its online journal *Lifelong Learning in Europe (LLinE)*.

The Finnish Association of Adult Education Centres is an umbrella organization for adult education centres in Finland. It was founded in 1919 as an NGO and its main task is to improve and promote adult education and learning in Finland. The Finnish Association of Adult Education Centres carries out further training programmes and development projects for the staff of adult education centres and sends out newsletters to its members. It is represented in many committees, working groups and networks of adult education. One of the association's major objectives is to promote international relationships and to operate as a partner for international contacts.

The Finnish Adult Education Association (FAEA) is an umbrella organization for national non-formal adult education associations in Finland. It is a non-governmental organization that was founded in 1969. The FAEA's main responsibilities are promoting non-formal adult education and learning, conducting research on non-formal adult education and encouraging international cooperation.

# Implementation

*Espoo has a diverse range of educational opportunities aimed at creating a consistent learning path throughout life.*

## Provision of lifelong learning

Espoo has a diverse range of educational opportunities aimed at creating a consistent learning path throughout life. The following paragraphs describe just a few examples.

Espoo is one of the United Nations University's Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCE). Espoo became the first Finnish member of the network in 2011. Members of the RCE network around the world distribute research data, experiences and good practice and promote dialogue and cooperation in order to build a sustainable future. RCE Espoo focuses on the ecological, social and financial aspects of sustainable development.

The innovation education network Innokas, which is coordinated by the City of Espoo along with the Finnish Department of Teacher Education, the University of Helsinki and six other regional coordinators in Finland, guides and encourages students, teachers, school administrators and other stakeholders to be creative and innovative using available technology. Information and communications technology, coding, robotics and other technology play an important role in lifelong learning for all people, no matter what their age. Innokas therefore encourages kids and adults to come up together with new ways to make use of technology in everyday school life.

The Culture Clinics initiative is currently being run in three maternity clinics in Espoo. It helps families with young children support their child's cognitive, emotional and physical development through creative activities at home and in local art centres. Culture Clinics was launched in 2012.

The KULPS! programme aims to offer all children in Espoo equal access to local arts and sports activities. It provides learning opportunities for comprehensive school students at local cultural organizations and sports venues. The content of the KULPS! programme is designed to support the Finnish national curriculum. Visits to cultural and sports venues take place during the school day and students are accompanied by their teachers. KULPS! was launched in 2008.

The Cultural Buddy programme pairs trained volunteers with local residents who, due to their financial situation, mobility problems or feelings of loneliness, may otherwise find it difficult to participate in cultural activities. The Cultural Buddy programme makes participation easier by providing company and support during cultural activities. Cultural Buddy activities, which are free of charge, are aimed chiefly at older people. The programme began in 2014.

In the Cultural Chain programme, local artists and art associations based in Espoo provide a variety of activities for older people living in care homes and hospitals. Activities range from live performances and art workshops to book readings. The aim is to promote the health and well-being of older people. The programme was created in Espoo between 2007 and 2008.



© Eva Witenius

Boys read in a library bus. Espoo's libraries are popular meeting places.

Many Espoo libraries are located in major shopping centres. In addition to their usual functions, these libraries serve as meeting places. Jukebox is an example of a meeting place in one of Espoo's libraries. Jukebox is a space for young people to relax, watch performances and create their own programme for the Jukebox Open Stage. The space is well-equipped and can be booked through library staff, who also organize dance evenings and music sessions for young people. Jukebox has about 5,000 visitors a month, some of whom are immigrant and underprivileged children.

Other cultural programmes in libraries in Espoo provide residents with a variety of free workshops to help them tackle everyday issues and learn new skills such as languages or IT skills.

Espoo Community College offers a wide selection of courses for adults for affordable fees. Courses in languages and music are very popular.

Vindängen offers a wide range of services in Swedish for people of all ages, from toddlers to older people. It also serves as a meeting place for different generations of Espoo's Swedish-speaking minority. Joint storytelling workshops are organized for primary schoolchildren and older people. The older people choose stories from their lives, in particular stories about their own childhoods, that they want to share with the children. The children work on the stories and create short plays that they then perform for the older people. The collaboration has been well-received, and Vindängen wishes to continue these workshops.



# Example of innovation or good practice

*It is important to provide learning facilities that enable the same location to be used for many different kinds of learning purposes.*

## **Flexible places for learning: temporary learning environments enabling renewable learning**

### **Objectives**

Many schools in Espoo are currently operating in temporary locations, as they have had to leave their former buildings for renovation, health or other reasons. Some schools have turned their relocation to temporary premises into an opportunity to change their teaching and operating habits. One secondary school has relocated to an old printing house. The school has grown, and as a result it now has to use the building's attic space. This attic, which is not divided into classrooms, serves as a multifunctional space. It has been equipped with Wi-Fi and digital tools. The school is currently using the space to pilot e-examinations, which will replace traditional secondary school final examinations throughout Finland in 2016. In addition, the space operates as an open learning space.

Examples such as this have made the city authorities think about how spaces can be used differently to make learning happen. They have also triggered debate on the future of learning. Here is an opportunity to see school as a service rather than a building. How can physical, virtual and flexible environments best support renewable learning (i.e. learning that makes students rethink what they have learned before and perhaps change

their understanding of it)? What new teaching and learning methods and what kind of learning environments can support learning while ensuring that students enjoy being at school? From a technological perspective it is important to find ways to make use of the skills and knowledge people have acquired in non-formal arenas. The primary objective of this project is thus to create and model cost-effective yet flexible conditions that support renewable learning and well-being in schools.

### **Main target groups**

The main target group in the first stage of the development project is a school community operating in a temporary location (in the pilot study it will be Tapiola School). The school community comprises students, teachers and other staff, parents, and other stakeholders. The project also involves furnishing companies, designers and builders.

The lessons learned will be used for the whole Espoo learning city community in order to change the working cultures and environments little by little in all the places where learning is meant to happen. School buildings and other places dedicated to learning need to open up to the surrounding communities and embrace lifelong learning opportunities. It is important to provide learning facilities that enable the same location to be used for many different kinds of learning purposes.

Educational administration needs to work together with the technical sector in the city in planning future school sites and renovating old ones so that they better serve the learning needs of the future. The project aims to deliver results with both national and international impact for future school users, designers and decision-makers.

### Main activities

The aim is to conduct an effective collaborative process whereby diverse stakeholders conceptualize the school of the future and learn from each other. New concepts are currently being prototyped, tested and evaluated. Aalto University and University of Helsinki researchers are collecting intervention data in order to develop evidence-based designs and usable solutions.

The project has three phases:

1. co-creating new flexible physical and digital learning environments with diverse stakeholders;
2. conducting intervention studies and collecting data before and after new solutions are invented, with an emphasis on inspiring learning and ensuring the usability of learning environments; and
3. conceptualizing a model based on the experiments and creating a design and user manual for the school of the future.



© Kari Sarkkinen

Students at an adult education centre

The outcomes of the project are:

- evidence on the efficacy of new models of future schools from the perspectives of learning, working and the usability of facilities;
- a design and user manual for the school of the future; and
- a collaborative experience for city authorities, users of the school (students, teachers, staff, parents, service providers) and the local community.

This is the first of a three-phase development project that ultimately aims to create a prototype of a learning environment that supports renewable learning. The future phases of this groundbreaking project will then scale up the prototype for wider use. The project, which is in its early stages, has just received generous funding from the Finnish National Board of Education.

# Mobilization and utilization of resources

*A willingness to collaborate has been more important than additional financing in Espoo. The city aspires to work in networks and share resources.*

Espoo has received some funding from the National Board of Education, which acts in Finland as the national development office for education. For example, the Flexible Places for Learning project received funding from this source. Various EU funds and other international opportunities that are announced through Finnish development bodies are also being used.

The City Council of Espoo has reserved some seed money for implementing its cross-sectional programmes in order to break down the silos in the city administration. One such programme is Youth Vitality, which funds activities related to Youth Guarantee.

Residents, communities and companies are Espoo's best resources. The active involvement of residents in the development of services and cooperation with partners ensure successful services that meet the needs of residents.

A willingness to collaborate has been more important than additional financing in Espoo. The city aspires to work in networks and share resources. Espoo has made a strategic decision to collaborate with its partners in many ways. As a city, Espoo does not run all its services itself, but rather invites third-sector organizations to manage some activities. The city pays those organizations for their services, thereby supporting their work. For example, many sports clubs manage city sports activities, music schools teach students to play musical instruments and run choirs and orchestras, and some churches organize after-school activities for younger students. This is also the city's way of helping civil society organizations to survive and reach out to city residents.

Another example of Espoo's pioneering approach is the network that has been created between the city and other educational organizations that operate in

the city. This cross-functional and cross-institutional collaboration has proven to be fruitful. In the InnoEspoo model, collaboration between the city and educational institutions happens on the levels of strategic leadership and shared communication platforms as well as on the practical project and education level. For example, the Espoo Local Development Plan was prepared within these networks, which is why the participating organizations are genuinely committed to it. In addition, the city is working on involving private businesses and NGOs in these collaborative processes.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The City of Espoo uses a balanced scorecard four times a year to evaluate progress towards key objectives. The development and results of cross-sectoral development programmes are also reported to the city council four times a year. In addition, each development programme is required to have an evaluation system in place. Espoo systematically assesses customer satisfaction, service provider results, and student and staff well-being. Furthermore, it takes part in national and international performance surveys of learning outcomes (such as PISA and PIAAC). The city is constantly improving its methods of gathering feedback and conducting evaluations. Last year Espoo purchased a new tool to make electronic surveys and information-gathering easier.

A systematic self-assessment process takes place in each of Espoo's schools every three years, whereby students, staff and parents give feedback on schools' culture and management. The city also takes part in metropolitan area student surveys with one cohort per year. This reveals how children and young people are performing in Espoo compared with other cities.



# Impacts and challenges

## Impacts

The learning city actions help Espoo to inform its citizens that good learning and activity opportunities are available in Espoo and that these opportunities are easy to reach. Lifelong learning opportunities in Espoo give learners better motivation, a sense of life management and the skills to adapt to future demands.

Espoo strongly believes that culture can enhance well-being. It is therefore important to provide cultural activities from early on in life. Likewise, physical education and sports activities can help

people to keep fit throughout life. It is important that everyone finds his or her own interests, and that everyone receives guidance in this respect.

It is important to increase the sense of community among Espoo residents. This can be a great source of strength for the city. Loneliness is a growing social problem across all age groups, and so it is important that no one is left alone. Moving from social care to inclusion makes society more effective but also more human. Preventative actions are ultimately a better investment for everyone.

*Northern Europe's largest innovation hub is located in the Espoo district of Otaniemi*



© Tuire Ruokosuo



*Espoo offers opportunities for citizens to remain active throughout their lives*

On the city level, the strategy of taking the city's services to places where people otherwise go in their daily lives has proven to be successful. The use of library services, for example, has increased since libraries were opened in shopping centres. Designing schools as multipurpose spaces provides meeting places for people and creates cost-effective spaces that perform diverse functions for the city.

The creation of the new Adult Learning Services Centre is improving opportunities for lifelong learning by bringing many of Espoo's education services for adults together under one roof. This step has made these services easier to find.

### **Challenges**

Education has long been valued highly in Finland. The challenge is to ensure that this remains the case. What if people lose their belief that formal education offers added value? What role should informal learning play? How does the city motivate people to keep learning throughout life?

As already discussed, one of Espoo's greatest challenges is its shortage of spaces that support renewable learning. The city is growing, often in areas where there are currently no schools. Another problem is that many existing school buildings are not in good condition and need to be renovated.

The rapid development of new digital technologies presents another challenge. To what extent and how should the city keep up with new technologies? How can it deploy digital technologies so as to make better use of the knowledge and skills learned in non-formal settings?

## Lessons learned and recommendations

The learning city concept has helped the City of Espoo develop an approach to education that concentrates on giving individual learners opportunities to learn. This approach has led the city to organize its activities and administration in a more customer-orientated way. In addition, the city recognizes that it cannot achieve its goals alone. That is why it has established the InnoEspoo network, which enables education service providers in the area to collaborate on improving education services in Espoo.

Effective strategy tools and evaluation systems are in place in Espoo. The city now needs to decide how these systems can integrate systematic evaluation of progress towards both global learning city objectives and Espoo's own Local Development Plan goals.

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# Cork

Ireland

## Profile

Total population of the metropolitan area\* 289,739

Urban population density\* 347.83  
*inhabitants per square kilometre*

Total area of the city\* 833  
*in square kilometres*

GVA (gross value added) per capita  
of the city\* 47,610  
*in US dollars*

GDP per capita of the country\* 39,290  
*in US dollars*

Age structure\*  
*in per cent*

0–14	20
15–24	14
25–59	50
60+	16

Average number of years of schooling  
completed by people aged 15 and above\*


Men	13.7
Women	13.7

Average life expectancy at birth  
in the city\* 80.9  
*in years*

\* most recent available data







*Building a learning city falls under the heading 'Skills and human capital' of our current Cork City Development Plan 2015–2021, which promises that the council will work with the education and training sectors to develop the skills of its people to match the needs of existing and future businesses. Learning is therefore seen as crucial in meeting not only the individual's needs but also the city's economic and developmental goals.*

Ms Mary Shields, Mayor of Cork





As the second-largest city in Ireland and the main economic driver in its region, Cork has a strong learning infrastructure that includes two major higher education institutions (University College Cork [UCC] and Cork Institute of Technology [CIT]), three of the state's five largest colleges of further education, a wide range of complementary and second-chance education opportunities, and initiatives tackling educational disadvantage in both formal and community settings. The city council has been committed to developing Cork as a learning city since 2002 and formally adopted the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* in 2014. Cork has developed many initiatives that work towards this aspiration. One of these is the Lifelong Learning Festival, which runs annually and has grown each year since its establishment in 2004. Furthermore, Cork enjoys an international profile as a learning city thanks to its membership of PASCAL International Exchanges (PIE), a project that fosters exchange on lifelong learning between local, community and city organizations throughout the world.

## Introduction

### General overview

Metropolitan Cork has enjoyed rapid growth in recent years, having attracted foreign investment in pharmaceuticals and healthcare, information and communications technology, and internationally traded services. There are considerable differences in wealth across various parts of the city, however. Unemployment has affected disadvantaged areas particularly badly as a result of the loss of the city's manufacturing base in the 1980s. This development has been exacerbated by the nationwide economic downturn that began in 2008. Over recent decades, the Irish Government and local authorities have targeted such disadvantaged areas with programmes aimed at counteracting intergenerational issues such as low literacy skills, early school leaving and unemployment.

### Main issues to be tackled

A significant percentage of the Irish population is not achieving its full potential as a result of unsatisfactory initial experiences of education. The 2012 OECD PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) study surveyed twenty-four countries and placed Ireland in seventeenth place for literacy (with 18 per cent of those surveyed at or below the lowest level) and in nineteenth place for numeracy (with 24 per cent at or below the lowest level). The survey also found that 42 per cent of the Irish adults surveyed were at or below the lowest level in problem-solving. This means that a significant percentage of the adult population is unable to participate fully in a modern knowledge-based society. Early school leaving is also a major contributing factor to the high levels of unemployment in certain parts of Cork City, with more than 40 per cent of the total population of some parts of the city leaving school early. In addition to long-term unemployment, people who do not do well in formal





*A young participant enjoys the Cork Lifelong Learning Festival*

education often face other challenges, such as a lack of self-confidence and coping skills, isolation, addiction and social exclusion. In the most disadvantaged areas of Cork, these challenges are frequently intergenerational. Breaking that cycle is one of the main aims of Cork's lifelong learning strategies and activities.

Another challenge facing the city is an imbalance in spatial development. Rapidly developed suburbs are largely home to young families, while large sections of urban housing are occupied by older people or welfare-dependent individuals and families. Furthermore, a 'doughnut' effect is emerging, with retail developments on the city's outskirts draining activity from the centre. This has knock-on effects on jobs and related services.

Immigration has transformed Cork's population over the past few years, with the city experiencing a dramatic increase in the number of people from Africa and Eastern Europe. Integrating these migrants therefore constitutes another challenge.

As a waterfront city, Cork is facing the environmental challenge posed by increasing incidences of flooding. The city therefore seeks to bring such environmental concerns into the heart of

lifelong learning and to integrate these with its responses to health, culture and the economy.

Finally, as the second-largest city in an island country, Cork's connectivity with the world is a challenge, both from a technological standpoint and in human terms. One of Cork City Council's objectives is to improve data connectivity. Cork's participation in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities also lessens the perceived distance between the city and the rest of the world.

### **Motives for becoming a learning city**

The main motives behind Cork's decision to become a learning city were to encourage investment, increase employment and generally improve the lives of the city's residents by reducing inequality and social exclusion.

An official designation as a learning city would be an acknowledgement of the work already done by many to develop a culture of lifelong learning, and it would provide encouragement to continue this work. It would also build on the positive profile of the city that was created when Cork was designated a WHO Healthy City in 2012.

# Learning city policies and strategies

Local authorities in Ireland support specific initiatives associated with lifelong learning but, unlike other countries, local government is not directly responsible for the provision of education or training.

## Definition of a learning city

*Imagine Our Future* (Cork City Council, 2001b), Cork City Development Board's 2002–2012 strategy for the economic, social and cultural development of the city, contains the following definition of Cork as a learning city:

We see Cork as a place:

- (i) Where access to learning is available for all levels and to all ages in the city.
- (ii) Where provision addresses comprehensively the diversity of learning needs.
- (iii) Where an ethos of quality underpins the provision of continuous learning opportunities for all citizens in the city.
- (iv) Where the city is recognized nationally and internationally as a centre of learning and research.
- (v) Where available information and knowledge are catalysts for creativity and learning.

## Vision and objectives

The aim of the *Imagine Our Future* strategy was to improve the quality of life of all citizens and to tackle the causes of social exclusion, including poverty and unemployment. The *Cork City Development Plan 2015–2021* (Cork City Council, 2014) identifies the enhancement of skills and human capital as critical for stimulating the city's economy and states that Cork City Council will work with the education and training sectors in order to meet the needs of existing and future businesses. Building a learning city therefore plays a key role in meeting the city's economic and developmental goals.

## Legislative framework

When published in 2000, the Department of Education and Science's *White Paper on Adult Education* represented a departure from the traditional understanding of the role of education in Irish society. This was because it asserted the importance of providing learning opportunities over the entire lifespan, embracing new forms of learning, recognizing that learning takes place in a range of settings beyond schools and universities, encouraging links with industry, and developing more flexible forms of provision. Thanks to this white paper, lifelong learning continues to be the governing principle of education policy in Ireland.

In 2002 Cork City Council adopted the Cork City Development Board's *Imagine Our Future* strategy, thereby committing itself to working towards making Cork a learning city.

In April 2014 Cork City Council adopted the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities*, so far the only city authority in Ireland to do so.

## Governance and partnership

Local authorities in Ireland support specific initiatives associated with lifelong learning but, unlike other countries, local government is not directly responsible for the provision of education or training. Instead, education in Ireland is organized and financed by the Irish Government through its Department of Education and Skills, which runs primary and most secondary schools. Universities, institutes of technology and colleges of education are largely funded by the state through the Higher Education Authority (HEA). Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) maintains, develops and reviews the National Qualifications Framework which, since 2003, has formed the basis of a flexible and integrated system aimed at developing



© Cork City Council

*The quadrangle at University College Cork, which was founded in 1845 as Queen's College*

a lifelong learning society. It awards certification, working with all providers of education including Cork ETB, UCC, CIT, and commercial and private providers.

All learning institutions in Cork are integrated through the City Learning Forum, which was established under the City Development Board in 2003. This forum brings together all stakeholders in education and training, from preschool to higher and community education as well as work-based learning initiatives. It includes policymakers, providers, learners, trade unions, the private sector and other relevant public service providers. It has facilitated an integrated view of issues affecting learning in the city.

The Cork Education and Training Board (Cork ETB), which is funded by the Irish Government, runs adult and further education programmes as well as some secondary schools in Cork. It also runs the Youthreach programme for early school leavers, Skills for Work (a workplace learning programme), community training workshops, the Adult Basic Education Service and the Adult Guidance Service. In partnership with other statutory organizations such as the Health Service Executive (HSE), Cork ETB is involved in many other projects too, including education for ex-prisoners, recovering addicts, homeless people and disabled people.

Cork Adult Education Council is a local voluntary organization supported by Cork ETB that has been promoting adult education opportunities for over forty years. It runs an annual exhibition on adult education and training that is hosted by Cork City Council in City Hall. Both UCC and CIT also have active access programmes and a regional mission to provide lifelong learning opportunities for adults.

A number of organizations in Cork have evolved best-practice models for promoting social inclusion through education and training by collaborating on projects that support early school leavers, in particular Travellers, ex-prisoners, people in recovery from addiction, and migrants who do not speak English as their first language. In September 2014, fourteen of these organizations came together to form Cork Equal and Sustainable Communities Alliance (CESCA), which aims to pool resources and expertise, achieve cost-savings and address gaps in provision.

With regard to international partnerships, Cork was the first Irish city to become a member of PASCAL International Exchanges (PIE). Cork's involvement in PIE has led to its adoption of the EcCoWell approach (Ec = ecology and economy; Co = community and culture; Well = well-being and lifelong learning), which offers a creative means of integrating thinking and planning across the fields of economics, the environment, health, learning and social inclusion.



# Implementation



© Cork City Council

University College Cork and the Cork Institute of Technology are renowned for research in the sciences

Over its eleven years the festival has grown to showcase opportunities for learning and training to people of all ages, abilities and interests.

## Provision of lifelong learning

Considering the wide range of Cork's educational community network, the following are just some examples of the city's provision of lifelong learning.

Hundreds of courses are organized for older people every year, such as basic IT skills courses and an intergenerational project in Mahon (one of the city's more disadvantaged areas), where school students teach their older neighbours how to use mobile phones.

One Book, One Community is a family reading project organized by home-school community liaison teachers in disadvantaged schools and preschools. Copies of a chosen book are distributed free of charge to schoolchildren, who take these books home with them to read with their families. Activities inspired by the chosen book requiring parental involvement, such as quizzes and arts and crafts, take place over the course of the year.

Year-round cross-border, cross-community projects are organized by the Cork Festival of Lifelong Learning in partnership with the Féile an Phobail annual community arts festival in Belfast. When these projects began in 2011, the organizations involved in Cork were Meitheal Mara (translates roughly from Gaelic as 'workers of the sea'), a community boatyard and nationally accredited boatbuilding training centre, and Mahon Community Development Project (CDP). Organizations initially involved in Belfast were Féile an Phobail's youth section and the Mural Artists Collective. That has grown over the last three years to involve others, including youth projects in both Republican and Loyalist communities and organizations working with unemployed men. The projects involve learning how to build and row traditional boats (currachs) and paint murals. These initiatives have meant that people from Northern Ireland have spent time in Cork (and vice versa) and have had the opportunity to learn about each other.

Project Refocus, which is supported by Cork City Council and the City Development Board and funded by the Department of Social Protection, is an inter-agency, community-based project aimed at 18- to 25-year-olds who are out of education or employment. In their first year, participants complete a programme that is designed to help them enter the workforce. Over the following three years, various education and training agencies monitor and support these participants in order to help them find and retain employment.

The establishment of the Cork Lifelong Learning Festival, which is described in more detail on the next page, is a key achievement in building a learning city. This festival involves participants from state, voluntary and private sectors that offer opportunities for learning and training. Over its eleven years the festival has grown to showcase opportunities for learning and training to people of all ages, abilities and interests.

## Example of innovation or good practice

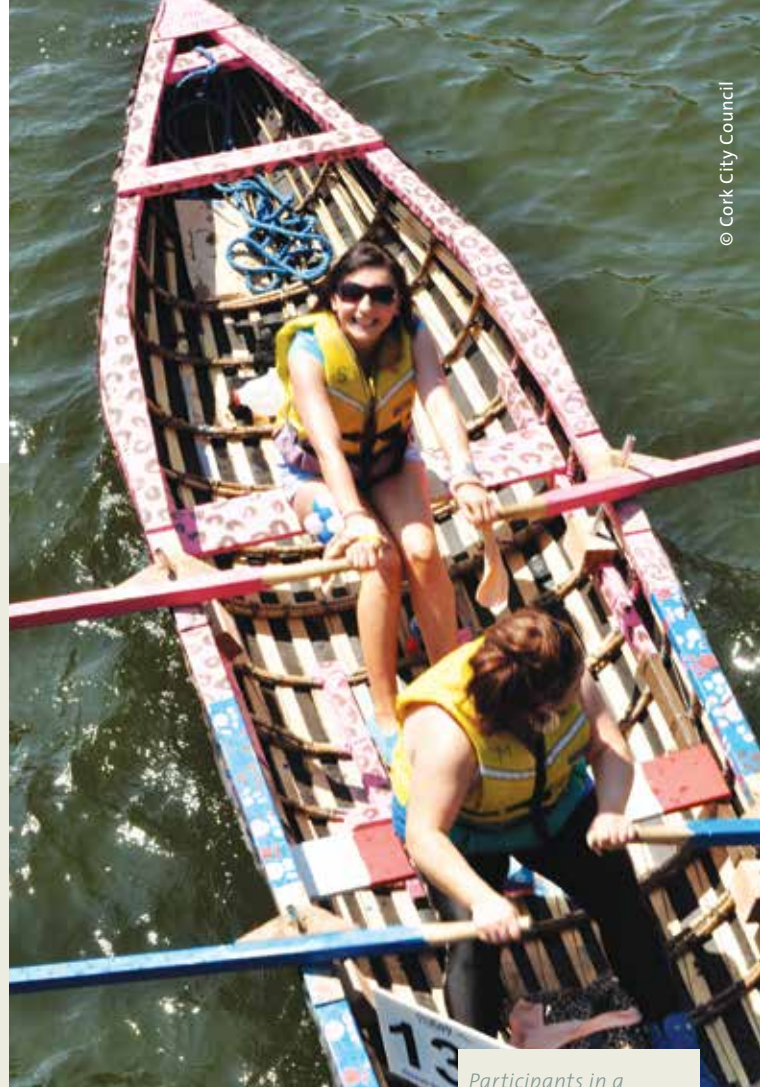
### Cork Lifelong Learning Festival

#### Objectives

The festival promotes and celebrates learning in all its forms and encourages participation by people of all ages and from all backgrounds, particularly those who might normally feel excluded from learning. The festival's motto is 'Investigate, Participate, Celebrate!' While showing that learning is fun, the festival also has a serious intent: to develop a culture of lifelong learning among all of Cork's citizens. Over its eleven years, the Cork Lifelong Learning Festival has challenged people's perceptions about learning. It has helped individuals and institutions reimagine the place that learning has in diverse activities and organizations, and to reposition learning as a core activity that is central to life in the city.

#### Main target groups

The festival is inclusive and encourages disadvantaged and marginalized people, such as disabled people, Travellers and immigrants, not only to attend events but also to organize their own. Every example of learning is valued equally, from PhD students discussing their research to older people learning how to crochet in their local community centre.



© Cork City Council

Participants in a traditional currach during the annual Ocean to City Rowing Race

#### Main activities

During the week there are about 500 events, all of which are free of charge. Events include performances, talks, tours, debates, taster classes, demonstrations, workshops and international seminars. The festival embraces all aspects of civic society, including the arts, industry, health, IT, the environment, genealogy, languages, local history and architecture.

Events are run by statutory bodies, voluntary and private organizations, and individuals offering learning opportunities. The events take place across the city and suburbs in colleges, schools, galleries, theatres, community and family centres, libraries, sports grounds, parks, streets and even on the water.

Many volunteers are involved in running events and each organization covers its own expenses. All are furnished with supplies of programmes and posters, and are advised on how to publicize their events.

# Mobilization and utilization of resources

Human, technological and intellectual resources and leadership are accessed through the festival's voluntary organizing committee, which meets year-round.

The Lifelong Learning Festival receives national funding indirectly through Cork ETB and Cork City Council. Festival costs are kept as low as possible; in general, total costs amount to approximately 25,000 euros for a week-long programme offering 500 free events.

UCC, CIT, the HSE, the QQI and the HEA provide financial support, as does the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, Ballyphehane Credit Union, O'Callaghan Properties (a local property development company) and Blacknight Solutions (an Irish internet

company). In addition, some city councillors donate money from their own ward funds.

Cross-border, cross-community projects organized in partnership with Féile an Phobail in Belfast are partly funded by the Cork branch of the peace-building charity Co-operation Ireland and by Cork City Council.

Cross-sectoral and private philanthropic initiatives also support lifelong learning projects. For example, Music Generation Cork, which provides music classes to disadvantaged young people, is partly funded by the band U2. The Discovery Science event, meanwhile, which is targeted at schoolchildren, is awarded national funding from Science Week Ireland, but also receives financial support from local scientific, pharmaceutical and electronics industries.

Human, technological and intellectual resources and leadership are accessed through the festival's voluntary organizing committee, which meets year-round. This committee is made up of volunteers and representatives of UCC, CIT, Cork City Council, Cork ETB, further education colleges, traveller and community education programmes, and the city library service.

The local *Evening Echo* newspaper and 96 FM radio station are the festival's media sponsors, providing coverage as well as free advertising. The River Lee Hotel supports the festival by accommodating guests visiting from abroad. Support for lifelong learning organizations in Cork often takes the form of benefits-in-kind. A good example is Meitheal Mara, the community boatyard and boatbuilding training centre discussed above. Meitheal Mara receives funding from local and statutory agencies, including the Garda Síochána (police



The Lifelong Learning Festival is inclusive, encouraging participation by everyone, including new residents and visitors to the city





*Cork is known as the food capital of Ireland due to the quality of its produce, which you can buy at the English Market in the city centre*

service), but two premises have also been donated to it: one by Cork City Council and the other by the local property developer O'Callaghan Properties.

In responding to the nationwide economic downturn and structural reform, both statutory organizations and NGOs have fewer resources to devote to non-core activities. Achieving the support of CEOs and heads of department in local government, educational institutions and partner organizations such as Cork Chamber of Commerce and the HSE has been key to building confidence that the lifelong learning city will remain part of their core business. Members of the Cork Lifelong Learning Festival's steering committee are planning a series of briefings for key organizations to ensure organization-wide buy-in and support for the objectives of the lifelong learning city initiative.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The festival organizing committee oversees and evaluates the festival on an on-going basis. The festival coordinator writes a comprehensive report after

each festival, which is presented to its organizing committee and sponsors. This report includes details of the number and types of events, feedback from participating organizations and individuals, and details of income and expenditure. An annual newsletter is circulated widely to all stakeholders. Regular updates on the festival were given to the Cork City Development Board (CDB) until earlier this year. The current reshaping of the CDB has seen it replaced by a Local Community Development Committee.

The city council's Strategic Policy Committee on Economic Development, which is made up of senior officials, staff and cross-party elected representatives, will oversee the next phase of Cork's development as a learning city. This committee reports to the Corporate Policy Group, which itself reports to the chief executive and the full city council. Educational programmes that operate in Cork and receive national funding are closely monitored by the relevant government body, as is the case when funding is received from Cork City Council or other statutory agencies such as the HSE.

# Impacts and challenges

*UNESCO interest helps to renew the commitment of bodies such as this beyond the lifetime of one lord mayor or the current local government.*

*Whatever your age, there is always something new to be learned during the festival*

## Impacts

The Lifelong Learning Festival has grown exponentially over the past eleven years. Starting with about sixty-five events over two days, it quickly became a week-long celebration, and has grown to now include about 500 events. These events fully reflect the variety and scope of learning experiences available across the city.

The festival has helped forge alliances between participants. It has also helped bring higher level institutions into contact with marginalized groups. Such contacts made between participants during the festival continue year-round. Some festival activities have also developed beyond the event to have a life of their own, such as the cross-border mural and boat-building projects already discussed.

Cork people are very proud that an initiative that started in their city is being emulated elsewhere. For example, Limerick City has followed in Cork's footsteps. For the past four years it has organized its own festival, which runs concurrently with the Cork event.

Through the festival's membership of PASCAL International Exchanges, it became involved in the EcCoWell concept, hosting first a seminar and later an international conference in 2013. This led in turn to an invitation from UNESCO to take part in the conference in Beijing. The Cork Lifelong Learning Festival has also been involved in EcCoWell events in Glasgow and Limerick and the PASCAL annual conference in Hong Kong. Recognition of Cork abroad has given a significant impetus to the city to persevere in its commitment to making Cork learning city.

## Challenges

Since the economic downturn in 2008, the election of a new Irish Government in 2011 and the election of a new local government in 2014, there have been many changes in the bodies involved in providing or supporting learning initiatives. There are concerns that these changes could affect the delivery and evaluation of learning city programmes. UNESCO interest helps to renew the commitment of bodies such as this beyond the lifetime of one lord mayor or the current local government.



© City Council

## Lessons learned and recommendations

The following are Cork's main recommendations for anyone considering organizing a lifelong learning festival:

- Start small and build up – encourage new participants to organize just one event the first year they are involved; if they are over-ambitious, they may be disappointed if events are not well attended.
- Keep participation voluntary.
- Ask all participants to publicize their event(s) and the festival as a whole; as well as the practical impact, this gives them a sense of ownership over the festival.
- Make sure that the kinds of learning showcased – formal, informal, certified and non-certified – are as broad as possible and that all are given equal billing in publicity material such as festival programmes.
- Do not restrict participation to the state sector; individuals, the voluntary and community sectors, and private and commercial providers should all play a part too.
- Publicly recognize and thank all those who organize events, as they do this on a voluntary basis. This can be done by sending thank-you letters and organizing receptions.
- Never forget that it's a festival – fun and celebration are a powerful means of changing attitudes to learning.

### Contact

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# Amman

Jordan

## Profile

Total population of the city\* 2,584,600

Urban population density\* 3,800.88  
*inhabitants per square kilometre*

Total area of the city\* 1,680  
*in square kilometres*

GDP per capita of the city\* 5,193  
*in US dollars*

GDP per capita of the country\* 4,413.70  
*in US dollars*

Age structure\*  
*in per cent*

0–14 35.10

15–24 21.32

25–59 37.89

60+ 5.69

Average number of years of schooling  
completed by people aged 15 and above\*

Men 6.9

Women 6.9

Average life expectancy at birth  
in the city\* y

80.9

*in years*

Men 72.7

Women 76.7

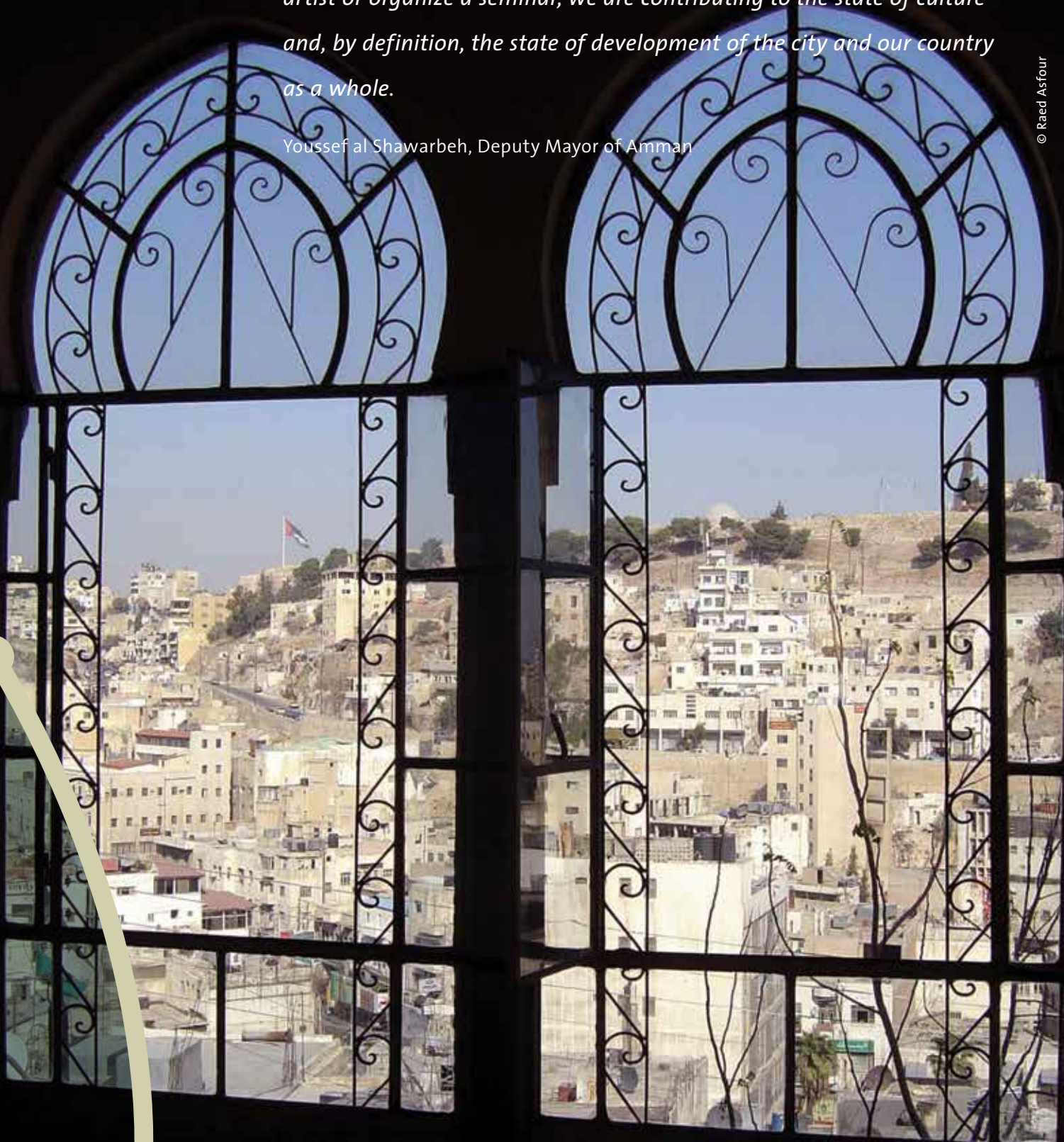
\* most recent available data





*The independence of Jordan was declared from the balcony of Amman municipality on 25 May 1946. Since then, the social responsibility of the city has hinged on sharing and engaging with the community and this has been, and continues to be, a main pillar of the work of the municipality. Whether we print a book, produce a play, support an artist or organize a seminar, we are contributing to the state of culture and, by definition, the state of development of the city and our country as a whole.*

Youssef al Shawarbeh, Deputy Mayor of Amman





Amman's learning city project, a collaborative initiative between the Arab Education Forum and Greater Amman Municipality that was launched in 2011, is called 'Jeera: Amman Learning and Convivial City'. The project, which aims to promote informal and non-formal learning opportunities in local communities, is the first of its kind in the Arab world. The concepts of neighbourliness, hospitality and conviviality – concepts with a rich tradition in Arab culture – are central to Jeera's efforts to provide the citizens of Amman with positive learning experiences beyond the structures of formal education. As part of the Jeera project, citizens visit learning initiatives in other communities. They are then encouraged to apply and adapt the ideas generated by these visits in their own local communities. The ultimate objectives are not just to promote lifelong learning at a community level throughout the city, but also to help promote integration and a sense of belonging in this multicultural city.

*Combatting the marginalization of informal and non-formal learning and encouraging citizens to recognize that they all have valuable roles to play as both teachers and learners are therefore among the main tasks of the Jeera project.*

## Introduction

### General overview

Jordan has always been home to people from many different backgrounds. Since 1948, Jordan in general, and Amman in particular, have experienced an ongoing influx of refugees from neighbouring countries. During the 1991 Gulf War, over 300,000 Jordanian citizens were forced to return to Jordan from the Gulf countries and settled primarily in Amman. This was followed in later years by the arrival of large numbers of Iraqi refugees, followed by Lebanese refugees during the 2006 war, and more recently by Syrian refugees. These waves of immigration have seen the population of Amman double in fewer than twenty years. Resources such as water, gas and oil are in short supply in the city, and the economic situation is gradually deteriorating. Furthermore, there is a wide gap between rich and poor neighbourhoods in the city, and feelings of alienation and political apathy are widespread among Amman's citizens.

The education system in Amman still follows the one introduced during the British Mandate in the 1920s and 1930s. Despite several reforms, a heavy emphasis on rote learning and a strict grading system mean that learners tend not to be encouraged to be creative, assume responsibility or develop a sense of agency over their learning. Furthermore, the increasing number of refugees in Amman is putting pressure on the city's schools. As a result of overcrowding, quantity often takes precedence over quality as schools attempt to provide learners with as much information as possible rather than prompting them to explore.





© Jeera

*Children learn the traditional dabke dance in one of Amman's neighbourhoods*

### **Main issues to be tackled**

Amman's fundamental principle as a learning city is that knowledge and learning are among its citizens' most important tools for combatting the problems such as scarce resources, inequality, alienation and apathy outlined above. Many people in Amman have not received a formal education, yet they possess valuable knowledge and skills. However, such knowledge and skills are not always fully appreciated in Amman society. While there is a huge demand for higher education, learning that takes place outside formal education tends to be undervalued. Combatting the marginalization of informal and non-formal learning and encouraging citizens to recognize that they all have valuable roles to play as both teachers and learners are therefore among the main tasks of the Jeera project.

### **Motives for becoming a learning city**

As a city that has experienced a great deal of immigration, one of Amman's main motives for becoming a learning city is to cultivate respect for the many different cultures that make up the city and to promote a sense of belonging among people from all backgrounds. The Jeera project aims to create a bond between the citizens of Amman and their local neighbourhoods and to help people to rediscover the joy and value of learning.

# Learning city policies and strategies

*The AEF's understanding of learning considers people as builders of their own identities, of their society, of meaning and of knowledge.*

## Definition of a learning city

Amman does not have an official definition of 'learning city'. However, the Arab Education Forum (AEF), one of the founders of the Jeera: Amman Learning and Convivial City project, recognizes the distinction between learning and education, and its contributions towards building a learning city in Amman place a firm emphasis on the former. The AEF stresses the fact that learning can take place outside formal education. Its understanding of learning considers people as builders of their own identities, of their society, of meaning and of knowledge. Learning ensures diversity and dialogue, which together constitute the basis for the growth and prosperity of individuals and societies.

As the project's title indicates, the concept of conviviality also plays a key role in building a learning city in Amman. This is because conviviality has a very long tradition in Arab culture, and it has particular significance in Amman. Due to the city's location in the heart of the Levant region and its history of high immigration, it is extremely important that Amman's citizens are open, welcoming and hospitable to others. However, the tradition of conviviality is being eroded by globalization, urbanization and modern technology. Jeera is seeking to recapture this tradition by placing it at the centre of its learning city initiatives, which take place at the local community level (*jeera* is the Arabic for 'neighbourhood').

*Children's activity at the Abu Nseir Municipal Public Library*





Conviviality involves generosity on one side and acceptance on the other. It is about giving and taking without expecting anything in return. In the context of learning, this means demonstrating generosity in sharing one's knowledge, skills and personal experience, and accepting the experience and knowledge of others. Conviviality in the AEF's philosophy is translated into the *mujawara* learning method, which involves learning by acting in a neighbourly way: sharing food, ideas, knowledge, experience and events, taking care of each other and spending time together. *Mujawara* used to be the main learning method in Jordan, where it was a means of passing down knowledge from one generation to the next before the formal school system was introduced. However, instead of combining the benefits of the two, the latter eradicated the former. This brought about the loss of rich learning resources and indigenous knowledge about important issues such as recycling, organic farming, and generally respecting nature and the environment. The Jeera: Amman Learning and Convivial City project aims to recover such indigenous knowledge and to restore to learning the deep-rooted values of hospitality and conviviality. It does this by providing opportunities to engage in learning experiences by visiting inspiring individuals, initiatives and organizations that generously open their doors to visitors. The project has found that such experiences leave a positive impact on both hosts and guests.

### **Vision and objectives**

The vision behind building a learning city in Amman is to meet its citizens' learning needs by expanding community partnerships and creating a pool of learning opportunities that all citizens contribute to and benefit from. The Jeera project aims to provide resources and spaces that enable citizens to share their knowledge and skills. Reciprocity,

initiative, mutual understanding and shared responsibility are therefore among the project's core values. The project is particularly committed to harnessing the potential of Amman's many beautiful libraries to function as hospitable learning spaces.

### **Legislative framework**

At present, neither Jordan nor Amman have laws with a primary focus on supporting the development of a learning city or promoting lifelong learning at city level.

### **Governance and partnership**

Jeera: Amman Learning and Convivial City is a joint initiative of the AEF, an NGO that aims to regenerate Arab culture by promoting learning in local communities, and Greater Amman Municipality (GAM). The GAM Department for Culture has been particularly supportive of the project from the start, providing learning spaces as well as transport to and from these venues. Most of Jeera's learning activities take place in GAM's seventy-two libraries. The librarians thus play a very important role, as they create opportunities for learning in their libraries and help participants to plan their learning journeys. The National Libraries Association, an association for private and public libraries in Jordan, also supports Jeera.

The strategic partnership between the AEF and GAM has been the driving force behind Jeera. However, partnerships with many other organizations and individuals are also crucial to Amman's success as a learning city. For example, the Arab Towns Organization (ATO), which is based in Kuwait, brings together more than 500 towns across the twenty-two Arab countries. In 2013, the ATO invited Jeera to present its experience to Arab mayors during the 16th General Assembly in Doha, Qatar. In 2015, the ATO established

*The project is particularly committed to harnessing the potential of Amman's many beautiful libraries to function as hospitable learning spaces.*





*Couple at the Citadel in downtown Amman*

© Raed Asfour

the Cultural Committee for Arab Cities in Amman. Inspired by Jeera, this committee turns cultural spaces into learning hubs.

Another NGO that has contributed to Jeera is Tammy for Youth Development, which conducts training workshops and development projects for young people. Ruwwad is part of a network of community centres in Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and Egypt that implements community empowerment programmes in disadvantaged communities. Ahel is a social enterprise that provides training and coaching in order to empower communities to organize campaigns for change. Kitabi Kitabak encourages children to read,

We Love Reading organizes community reading initiatives throughout Jordan, and Abjad is an online platform that promotes reading. Al Balad Theatre is a non-profit theatre in Amman, and Taghmees: Social Kitchen promotes community learning. The Jordanian Network of the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue Between Cultures, an inter-governmental institution that works to build trust and understanding among citizens across the Mediterranean, is one of Jeera's donors. Tal'et tasweer brings professional and amateur photographers together for photography trips around Amman. This initiative not only enables photographers to share skills, but also to get to know Amman's various neighbourhoods.

# Implementation



*The Jeera team visits the municipal plant nursery in Abu Nseir*

## Provision of lifelong learning

Jeera activities include creating community-based learning opportunities by bringing people keen to learn things together with people who are willing to share their knowledge with others; turning used and abandoned spaces into functional learning spaces; and encouraging people to adapt learning experiences and to welcome learners and visitors to various areas of Ammani society.

Mobility is a key concept in the Jeera initiative, which arranges for Amman's citizens to travel around the city discovering learning spaces in other

neighbourhoods, taking part in learning events, meeting inspiring people and building networks. As such, Jeera provides learning experiences that are radically different from those offered within the formal education system. More than fifteen such trips were organized between February 2013 and February 2014, and more than ninety individuals and organizations took part during this period. Jeera aims to be sustainable and have a 'contagious' effect, in so far as participants are encouraged to take ideas from the initiatives they visit and adapt these ideas for learning spaces in their own neighbourhoods.

## Example of innovation or good practice

### **Ta'azeelah (the 'unlearning' session)**

#### **Objectives**

The *ta'azeelah* ('unlearning') session is at the centre of all Jeera visits to different neighbourhoods. *Ta'azeelah* can be translated as 'spring cleaning', a time when everything in the house is removed from the cupboards and thoroughly dusted and cleaned. Spring cleaning also offers an opportunity to sort out possessions, mend what needs mending, throw away what is no longer useful and put everything back in order. The use of this term in a learning context implies that learners should not only think about what they want to learn, but also that they should let go of some

older perceptions of learning that are no longer useful. One example might be the perception that learning ends when one completes formal education.

#### **Main target groups**

Ammani citizens who take part in the visits both as visitors and hosts.

#### **Main activities**

The *ta'azeelah* session begins by challenging participants' preconceptions about the roles of teachers and learners, encouraging them to view these roles as much more fluid and interchangeable. Participants come to the realization that one does not need a formal qualification to share valuable skills or knowledge, and that learning is an ongoing process that can take place at any age. The session also encourages participants to redefine the concept of knowledge. Knowledge is not only information and skills developed during formal education; it can also take other forms, such as learning how to sew or how to be a farmer. Each *ta'azeelah* session therefore asks all participants to identify what they wish to learn and what useful skills or knowledge they wish to share with others. This encourages them to recognize the value of all skills and knowledge, especially non-academic ones. Skills that are most in demand include cooking, farming, languages and IT.

Learning activity  
for the Jeera team  
at the vocational  
training centre in Abu  
Nseir





## Mobilization and utilization of resources

Amman's learning city has not been officially funded by any entity and there has been no direct attempt to raise funds for it by any of the partner organizations. Instead, the Jeera project depends on the sharing of resources, in particular human resources. The AEF provides the volunteer coordinators and GAM provides learning spaces and transportation for the visits, but Jeera also relies on the efforts of a huge number of other volunteers.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Due to the often quite informal and experimental nature of Jeera, official monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are not currently in place. Citizens are often inspired by *ta'azeelah* sessions and visits to learning initiatives in other communities, and subsequently act on their own initiative to organize similar Jeera events. However, they sometimes do not inform the co-founders of these events or provide feedback. One of the challenges facing the project is therefore to improve communication between its co-founders and its participants.

A *ta'azeelah* session in the Badr district



© Jeera

# Impacts and challenges

*Jeera is an initiative*

*built on the strengths and treasures that exist within the community.*

## Impacts

Jeera started with a core group of ten people. The core team now consists of more than fifty people, and more than thirty organizations and initiatives are involved in developing Jeera learning opportunities in Amman. The Jeera culture of conviviality and learning is spreading, changing the attitudes of both citizens and the municipality towards the city.

It is difficult to gauge at this early point the actual measurable impact of this initiative. However, the Jeera team took part in an evaluation session in March 2014 to reflect on the past and envision the future impact of Jeera. At this session, participants were asked to envision Jeera three years from now and to reflect on what they expect (realistically), what they would like (moderate ambition) and what they would love (ideally) the initiative to achieve. 'Realistic' expectations focused largely on continuing and expanding current activities aimed at building connections between various organizations and communities. Participants said that they would like to see Jeera broaden its outreach. Some participants continued to focus on Jeera's work within Amman, hoping that Jeera groups would be formed in neighbourhoods throughout Amman, and that the concept of Jeera would influence organizations and associations throughout the city. Others saw expansion to other Jordanian cities and governorates as a moderate ambition. Many participants would also like to see more variety in the type of activity organized by Jeera. The ultimate ambition of restoring or reclaiming the communal understanding and practice of Jeera and achieving a sense of sharing one's home was widely shared. While the degree to which participants viewed this as possible varied, the hope that Jeera as a way of life would take root and spread – not only across Amman, but also across Jordan and indeed the entire Arab World – was articulated by participants.

## Challenges

Jeera is an innovative, grass-roots project that is the first of its kind in the Arab world. As such, it has largely developed by means of trial and error. Its non-hierarchical approach, which emphasizes participatory decision-making, is rather unfamiliar in Amman. This therefore met with some initial scepticism from participants and partners who were used to a more structured, top-down approach. Overcoming this scepticism has been one of the main challenges the project has faced, as was getting participants and partners to reach mutual understanding and agree on how the project should proceed.

A second major challenge has been a lack of resources. As noted above, the project has relied to date on the efforts of volunteers and the sharing of resources among partner organizations. However, in order to continue growing, Jeera requires additional funding for a full-time employee who will coordinate the volunteers, develop the database and promote the initiative in Amman.

A third challenge is that the potential offered by Amman's libraries is not being fully harnessed. Efforts are currently underway to inform the city's librarians about the Jeera project and encourage them to support it more fully.

## Lessons learned and recommendations

Jeera is an initiative built on the strengths and treasures that exist within the community. On one hand this requires a flexible approach, but on the other hand some structure is essential to ensure that flexibility does not turn into volatility. The question of 'ownership' was crucial from the outset. Jeera stresses the importance of collective ownership between the AEF, the municipality, partner NGOS and all citizens involved in the initiative. As noted above, Jeera firmly rejects a hierarchical approach. Furthermore, as a grass-roots initiative, it was important to establish a strong partnership between the AEF and the municipality. It was also important to find the right balance between volunteers and staff. Finally, while Jeera was initially conceived as an online portal, the project has found that nothing can replace the sense of conviviality, hospitality and community that arises when residents come together in learning spaces throughout the city.

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# Mexico City

Mexico

## Profile

Total population of the city*	8,851,080	
Urban population density* <i>inhabitants per square kilometre</i>	5,920	
Total area of the Federal District* <i>in square kilometres</i>	5,920	
GDP per capita of the city* <i>in US dollars</i>	23,130	
GDP per capita of the country* <i>in US dollars</i>	16,377	
Age structure* <i>in per cent</i>		
0–14	21.9	
15–24	16.7	
25–59	47.8	
60+	13.6	
Average number of years of schooling completed by people aged 15 and above*		
Men	10.8	
Women	10.3	
Average life expectancy at birth in the city* <i>y</i>	72.6	80.9
<i>in years</i>		
Men	73.6	
Women	78.4	

\* most recent available data

*A learning city mobilizes resources to develop, promote and improve the learning of new competencies among its citizens. In Mexico City we seek to build a more resilient society where everyone has access to the learning tools that enable better social, economic and environmental skills to address the challenges this twenty-first century brings.*

Miguel Ángel Mancera Espinosa, Mayor of Mexico City



The Government of Mexico City wishes to play a more active role in shaping the learning opportunities available to its citizens. While formal education continues to be regulated by Mexico's National Government, the process of building a learning city has enabled the local government to create non-formal and informal initiatives that respond to the complex challenges facing this megacity. Partnerships with NGOs and corporations have helped the city find innovative learning-based solutions to issues ranging from obesity, illiteracy and social inequality to natural disasters.

*It is hoped that implementing lifelong learning activities across all of these areas will promote a more participatory and democratically mature society.*

## Introduction

### General overview

Measuring 1,495 square kilometres and with a population of about 8.851 million (21.1 million if we take into account the greater metropolitan area), Mexico City – also known as the Federal District or México, D. F. – is the capital of Mexico, one of the world's major emerging economies. In 1997, Mexico City achieved greater autonomy from the national government when residents won the right to directly elect the head of government and representatives of the Legislative Assembly of the Federal District. However, some areas, including education, remain largely under the control of the national government. Until recently, the activities of the Federal District's Ministry of Education (SEDU) were mainly limited to promoting equality and non-formal education and ensuring the retention of students within the education system. Building a learning city will enable SEDU and the Government of the Federal District to play a more active role in shaping the learning opportunities available to citizens of all ages in Mexico City.

### Main issues to be tackled

The Government of the Federal District's General Plan for Development for the years 2013 to 2018 identifies a number of challenges currently facing the city. It is hoped that the learning city approach can help tackle these challenges.

The first challenge is rising rates of obesity, which are putting a significant strain on Mexico City's health services. According to UNICEF Mexico, the country has the highest rate of childhood obesity in the world (UNICEF Mexico, 2015). Creating integrated health and education policies will be essential for reducing obesity.

The second challenge is illiteracy. At present, 140,000 adults in Mexico City (i.e. 2.1 per cent of the city's population) are





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*Participant of an adult literacy programme practises writing her name*

unable to read or write. The Government of the Federal District wishes to combat illiteracy in order to protect these people's rights and citizenship.

The third issue the city seeks to address by building a learning city is the growing gap between rich, highly educated citizens on one hand, and poor, low-skilled citizens on the other. This gap is being exacerbated by the city's rapid growth. Poor urban planning is leading to increased marginalization of socially disadvantaged residents, who often live in overpopulated yet remote parts of the city with inadequate infrastructure, a lack of amenities and public services, and no access to learning opportunities.

Finally, it must be remembered that Mexico City is a city with a very high population density located in an area of high susceptibility to natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides and volcanic eruptions. Mexico City is also suffering from the effects of climate change,

pollution, the overexploitation of resources and water shortages. Such conditions demand a strategy for managing crisis situations and developing learning programmes that ensure the highest possible standards of civil protection. Such programmes were stepped up following the devastating earthquake of 1985.

### **Motives for becoming a learning city**

Mexico City has two main reasons for becoming a learning city. The first is to create better coordination and integration of the city's existing learning policies and programmes. The second is to promote the concept of lifelong learning and to ensure that it becomes a key component of other public policies and government actions, including those relating to urban development, the environment and health. It is hoped that implementing lifelong learning activities across all of these areas will promote a more participatory and democratically mature society.

# Learning city policies and strategies

*Becoming a learning city also means creating a variety of communities of learning, reflection and experimentation and promoting a transition to a new culture of public and private management with a greater focus on learning.*

## Definition of a learning city

Becoming a learning city will enable the Government of the Federal District to play a more proactive, dynamic role in shaping the lifelong learning opportunities available to its citizens. More specifically, the Federal District is developing learning programmes that go beyond the traditional curricula of formal education to include a greater focus on subjects such as art and nutrition. Becoming a learning city also means creating a variety of communities of learning, reflection and experimentation and promoting a transition to a new culture of public and private management with a greater focus on learning. Furthermore, public areas are being transformed into inclusive learning spaces that promote respect for diversity and encourage learners to share their skills and knowledge. Finally, building a learning city involves becoming more sustainable by increasing environmental awareness.

## Vision and objectives

By encouraging multisectoral participation, Mexico City aims to develop a complex network of public spaces that make lifelong learning opportunities accessible to all residents and promote diversity, multiculturalism and basic rights. Mexico City's chief objective is to enhance the skills of citizens of all ages. This will promote individuals' sense of well-being and personal satisfaction, reduce inequality in the city and promote greater social integration.

## Legislative framework

The Political Constitution of the Mexican United States establishes the state's obligation to provide free and compulsory education at preschool, primary and secondary levels. Major national education reforms in 2013 and 2014 aimed, among other things, to promote the right of

children to a comprehensive, inclusive and quality education, and to strengthen teacher training and competence assessment. Also at the national level, the Federal Labour Law guarantees employees the right to continually enhance their skills, stipulating that companies are obliged to provide their workers with training to improve their job skills.

Although the Government of the Federal District has limited influence on the education system, one of the main objectives of the 2013–2018 General Plan for Development is to achieve equity and inclusion for human development. Thus the city has various laws guaranteeing citizens equal rights to education. Examples include a law on children's right to education (Asamblea Legislativa del Distrito Federal, 2000a), a law on young people's right to education (Asamblea Legislativa del Distrito Federal, 2000b) and a law on older people's right to education (Asamblea Legislativa del Distrito Federal, 2000c). There is also a law promoting reading (Asamblea Legislativa del Distrito Federal, 2009) and a law encouraging the development of science and technology (Asamblea Legislativa del Distrito Federal, 2013).

## Governance and partnership

The Federal District's Ministry of Education (SEDU) has primary responsibility for initiating, designing and building the learning city. However, the process of building the learning city also involves transversal collaborations between many other local and national government agencies and stakeholders. For example, a number of national agencies, such as the National Institute for Adult Education, the National Institute of Public Health and the National Institute of Medical Sciences and Nutrition are actively involved in SEDU programmes and initiatives. At the municipal level, the SEDU works closely with the Federal District's Ministry of

*The Iztapalapa Borough Public Library also functions as a learning space for citizens of all ages*

Social Development, Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion, Ministry of Health, Institute for Sport, Institute for the Care of the Elderly, Guaranteed Education Trust and School for Public Administration, as well as with the authorities of the Historic Centre of Mexico City, who are working towards turning the city's historic centre into a learning space.

In order to boost its learning actions, the Federal District has also established partnerships with some of the country's best higher education institutions. The most prestigious is the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where almost 80 per cent of research in the country is carried out and with whom the SEDU has many collaboration agreements. Other important public and private institutions involved in building the learning city include the National Polytechnic Institute, the Autonomous Metropolitan University, the Ibero-American University, the Colegio de México, the Centre for Economic Research and Teaching and the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences.

In addition, a wide range of partnerships with non-governmental organizations has been formed. Examples include partnerships with Mexicanos Primero (which promotes the right of all Mexicans to quality education), Cocina y Huertos Concretos (which promotes healthy eating), the Mexican Dental Association, the Policy Institute for Transportation and Development (an international not-for-profit organization that works with cities to implement transport solutions that cut greenhouse gas emissions, reduce poverty and improve the quality of urban life), the Aspen Institute Mexico (an educational and policy studies organization), UNESCO and UNICEF. Partnerships have also been established with corporations such as Telmex, Google, Coca-Cola FEMSA and Colgate. All of these partnerships have proven to be advantageous for both the city and the country as a whole.



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# Implementation

## Provision of lifelong learning

This section describes just some of the major programmes that the city government has implemented as part of its evolution as a learning city.

The Federal District's Department of Civil Protection offers free civil protection courses. Once a year, the entire city participates in a 'massive drill' (a simulated mass evacuation).

The Federal District's Ministry of the Environment runs a cycling school called Bici Escuela. This educates citizens on the rights and obligations of all road users and traffic rules for cyclists in the city. The programme runs alongside the city's ECOBICI bicycle sharing scheme and Muévete en Bici (Move by Bike) scheme. Meanwhile, Road Safety and Crime Prevention is a programme offering training, conferences and workshops that help citizens to be safer on Mexico City's

streets. Vamos a separar (Let's Separate), which is also run by the Ministry of the Environment, provides training on recycling and composting waste.

The Federal District's Ministry of Education also offers several learning programmes. Ciudad Lectora (Reading City), for example, encourages citizens to read. Literacy Programme aims to reduce the illiteracy rate among citizens aged 15 years and over. School Violence and Culture of Peace aims to reduce discriminatory practices that generate exclusion, abuse and violence in schools and families. The Ministry of Education also runs programmes promoting the use of new technologies in secondary schools. In addition, it works with the National System for Integral Family Development and the city government's Guaranteed Education Trust to provide financial support for disadvantaged children so that they can complete their basic and secondary education.

Visitors to the Iztapalapa Borough Public Library use the ICT facilities



© SEDU

## Example of innovation or good practice

### SaludArte

#### Objectives

SaludArte aims to improve the health, nutrition, personal hygiene, well-being and civic awareness of public primary school children in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Mexico City.

#### Main target groups

Primary school children between the ages 6 and 13 are enrolled by their parents in the programme, which takes place after normal school hours. Participation is voluntary. The schools were selected on the basis of three criteria: poor school performance; location in an area of high deprivation; and willingness to participate.

#### Main activities

From September 2013 to June 2014, SaludArte operated in 100 disadvantaged public schools in Mexico City. In that time, it provided 2,700,000 tasty and nutritious meals to 21,781 children. It also offered tens of thousands of workshops in drama, music, dance, art, nutrition, sport and fitness, hygiene, healthy lifestyles and citizenship. These workshops are mostly run by young people; in total, the programme currently employs 1,814 facilitators. It is expected that by the end of 2015 the programme will be offered in 120 schools.



*SaludArte participants learn about the importance of washing their hands before and after meals*

The programme has been possible thanks to the support of many institutions and governmental and non-governmental agencies. For example, the Ministry of Health of the Federal District, the National Institute of Public Health and the National Institute for Nutrition and Medical Sciences have monitored the creation of healthy and nutritious food plans for children. The National Institute for Educational Evaluation, the Mexican Dental Association and the Mexican Collective for Cooking have also donated resources.

## Mobilization and utilization of resources



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Residents of Mexico City take part in a simulated mass evacuation

In 2015, 3.59 per cent of the Federal District's total government budget was allocated to education. An additional 8.09 per cent of the city's budget for social development was invested in education. The city government is not the only source of funding for learning city initiatives, however. As noted above, additional support comes from non-governmental organizations and the private sector; for example, Coca-Cola FEMSA has donated 312 drinking fountains to 78 schools in the city, while Colgate donated toothbrushes and toothpaste to SaludArte.

### Monitoring and evaluation

The Government of the Federal District uses the Logical Framework Approach to evaluate its learning city actions. In addition, it has established an advisory council to guide the building of the learning city, and is currently developing a set of indicators based on the *Key Features of Learning Cities*.



# Impacts and challenges

## Impacts

Learning city initiatives have helped people of all ages throughout Mexico City to become healthier, develop greater civic and environmental awareness, and be better prepared for natural disasters. The SaludArte programme, in particular, has had a marked impact on children's lives, as an evaluation conducted by the National Institute of Public Health has demonstrated (Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública, 2014). This evaluation found that the programme increased children's physical activity, as demonstrated by the fact that the time they spent watching television fell by 7 per cent. There was also a notable decrease – from 21.3 per cent to 17 per cent – in the levels of obesity among children in schools participating in the programme. In addition, children's dental plaque decreased by 9 per cent, and almost 15 per cent of the children participating in the programme acquired the habit of washing their hands before and after eating.

## Challenges

The main challenges in terms of planning the learning city include developing a definition of 'learning city', using this definition to create coherent policies, and achieving consensus among the many different partners and stakeholders involved. The Federal District is also tackling the challenge of developing a set of indicators that are based on the *Key Features of Learning Cities*, yet are also adapted to local circumstances. With regard to implementation, one of the chief challenges lies in effectively communicating the learning city concept to citizens so that they develop a sense of ownership over the learning city and play an active role in building it.



© SEDU

Adult learner prepares for a literacy class

*With regard to implementation, one of the chief challenges lies in effectively communicating the learning city concept to citizens so that they develop a sense of ownership over the learning city and play an active role in building it.*

## Lessons learned and recommendations

Mexico City has two key recommendations. Firstly, communicating with other learning cities is extremely important. The development of a learning city in the Federal District has benefited enormously from sharing ideas and best practice with other cities, for example during the 1st

International Conference on Learning Cities in Beijing. Secondly, Mexico City has found that while the city government should play a leading role in building the learning city, it is very important to establish synergies and share resources with the private and NGO sectors.

*Students of José  
Guadalupe Posadas  
High School practise  
their IT skills*





SaludArte participants take part in family activities

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# Ybycuí

Paraguay



## Profile

Total population of the city*	23,094	
Urban population density* <i>inhabitants per square kilometre</i>	27.9	
Total area of the city* <i>in square kilometres</i>	827.9	
GDP per capita of the country* <i>in US dollars</i>	4,402.76	
Age structure* <i>in per cent</i>		
0–14	32.9	
15–24	16.8	
25–59	38.3	
60+	12.0	
Average number of years of schooling completed by people aged 15 and above*		
Men	7.58	
Women	7.69	
Average life expectancy at birth in the city* <i>y</i> *	72.6	80.9
<i>in years</i>		

\* most recent available data





*It is a timely moment to tackle the challenge of creating a city where people take the lead in formal, non-formal and informal education promoting social inclusion. Learning that addresses the needs of children, young people and older people can contribute to professional development and an improvement in the quality of life for families. Undoubtedly, education is crucial to the fight against poverty. Today we are all contributing to Paraguay's first learning city.*

María del Carmen Benítez, Mayor of Ybycuí



Ybycuí has been experiencing severe economic difficulties since the decline of its cotton industry in the 1970s. Unemployment is high, but the political situation has improved in recent years thanks to a generation of leaders who have invested in the city's social, cultural and economic development. However, citizens themselves need to play a more active role in developing their city. Having participated in the first International Conference on Learning Cities in Beijing in 2013, Ybycuí has adopted a policy of lifelong learning in order to promote this civic engagement. The city is therefore currently intensifying its efforts to become a learning city and launched a project entitled Ybycuí Learns and Develops in March 2014.

*One of the city's main motives for becoming a learning city is the opportunity to learn from the experience of other learning cities.*

## Introduction

### General overview

Ybycuí is a city with a fairly good infrastructure, modern telecommunications services, essential public services, relatively good public education and health systems, and an economy based on agriculture, livestock breeding and commerce. Industrial activity comprises cotton fibre, textiles, oil and soap, as well as meat, leather and dairy processing businesses. Around 60 per cent of the city's citizens are employed. Ybycuí's main languages are Spanish and Guarani. The city has a vibrant cultural life: its cultural centre includes the Historic Museum of the Park La Rosada, the Ybycuí Iron Foundry, the General Bernardino Caballero Museum in Tacuary and the Don Mauricio Cardozo Ocampo Museum. The city also has a youth symphony orchestra, twelve sports clubs, a martial arts academy, a horse-riding centre and an open-air gym.

The education system in place in Ybycuí is the same as that implemented throughout the Republic of Paraguay. It covers the initial level of pre-nursery and nursery education (which lasts two years), basic school education (nine years), intermediate level (three years) and higher level (lasting between three and seven years). The city has sixty-three educational institutions that are dependent on the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC). There are also five universities and a cultural and educational centre in which professional training courses are offered. In addition, the Permanent Inclusive Education Resources Centre is located in the nearby city of Paraguari. This is a technical operating unit of the Directorate General of Inclusive Education. It comprises a team of teachers and psychologists who provide educational support for children and young people with special educational needs. The Permanent Inclusive Education Resources Centre also provides assistance to teachers in the form of guidance on adapting curricula and learning materials for children with special needs.



### Main issues to be tackled

The central issue that Ybycuí wishes to address is unemployment. The city intends to combat this problem and thereby generally improve citizens' quality of life by enhancing the city's human capital through formal, informal and non-formal learning. As well as creating a highly skilled workforce that will boost Ybycuí's competitiveness, the city hopes to promote entrepreneurship by giving its citizens the skills needed to establish micro enterprises.

### Motives for becoming a learning city

One of the city's main motives for becoming a learning city is the opportunity to learn from the experience of other learning cities. The municipal administration believes that this will encourage citizens to embrace lifelong learning as a means of promoting sustainable community development.

*Official launch of a food safety programme, part of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project*



# Learning city policies and strategies

*For Ybycuí, a learning city is one that is committed to its citizens' development, where everyone both teaches and learns from each other.*

## Definition of a learning city

For Ybycuí, a learning city is one that is committed to its citizens' development, and where everyone both teaches and learns from each other. A learning city encourages its citizens to learn throughout life and promotes formal, non-formal and informal learning.

## Vision and objectives

The city's vision is to implement a policy of lifelong learning through the creation of formal, non-formal and informal learning spaces that promote the development of the community by harmonizing the participation of all sectors of society. More specifically, Ybycuí's objectives can be summarized as follows:

- to promote inclusive learning in the education system;
- to develop activities that stimulate inter-generational learning;

- to offer job and professional training opportunities;
- to create a culture of lifelong learning; and
- to support formal and non-formal education.

## Legislative framework

Several articles of the National Constitution (1992) deal with education and learning at the national government level. Article 73 states that all citizens have the right to education, and it describes the ends of Paraguayan education. Article 74 establishes that all citizens have the right to learn and to equal opportunities without discrimination. This article also guarantees the freedom to teach, the only requirements being aptitude and ethical integrity. According to Article 75, education is the responsibility of society, in particular the family, the municipality and the state.

*Adult learners practise their IT skills*







© City of Ybycuí

A float in the Spring in the Learning City parade

At the city government level, the Municipal Constitutional Law No. 3966/10 (2010) establishes in its third section the municipality's responsibilities with regard to education, culture and sport. According to this law, the municipality's duties as a provider of educational services include creating education plans, promoting culture, sport and tourism and increasing civic awareness. Ordinance No. 239/2014 establishes the learning city programme as a policy for strengthening citizen education and culture in the entire district of Ybycuí.

### Governance and partnership

Ybycuí's learning city project, Ybycuí Learns and Develops, is being run by the Municipality of Ybycuí. The City Government has therefore made significant contributions to various learning city activities.

The national Ministry of Education and Culture offers activities for older people as part of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project, including workshops on aspects of growing older such as biological processes, healthy lifestyles, myths and realities about old age, nutrition and active citizenship.

Ybycuí's Youth Ministry grants scholarships to disadvantaged university students, runs activities for young people and cooperates with activities developed within the framework of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project.

The government of the nearby city of Paraguari supports Ybycuí's schools by funding *meriendas escolares* (school snacks and lunches) for disadvantaged children. It also grants scholarships to university students and provides financial





A literacy-themed float with Miss Spring

contributions to farmers' and women's groups participating in the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project.

The National Professional Promotion Service, an offshoot of the Ministry of Work, Employment and Social Security, provides professional training courses.

The Agrarian Extension Directorate provides free technical assistance, training and a forum on soil management to rural educational institutions as part of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project.

The Catholic Church, in particular the San José de Ybycuí parish church, provides education on values to families and young people. It also provides financial assistance to disadvantaged people in order to help them participate in the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project.

The Ybycuí Body of Voluntary Firefighters offers lectures on fire prevention and rescue as part of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project.

Sonidos de la Tierra (Sounds of the Earth) is a social and community integration programme that uses music to encourage civic responsibility and eradicate poverty. Founded in Ybycuí over ten years ago, it benefits young people, helping them to combat violence and construct a better society through music.

The Organization of Ibero-American States supports local institutions in Ybycuí in implementing learning city activities, for example by providing experts to help develop strategies and create synergies between local, national and international institutions.

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) plays a key role in the development of the initiatives. It offers spaces for debate and exchange, and motivates and supports the promotion of the learning city concept.

Plan International, an international development organization, organizes workshops promoting children's rights.

# Implementation

## Provision of lifelong learning

In 2006, the restoration of a former local market resulted in the creation of the Dr Julio César Fanego Cultural Centre. Since its foundation, this centre has offered free courses for the entire community. The centre is supported by the Municipality of Ybycuí, which provides qualified teachers, technicians and instructors and also contains a college for adults which is associated with the Secretariat of Culture of the Republic of Paraguay and is part of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project. The cultural centre offers the following courses to people of all ages: secretarial skills, information technology (including CorelDRAW graphic design software, Photoshop software and computer maintenance), technical drawing, motorcycle maintenance, manicuring, hairdressing, cookery, manufacturing of leather items, making children's clothes, fish farming and tractor driving. The centre also offers workshops on social harmony, public speaking and human resources.

The Ybycuí Learns and Develops project runs several other activities, including a reading day involving pupils from all the schools in the city; a food safety programme; and a writing competition on the topic 'Ybycuí of yesterday, today and the future'.

In 2014, Ybycuí held a festival entitled 'Spring in the Learning City', which included a parade with floats depicting images of lifelong learning and a 'Miss Spring' contest that promoted the idea that everywhere can become a learning environment. Thousands of people participated in the festival, which also promoted recycling and the conservation of the environment. In addition, the names of the winners of the writing competition were announced and outstanding young people in art, music, sport and intellectual work received awards. The festival strengthened the pride and sense of community of Ybycuí residents.

One of the innovative mechanisms implemented by the city is advertising spots giving historical information about Paraguay from a learning city viewpoint. These are broadcast on the radio twenty times a day and aim to arouse interest in the history of the country, to encourage citizens to learn more, and to strengthen their sense of belonging and identity.

*A preparation meeting for the International Day of Older Adults*



## Example of innovation or good practice

### **Day of Government of the Municipality of Ybycuí and the Government of Paraguari**

#### **Objectives**

To implement activities in the framework of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project

#### **Main target groups**

All members of the visited community and the principal participants

#### **Main activities**

The Day of Government of the Municipality of Ybycuí is a day event in which representatives of the municipal government visit remote communities. Educational talks are offered throughout the day. For example, a mobile clinic empowers citizens by helping them learn about their own bodies and health issues in general. Information events on children's and adolescents' rights are organized by the NGO CODENI, and education on gender equality is provided by Paraguay's Ministry for Women. Such learning events aim to create well-educated citizens who are able to understand and address the challenges they and the city as a whole face. Another highlight of the Day of Government is that it organizes a reading day for children, young people and adults. Residents of remote communities are encouraged to visit mobile libraries in order to take part in reading day activities. The aim is to motivate people to read and write in both Spanish and Guaraní about topics dealt with during the Day of Government. The use of both languages reflects a recognition of the importance of promoting literacy skills in the indigenous language.



## Mobilization and utilization of resources

The Municipality of Ybycuí is committed to mobilizing its resources in an effective manner in all sectors of society. The Organization of Ibero-American States supports the city in creating mobile public libraries by donating books. This in turn has facilitated the implementation of two reading days.

Social media play an important role in promoting the learning city initiative. They provide online platforms where people can share their experiences. This helps build a sense of community. It also offers transparency regarding the activities organized as part of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project.

### Monitoring and evaluation

The Dr Julio C. Fanego Cultural Centre maintains information on the entry and exit of people who take part in training courses there. Recent figures suggest an

increase in the number of people taking part in lifelong learning opportunities such as these, and unemployment is falling in Ybycuí. However, to date there has been no systematic evaluation of links between increased participation in lifelong learning and increasing employment figures.

Citizens are given the opportunity to provide feedback on learning city initiatives on a radio programme entitled 'Puertas abiertas' (open doors). This programme provides information on the activities carried out within the framework of the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project, and members of the public contribute their suggestions to the programme by sending text messages. The programme is broadcast at the weekend, which ensures that the lifelong learning message reaches a very wide audience, while the interactive element enables citizens to have their voices heard and to play a valuable role in shaping their learning city.

*Social media play an important role in promoting the learning city initiative.*



# Impacts and challenges

*The main challenge that Ybycuí faces is convincing its citizens that education is the cornerstone of sustainable development.*

## Impacts on individual and citizen levels

The main impact can be seen in the involvement of various institutions and citizens of Ybycuí. Schools are becoming important promoters of learning spaces through talks, literacy campaigns and community activities that motivate learning and bring people of different ages and generations together.

In addition, the Ybycuí Learns and Develops project has received national recognition and the backing of the president. On 28 March 2014, the launch of Ybycuí Learns and Develops was celebrated in a public ceremony attended by the President of Paraguay, municipal authorities of the City of Ybycuí, city government representatives, and representatives of the Ministry of

Education and Culture, the Ministry of Youth and the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI).

## Challenges

The main challenge that Ybycuí faces is convincing its citizens that education is the cornerstone of sustainable development. It is important that educational centres, cultural and artistic institutions, cooperatives, social organizations and individual citizens work together. Other challenges for Ybycuí include empowering citizens and encouraging them to play a role in learning city initiatives; creating a better appreciation for older people and their potential as both teachers and learners; developing the city's economy and human capital; and improving evaluation processes.

*Young people take part in a reading day*



© City of Ybycuí

## Lessons learned and recommendations

Ybycuí has learned that tools for tracking and monitoring progress against indicators are very important for improving its learning city project. More generally, Ybycuí recognizes the importance of learning throughout life. The city has found that this is more fruitful when all citizens work together with local authorities. Ybycuí recognizes that all individuals or members of the community, including children, young people, adults, older adults and people with different levels of education, have an important role to play and that no one should be excluded.

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# Balanga

Philippines

## Profile

Total population of the city*	93,687	
Urban population density* <i>inhabitants per square kilometre</i>	5,096	
Total area of the city* <i>in square kilometres</i>	111.67	
GDP per capita of the city* <i>in US dollars</i>	1,280.74	
GDP per capita of the country* <i>in US dollars</i>	2,765.10	
Age structure* <i>in per cent</i>		
0–14	32.11	
15–24	19.80	
25–59	41.05	
60+	7.04	
Average number of years of schooling completed by people aged 15 and above*		
Men	4.7	
Women	4.3	
Average life expectancy at birth in the city* <sup>y</sup> <i>in years</i>	61	80.9

\* most recent available data





*Because of our commitment to education, we are confident that our city will gain sustainable growth by successfully addressing challenges in health, employment, environment, security and disaster preparedness.*

Jose Enrique Garcia, Mayor of Balanga



The City of Balanga is in the process of becoming a university town as part of the learning city project. By replicating some of the structural features of renowned university towns around the world, Balanga aims to create an environment that encourages learning not just among university students, but also among citizens of all ages. The city's ultimate objective is to become a centre of knowledge and innovation with a highly educated, highly skilled workforce and citizens who play an active role in the governance of the city.

*In addition, becoming a learning city will enable Balanga to empower its citizens to be more responsible and self-reliant and to actively participate in the governance of the city.*

## Introduction

### General overview

The City of Balanga is the capital of the province of Bataan. It is surrounded by industrial zones such as the Freeport Area of Bataan, Subic Bay Freeport Zone and Clark Special Economic Zone. However, industrial development in Balanga itself is constrained by the city's small size and population. Thus while neighbouring cities rely on heavy industry, the City of Balanga aims to become a centre of knowledge and to supply the region – and eventually the country and the world – with the kind of world-class talents that create thriving organizations and industries.

Balanga will therefore focus on education as a means of spurring local economic development. The city already serves as the province's centre of education and has many institutions of learning. These include eighteen public and thirteen private primary schools; two public and five private secondary schools; and one state university and eight private colleges.

### Main issues to be tackled

Balanga faces a number of major development issues. The first of these is the very limited financial resources available: the city has an annual budget of just 12 million US dollars to support all its operations, programmes and projects, and local financial institutions are not able to support the city's development projects due to high interest rates.

The second issue is the centralization of primary, secondary and higher education at national government level through the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education. This centralization means that local government units are not able to independently plan, budget and implement education programmes.





© Balanga City Management & Information Services Offices (MISO)

Farmers attend an on-site training seminar to learn about agricultural innovations

### Motives for becoming a learning city

The city has decided to capitalize on its status as the centre of education in the province in order to spur development and economic growth. Having an educated workforce will attract business, thus boosting job opportunities. This will help lower poverty, which in turn will reduce crime. In addition, becoming a learning city will enable Balanga to empower its citizens to be more responsible and self-reliant and to actively participate in the governance of the city.



# Learning city policies and strategies



© Balanga City Management & Information Services Offices (MISO)

Story time in the children's corner of the City Library

## Definition of a learning city

The City of Balanga's understanding of a learning city involves becoming a university town in which the positive learning environment found in schools and university campuses is replicated across the entire city. To achieve this aim, excellent facilities and spaces in which learning can take place have been created throughout the city, such as a new library, an IT laboratory, open spaces and pocket parks.

## Vision and objectives

The city's vision is encapsulated in the slogan 'Balanga University Town 2020: the emerging hub for knowledge-based businesses in the Philippines'. Balanga's

overall objective is to build a family-oriented city with a strong learning atmosphere that will ensure sustainable development and participatory governance. This can be broken down into four more specific goals.

The first is to provide access to high-quality education. The City of Balanga aims to be recognized as a regional centre for education, excelling in both formal and informal settings and providing learning opportunities for all through a massive scholarship programme.

The second goal is to provide excellent student facilities and amenities. The city government is implementing a university town master plan that involves developing various learning facilities through a public-private partnership (PPP) model.

The third is to create an environment that is conducive to learning. Measures such as pedestrianized streets, free Wi-Fi zones and the promotion of cultural activities and a healthy lifestyle provide citizens with an ideal learning atmosphere.

The fourth goal is to ensure job opportunities through linkages between academia and industry. School-based career guidance and career orientation programmes are regularly undertaken by the city and provincial employment offices. Industries and businesses also provide dual training programmes to help students prepare for employment.

### Legislative framework

At the national level, the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 (Republic Act No. 9155) declares that all citizens have a right to basic education. It guarantees the right of all Filipino children to free education at elementary and high school level. This act also states that 'alternative learning systems' encompassing both non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills should be available to out-of-school young people and adults.

Also at the national level, Executive Order No. 874 (2010), amending Executive Order No. 483 (2005), approved the establishment of the Southeast Asian Centre for Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Development (SEA-CLLSD), an inter-agency coordinating body for lifelong learning for sustainable development.

At the city level, Executive Order No. 25, Series of 2008, entitled 'Creating the University Town Committee in the City of Balanga', aims to implement the university town by creating an accountable, efficient and dynamic organizational structure and operating mechanism that promotes quality education and meets the learning needs and service requirements of citizens.

### Governance and partnership

Several governmental institutions are involved in planning, implementing and evaluating learning city policies at national and city levels. The Department of Education (DepEd) supervises all Philippine primary and secondary education institutions and alternative learning systems, both public and private. The DepEd and the city government address all school concerns in Balanga through the Local School Board (LSB), which is chaired by the city mayor.

*Balanga's overall objective is to build a family-oriented city with a strong learning atmosphere that will ensure sustainable development and participatory governance.*



*Annual coastal clean-up activity involving various members of the community*

© Balanga City Management & Information Services Offices (MISO)





Visitors go on a guided tour of Amanda Battad's smoked fish factory, one of Balanga's knowledge-based businesses

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) monitors and evaluates the performance of higher education programmes. It also provides funding to Balanga's college scholarship programme.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) manages and funds technical education and skills development in the Philippines.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is involved in learning initiatives such as occupational training and the Educhild parenting training programme, which was pioneered by DSWD day-care workers and is described in more detail below.

On-the-job training for students in summer is provided by the Department of Labour and Employment through its Special Programme for the Employment of Students (SPES). The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) is Balanga's primary partner in implementing its Learning Barangay Week, an initiative which is discussed in more detail below.

Moving on to non-governmental organizations involved in the learning city, Ugnayang Balangueno is a multi-sectoral governance coalition of the City of Balanga. It is an alliance of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors that was formed to support the city government's vision of becoming a university town by the year 2020.

The University Town of the Peninsula Foundation, Inc. (UTown Pen) was launched by key leaders and top business people in Balanga in 2011. Its goal is to establish an endowment fund of 10 million US dollars within five years. This fund is used to finance various education programmes in the city, including college scholarships. The foundation currently sponsors the higher education of nineteen first-year and ten second-year students of engineering, accountancy and education.

The University Town Education Council was formed in 2011. Its objective is to promote education for all. It focuses on the planning, monitoring and evaluation of school roadmaps for accreditation.

# Implementation

## Provision of lifelong learning

Balanga is currently developing an infrastructure that replicates the characteristics of certain renowned university towns around the world. The aim is to improve educational facilities and create an environment throughout the city that encourages creativity, innovation and learning. Construction projects include the Plaza Mayor, a 1,4440-m<sup>2</sup> plaza that serves as a centre for cultural activities; a city library and other reading spaces across the city; and covered facilities that can be used by local organizations for learning events. As part of the process of creating a university town, schools have also allowed their facilities to be used by the wider community as venues for free seminars and workshops, which are conducted by volunteer educators.

Iskolar ng Bataan is a scholarship programme offering world-class higher education to people who would otherwise not be able to afford to study. The city and provincial governments and the Commission on Higher Education contribute a total of 2 million US dollars to this programme each year. More than 25,000 scholars have graduated since the programme started in 2004.

The Educhild Parenting Programme involves a ten-module parenting course held in day-care centres, primary schools and secondary schools across the city. The programme is based on the philosophy that children who are motivated to learn are closely supported by their parents. The programme aims to ensure that fathers and mothers are empowered, aware of their responsibilities and better able to face the modern challenges of bringing up children. The course covers topics such as child development, family values, marriage, spirituality, sexuality, family finances and relationships. To date, 5,281 parents have completed this course.

Project Duke is a public-private partnership that was formed to develop interventions for out-of-school youth in Balanga. The programme includes ten modules on having the proper mindset, developing effective learning tools and skills, and identifying job opportunities. The objective is to help out-of-school young people make strategic life choices that make them less likely to become involved in community problems such as crime and drug addiction.

School-based career guidance is regularly undertaken by the city and the provincial employment service. An online jobs database has been setup to enable jobseekers and employers to instantly upload and access job-related information. The Bataan Chamber of Commerce and Industry supports businesses offering students dual and on-the-job training.

*The aim is to improve educational facilities and create an environment throughout the city that encourages creativity, innovation and learning.*

*Makerspace is an innovative learning environment where people of all ages have the opportunity to realize their business ideas*



# Example of innovation or good practice

## Learning Barangay Week

The City of Balanga has achieved great progress in delivering services and programmes that promote learning and the general well-being of its citizens. This progress can be attributed to the close, strategic coordination between the relevant sectors in the city. To further promote this coordination and sustain this progress, the city government launched the Barangay Week in 2007, which is a collaborative effort between the city government and the barangay (district) leaders. After the 1st International Conference on Learning Cities in Beijing, the week was renamed 'Learning Barangay Week' in order to emphasize Balanga's transformation into a learning city.

## Objectives

One of the primary objectives of the Learning Barangay Week is to promote a more harmonious working relationship between barangay officials and residents through learning initiatives such as employment and technology training for small businesses; skills training that addresses the needs of specific groups (e.g. older people, women, youth groups, farmers and fishermen); tutorials and mentoring sessions for students; and information sessions on the city's healthy lifestyle programme.

## Main target groups

There is a wide range of target groups, including students, teachers and other people employed in the education sector; parents; entrepreneurs and local enterprises; investors; local government personnel and employees of national government agencies; civil servants; out-of-school youth and other youth organizations; non-governmental organizations; health professionals; and people aged 60 and above.

## Main activities

In addition to many fun family activities, the Learning Barangay Week offers several health education events, including information sessions on healthy lifestyles, blood sugar monitoring, dental services, fitness classes and anti-smoking films.

The Learning Barangay Week gives citizens opportunities to keep up to date with community issues by meeting *barangay* officials and participating in community consultation processes. The week also provides training on aspects of *barangay* governance such as the *barangay* governance performance management system. The *Katarungang Pambarangay* (*barangay* justice) seminar provided by the public attorney's office offers training on peace and order in the city.



## Mobilization and utilization of resources

Public-private partnerships (PPP) have enabled the City Government of Balanga to implement several projects that are part of the university town master plan. The redevelopment of the Plaza Mayor, for example, was realized through investments made by the private sector that support the city's vision. Upcoming projects such as the People's Centre Sports Complex will also be funded through PPP agreements.

### Monitoring and evaluation

The Performance Governance System (PGS) is a participatory process in line with the principles and best practices of good governance and responsible citizenship. It calls for effective, sustained and systematic contributions from individuals and institutions. This system uses a balanced scorecard in weighing the performance of local government units against their strategic road map. Currently, the City of Balanga is at the 'proficiency' or third stage of its PGS journey and is seeking to enter the final stage ('institutionalization') in 2015. This system is critical to achieving the city's vision of becoming a centre of lifelong learning.



*Students plant rice in order to develop hands-on knowledge of rice production*

# Impacts and challenges

## Impacts

One major impact of the Iskolar ng Bataan scholarship programme is the significant increase in the number of college graduates in Balanga. Every year, 12,000 students benefit from the college scholarship programme. This has enhanced the quality of the city's workforce, which in turn has increased investor and consumer confidence. This is reflected in a 43 per cent increase in gross sales of businesses in Balanga between 2010 and 2013. In addition to the increase in college graduates, 500 teachers have availed themselves of the scholarship grant to pursue postgraduate degrees, while 5,000 parents have graduated from the Educhild Parenting Programme. More generally, projects completed as part of the

university town master plan have greatly improved the learning infrastructure in Balanga and helped promote learning for all citizens. This helped Balanga secure the 2014 Most Outstanding Local Government Unit for Literacy prize, which was awarded by the National Literacy Coordinating Council.

## Challenges

The most urgent challenge facing the city is a lack of resources such as funding, expertise and technology. Furthermore, the city requires more detailed information on the best practices of other learning cities around the world. It also needs to develop more precise methods of measuring the impact of learning city initiatives.

*The City Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office teaches citizens how to deal with natural disasters and other critical incidents*





## Lessons learned and recommendations

It takes time to implement learning city programmes since these need to be understood and appreciated by citizens before positive results can be achieved. Clearly identifying and articulating benefits helps to encourage citizens to pursue their lifelong learning goals.

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# Namyangju

Republic of Korea

## Profile

Total population of the city\* 642,192

Urban population density\* 1,402  
*inhabitants per square kilometre*

Total area of the city\* 458  
*in square kilometres*

GDP per capita of the country\* 24,329  
*in US dollars*

Age structure\*  
*in per cent*

0–14 17.2

15–24 12.9

25–59 54.7

60+ 15.2

Average number of years of schooling  
completed by people aged 15 and above\*

Men 12.4

Women 10.9

Average life expectancy at birth  
in the city\* y\*

80.9

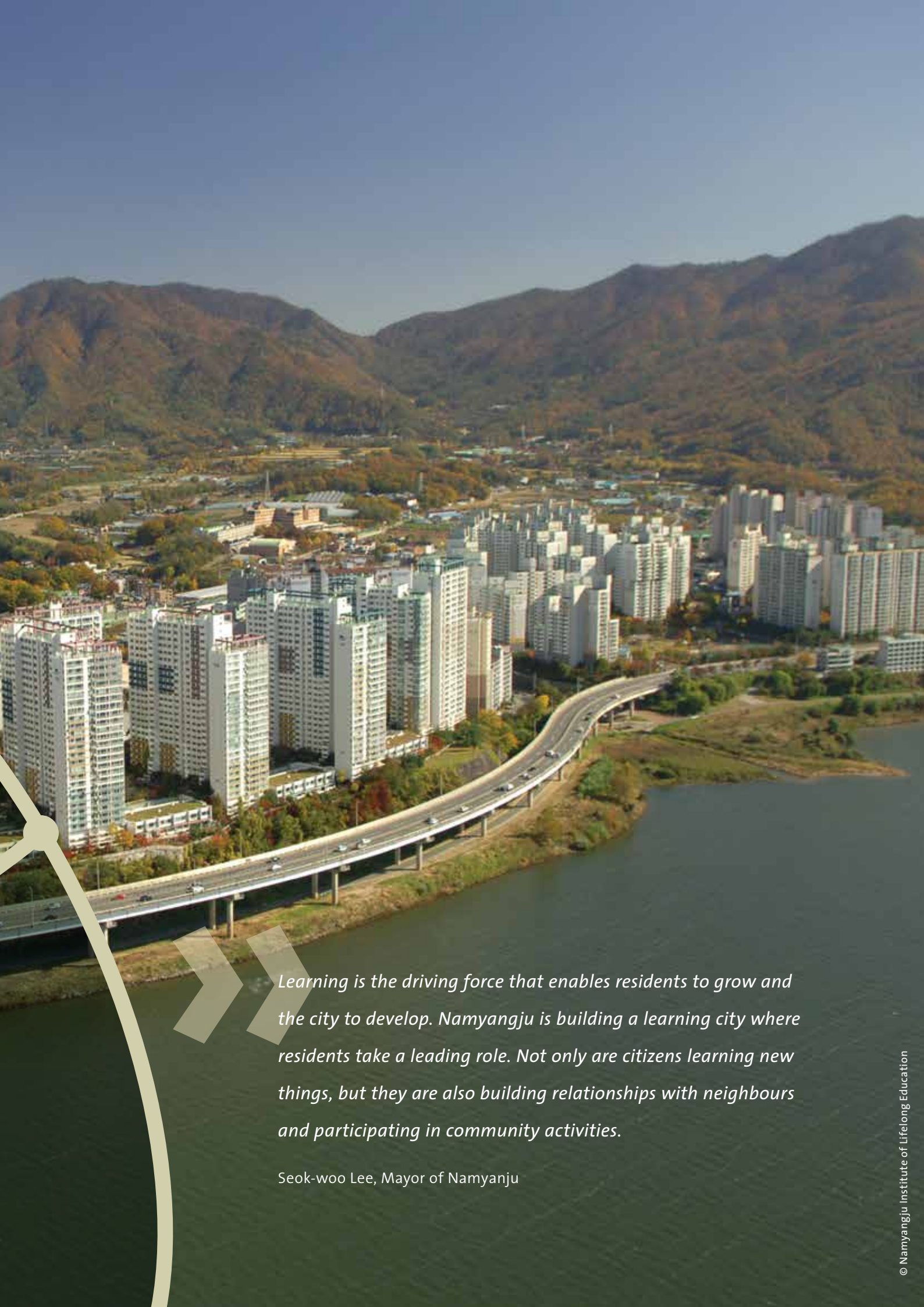
*in years*

Men 77.7

Women 84.5

\* most recent available data





*Learning is the driving force that enables residents to grow and the city to develop. Namyangju is building a learning city where residents take a leading role. Not only are citizens learning new things, but they are also building relationships with neighbours and participating in community activities.*

Seok-woo Lee, Mayor of Namyangju

Namyangju's 1-2-3 Lifelong Learning Infrastructure project is improving access to learning for citizens of all ages. Learning Lighthouses, which won Korea's 2013 Lifelong Learning Award and have since inspired similar initiatives throughout the country, are an important component of the 1-2-3 Lifelong Learning Infrastructure. Initiated by citizens themselves, Learning Lighthouses turn unused spaces around the city into community learning spaces. The city government ultimately intends to ensure that no resident is more than a ten-minute walk away from the nearest Learning Lighthouse. Learning Lighthouses not only offer opportunities to learn; they also promote community, cooperation and active citizenship.

*Namyangju wishes to improve its citizens' quality of life and to cultivate local talent through lifelong learning.*

## Introduction

### General overview

Namyangju is located near Seoul in the north-east of Gyeonggi Province. This historic city, which consists of twelve villages, was designated a Cittaslow 'slow city' because of its high environmental standards and the good quality of life it offers citizens. Due to its proximity to Seoul but relatively low housing costs, Namyangju's population has been growing rapidly, increasing by 23.4 per cent between 2011 and 2015 alone. The city is in a mountainous region, and these mountains have the effect of geographically separating the city's villages. The city has sixty-three lifelong learning facilities, but most of these are located in the downtown area. This creates disparities in the availability of lifelong learning opportunities, as residents of Namyangju's more outlying villages tend to be reluctant to travel into the centre of the city. Hence there is a huge gap between Namyangju's villages in terms of the educational, cultural and information services that citizens can avail themselves of.

### Main issues to be tackled

Many of Namyangju's residents work in Seoul, which has resulted in a low sense of belonging and community. As in many of the Republic of Korea's cities, a sense of loneliness and alienation is widely reported among Namyangju's citizens. Building social cohesion and community and promoting communication among citizens is therefore a major issue for the city.





© Namyangju Institute of Lifelong Education

*Traditional dancers at the Namyangju Lifelong Learning Festival*

Namyangju's economy is currently largely dependent on outside investment. In order to ensure sustainable growth, the city is seeking to foster talent, stimulate innovation and promote entrepreneurship within the city.

### **Motives for becoming a learning city**

Namyangju wishes to improve its citizens' quality of life and to cultivate local talent through lifelong learning. It is hoped that this in turn will increase the city's competitiveness. By building a virtuous cycle of learning in daily life and work, the city intends to boost community and cultural participation.

# Learning city policies and strategies

*The Republic of Korea's government sees building a learning city as a means of restructuring a city by improving citizens' quality of life, social integration and sense of community.*

## Definition of a learning city

The Republic of Korea's government sees building a learning city as a means of restructuring a city by improving citizens' quality of life, social integration and sense of community (National Lifelong Education Institute, 2012). Based on this concept, Namyangju defines a learning city as 'a good community city which is founded on a lifelong learning infrastructure, providing its citizens with ample opportunities to learn in any environment, so that they can mature through learning, and such matured citizens can build a learning community' (Namyangju Institute of Lifelong Education, 2009). Namyangju's vision of lifelong learning is to become a 'first-class learning city for people that opens doors to the future' (Namyangju Institute of Lifelong Education, 2009).

## Legislative framework

Article 31 (5) of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea stipulates that 'the nation shall promote lifelong education'. In fact, the Republic of Korea is one of the few countries in the world to stipulate the obligation to promote lifelong learning. The Lifelong Education Act (1999) defines 'lifelong education' as 'all types of systematic educational activities other than regular school curriculums, including supplementary education for educational

*A guitar club based in a community learning centre performs at the National Lifelong Learning Award ceremony*





attainment, basic literacy education for adults, occupational ability enhancement education, humanities and liberal education, culture and art education, and citizens' participation education.' The Lifelong Education Act sets forth the obligations and duties of national and local governments in promoting lifelong learning. The Act required the Republic of Korea to establish the National Institute for Lifelong Education.

At the city level, Namyangju adopted the Namyangju City Lifelong Education Promotion Municipal Ordinance in 2007. Article 2 of this Ordinance stipulates that it is the duty of the City Mayor to build a lifelong learning city, establish a master plan for lifelong education promotion, implement policy measures, provide a budget, and establish lifelong learning centres in local municipalities. Article 15 of this ordinance calls for the establishment of the Institute of Lifelong Education, which is the administrative body that governs lifelong learning in the city.

### Governance and partnership

The Institute of Lifelong Education functions to: create a line of communication between citizens and the lifelong learning administrative body; develop and operate lifelong learning programmes; gather and provide information on lifelong education to the region concerned and provide advice on lifelong education; promote lifelong learning to marginalized community members; create and support lifelong learning small groups; train personnel involved in lifelong education; maintain study records and a database of lifelong learning personnel; and run events and festivals to promote lifelong learning. The Lifelong Education Council was created to facilitate communication between the national Office of Education and Namyangju's Institute of Lifelong Education. Members of these



© Namyangju Institute of Lifelong Education

*A yoga class for women at a Learning Lighthouse*

organizations gather regularly to discuss and collaborate on learning projects and to gather feedback and proposals from local businesses and members of the community.

Various other organization and institutions are also involved in promoting and operating lifelong learning initiatives in Namyangju. These include social welfare centres, museums, art galleries, YMCAs, various clubs and associations and private education institutions.



# Implementation

*Namyangju firmly believes that its citizens are its most valuable resource.*

## Provision of lifelong learning

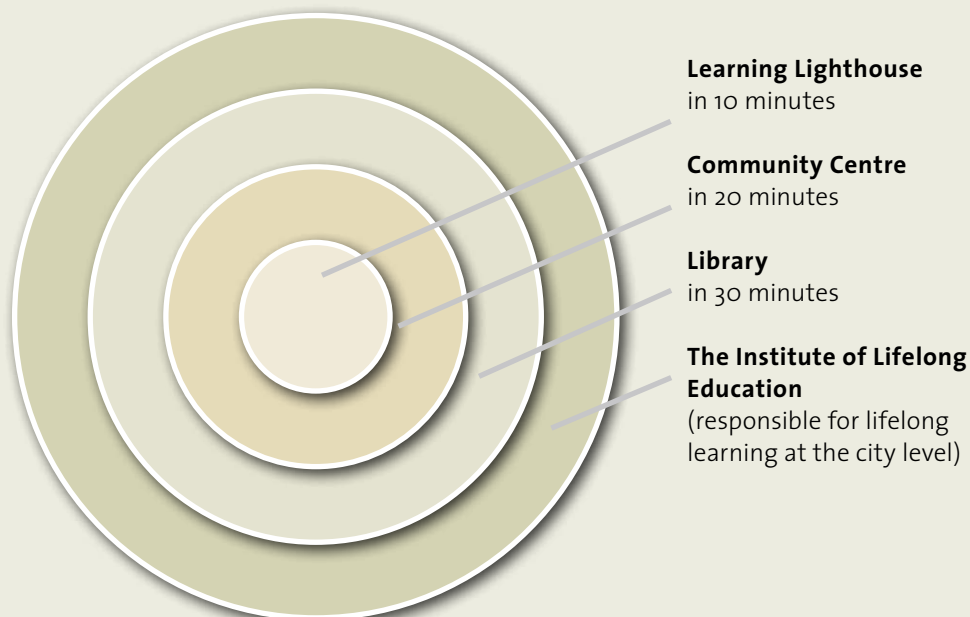
As part of its efforts to address imbalances in access to lifelong learning opportunities across the city, Namyangju has been focusing on seven aspects.

The first is the creation of a unique '1-2-3 Lifelong Learning Infrastructure'. The numbers refer to citizens' close proximity to lifelong learning facilities, no matter where they live in the city. '1' refers to the fact that each resident of Namyangju lives no more than a ten-minute walk away from the nearest community learning space, which is known as a 'Learning Lighthouse'. A larger community centre is no more than a twenty-minute ('2') walk away from each resident, while a library is no more than thirty minutes ('3') away. The 1-2-3 Lifelong Learning Infrastructure is illustrated in the figure below.

The second aspect is related to the first, in that Learning Lighthouses not only aim to promote learning, but also to generate a sense of community among citizens by providing them with spaces in which they can meet people from their local community and share ideas.

The third aspect is the incubation of local talent and the growth of professional capabilities. Namyangju firmly believes that its citizens are its most valuable resource. Volunteers, Citizen Lecturers, entrepreneurs and agricultural leaders are nurtured through the city's academies. Examples of these academies include the Lifelong Learning Manager Academy, the Neighbourhood Academy, the Green Planting Academy, the CEO Academy and the Traditional Tea Etiquette Instructor Academy. Graduates of these programmes give back to the city by volunteering and actively participating in city programmes.

### 1-2-3 Lifelong Learning Infrastructure





© Namyangju Institute of Lifelong Education

*Children take part in a slow-food cookery class*

In addition, Namyangju maintains a personnel database in which more than 600 people are registered to serve as Citizen Lecturers.

The fourth aspect centres on supporting small learning groups. The main goal here is to create a sustainable and self-sustaining culture of everyday learning. After lifelong learning programmes end, the graduates are encouraged to form their own small groups and to register such small groups with the city. The city then provides these groups with ongoing support and even provides seed money for entrepreneurial groups that wish to establish local community activities driven voluntarily by small learning clubs. There are currently 180 registered small groups; forty of these have established learning businesses. Namyangju's annual Festival of Lifelong Learning promotes these learning groups.

The fifth aspect involves supporting schoolchildren and their parents. The city runs after-school and educational support programmes for primary and secondary school students. For example, Vision School is a programme that aims to help primary schoolchildren work towards identifying and realizing their goals in life. Curriculum support programmes are available for secondary school students, as is a mentoring programme that helps secondary school students decide on their career path by partnering them with university students. In addition, Namyangju provides classes for parents to help them create a supportive learning environment at home.

The sixth aspect focuses on providing marginalized social groups with lifelong learning opportunities. For example, Namyangju provides literacy programmes for such groups; community centres are currently running ten literacy programmes for 780 participants. In addition, special lifelong learning programmes are available for people with disabilities, women who wish to return to work and multicultural families.

Finally, Namyangju offers offline and online learning support and advisory services. In 2009, the city opened a lifelong learning shop, where residents can receive lifelong learning advice, find volunteering opportunities, request one-day trials for classes and buy products made by learning groups. These are the arts and crafts produced in lifelong learning classes, such as natural soaps, pottery, paintings and items of clothing.

At the learning shop, Arumdawoon Gage, a non-profit organization, sells used and new goods donated by citizens and then shares the profits with the community. The learning shop is fully staffed by volunteers and includes a coffee shop, which is run by people with learning disabilities. Dasan School ([www.dasanedu.org](http://www.dasanedu.org)), which provides citizens with information on lifelong learning, is Namyangju's online learning centre. Home Learn ([www.homelearn.go.kr](http://www.homelearn.go.kr)) is a website run in cooperation with Gyeonggi Province that offers more than 800 online learning programmes.

# Example of innovation or good practice

## Learning

Lighthouses convert spaces lying idle in the city, such as empty apartments, offices, community centres and nursing homes, into learning spaces.

## The Learning Lighthouse

### Objectives

The overall aim of Learning Lighthouses is to contribute towards the building of a sustainable learning city and to cultivate learning among citizens. More specifically, Learning Lighthouses pursue five objectives. The first is to create a lifelong learning infrastructure that makes learning opportunities easily accessible to all residents. The second is to promote residents' development and cultivate local talent. The third is to train Citizen Lecturers and Learning Managers and appoint them strategically within different Learning Lighthouse programmes, thereby creating job opportunities. The fourth objective is to encourage citizens to take the initiative and show innovation in creating new kinds of learning opportunities. Finally, Learning Lighthouses aim to promote communication between residents, encourage local participation and generate a sense of community.

### Main target groups

Learning Lighthouses aim to provide introductory lifelong learning experiences to all citizens of all ages. In particular, this project targets citizens who previously had difficulties participating in learning initiatives due to issues such as a lack of transport, mobility problems, old age or parental responsibilities.

### Main activities

Learning Lighthouses are a key part of the 1-2-3 Lifelong Learning Infrastructure described above. They focus on generating interest in lifelong learning and providing introductory learning programmes. As already noted, Namyangju aims to improve the accessibility of educational and cultural opportunities by ensuring that no resident is more than a ten-minute walk away from the nearest Learning Lighthouse.

Learning Lighthouses convert spaces lying idle in the city, such as empty apartments, offices, community centres and nursing homes, into learning spaces. The initiative generally comes from citizens themselves. Residents of an apartment block, for example, come together and decide to set up a Learning Lighthouse in an empty apartment in their block. They must then submit an application, which includes details such as the aims and rationale for the Learning Lighthouse, the location, the term, the support already available,





the additional resources required, legal compliance, etc. The city administration then carefully reviews this application, assessing its feasibility and validity before designating the location a Learning Lighthouse and appointing a Learning Manager.

In the next stage, the Learning Manager works closely with the Learning Lighthouse Preparation Committee (comprising residents, representatives of the residents' association and apartment managers) to identify participants' learning needs and wishes before defining the learning programme's content. The Learning Lighthouse Committee is responsible for determining lifelong learning programmes based on resident surveys, promoting relevant Learning Lighthouse programmes, and recruiting and advising learners. Learning Lighthouse programmes typically relate to health and well-being, culture and the arts, liberal arts and basic literacy education. The programmes are tailored to different age groups. Generally, a Learning Lighthouse will offer two programmes for

youth, two programmes for adults and one programme for older people. Each programme usually lasts twelve weeks and comprises one two-hour class per week. At least ten students must sign up for a programme before it can be offered.

The first ten Learning Lighthouses were set up in 2011. This had increased to 85 by 2014, and there will be 100 Learning Lighthouses in Namyangju offering more than 1,000 lifelong learning programmes to more than 15,000 residents by the end of 2015. These Learning Lighthouses are intended to develop 300 learning communities, which will be self-sustaining learning structures run by citizens themselves. These learning communities will then share their learning with other local communities. A network between Learning Lighthouses will connect learning communities with each in order to build a collaborative spirit and enable communities to share business models, so that the information learned and resources available can freely flow within the Lifelong Learning City of Namyangju.

# Mobilization and utilization of resources



Learning Managers participate in a workshop

Rather than investing in new facilities for community services, Learning Lighthouse programmes save resources by using pre-existing spaces. Unused senior citizens' centres, office spaces, apartments and meeting rooms have all been converted into learning spaces.

Namyangju's citizens are another very valuable resource for building the learning city. Namyangju has been training Lifelong Learning Manager volunteers since 2009. By 2014, a total of 203 such managers had been trained. The training content comprises an introduction to the concept of lifelong learning, consultation of learners, programme operations, building a learning network and facilitating small-group learning. About eighty graduates of this programme continue to actively participate as volunteers in lifelong learning programmes and have been assigned to Learning Lighthouses.

Namyangju also continuously seeks out talented people to work as Citizen Lecturers. Citizen Lecturers have an area of specialism or technical skills and experiences that they can make full use of at the Learning Lighthouse. Applications for Citizen Lecturers are accepted

throughout the year on a rolling basis. The lecturers undergo basic training and are registered in the pool of our valuable personnel assets.

Namyangju has recruited a Lifelong Learning Professional, an expert in lifelong learning who works with the city's administration to build the learning city.

The budget for Namyangju's Institute for Lifelong Education is 14,920,000 US dollars. 79 per cent of the budget goes to support for schools, 8.8 per cent to library support and 12.6 per cent to lifelong learning. While the share allocated to lifelong learning is comparatively low, it has increased by 176 per cent since 2010.

## Monitoring and evaluation

Namyangju conducts satisfaction surveys and evaluations of its 1-2-3 Lifelong Learning Infrastructure twice a year. Learning Lighthouses, meanwhile, are making an effort to improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation in the following ways.

Learning Managers visit Learning Lighthouse programmes about once a week to check any problems or needs. During the Learning Managers' meetings, which are held twice a month in the city hall, such issues are reported to the city's administration. Case studies are also shared at these meetings and solutions for common problems are discussed.

Feedback forms are collected at the end of each Learning Lighthouse programme. These surveys ask learners to evaluate the lectures and the lecturer, to explain why they chose a particular class, and to state whether they would recommend the programme to other prospective participants. In addition, recommendations for future classes and other programmes are gathered to help Learning Lighthouses prepare for the next term.

# Impacts and challenges

## Impacts

In 2011, 835 citizens participated in Learning Lighthouse programmes. In 2014, this number had increased to 10,402. In a survey conducted in 2011, 68 per cent of participants said that the convenient location was the most attractive aspect of Learning Lighthouse programmes. Furthermore, 96 per cent stated that such programmes are needed.

As well as benefitting learners, Learning Lighthouses create jobs by employing Citizen Lecturers. Six hundred Citizen Lecturers were registered with the programme in 2014, and of these, 373 taught at 640 Learning Lighthouse programmes. This demonstrates that lifelong learning is providing paid employment as well as enabling citizens to contribute their knowledge and skills to their community.

An important feature of Learning Lighthouses is that, while the city administration provides support and guidance, citizens themselves are allowed to take a proactive role in deciding how their Learning Lighthouses will develop. This ensures that Learning Lighthouses cater to specific local needs, but it also encourages active citizenship. Another important impact of Learning Lighthouses is that they promote communication and cooperation between citizens and the building of networks between Namyangju's various villages.

The Learning Lighthouse began as Namyangju's innovative idea, but it is now having a national impact, as many other local governments throughout the Republic of Korea have since been inspired by this project. Fifty different local governments have visited Namyangju since 2011 to see how the project operates. Other cities recognize that this is a valid model that can make use of under-used resources and utilize human resources readily available

in their own cities. Furthermore, because the operational model is not rigid, it can be easily adapted to any village or city. The Learning Lighthouse became the role model for the national government's Happy Learning Centre project. In 2014, sixty local governments operated 180 Happy Learning Centres funded by the Korean government. Thus the Learning Lighthouse model has expanded at the national level.

The Learning Lighthouse project was awarded the Grand Prix Korean Lifelong Learning Award by the Korean Ministry of Education in 2013. The project received the award because of its innovativeness, its major impact on the lives of citizens and on society as a whole, and its positive effect on the city's values.

## Challenges

One important challenge facing the Learning Lighthouse project is expanding the range of learning programmes offered to participants. It is essential to ensure not only that a broader selection of courses is on offer, but also that these courses are kept up-to-date, that they are tailored to learners' specific needs and that they respond to the rapid changes currently shaping Korean society. In particular, the Learning Lighthouse project plans to offer more courses dedicated to promoting civic awareness. A second major challenge is creating self-financing Learning Lighthouses that no longer rely on the city administration for funds and personnel. Finally, given that 11.4 per cent of Namyangju's population is aged over 65, it is imperative that Learning Lighthouses cater more for the needs of older people. To this end, Namyangju is planning to open a Lifelong University in 2015.



## Lessons learned and recommendations

*By supporting the creation of learning communities, municipalities can help citizens to build bonds with each other, thereby counteracting the anonymity of city life.*

Namyangju has found that Learning Managers play an important role in connecting its citizens and villages with the city government. Learning Managers reach out to residents, gather their opinions and relay these back to the administration. In response, the city administration informs the Learning Managers about the policy and direction of the city and helps Learning Managers find solutions to challenges that arise. In the early days of the Learning Lighthouse project, Learning Managers played a fairly passive role of handling duties assigned to them. However, they later began to participate in the planning and execution of projects. Now they take ownership of the location they are assigned to, deciding the destination and direction of the programme. They also share their

experiences and build synergies with other Learning Managers. Thus Learning Managers are proactive citizens of Namyangju who take a genuine interest in their neighbours.

As well as appointing local Learning Managers, Namyangju recommends establishing an integrated lifelong learning service that creates synergies and avoids duplication across various areas.

Finally, Namyangju recommends that cities emphasize the social side of lifelong learning. By supporting the creation of learning communities, municipalities can help citizens to build bonds with each other, thereby counteracting the anonymity of city life.

*Namyangju's libraries provide spaces where parents and children can learn together*





Children and young people take part in a science club

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# Swansea

United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Northern Ireland


## Profile

Total population of the city region*	687,000
Urban population density* <i>inhabitants per square kilometre</i>	276
Total area of the city region* <i>in square kilometres</i>	4,810
GDP per capita of the city region* <i>in US dollars</i>	46,266.66
GDP per capita of the country* <i>in US dollars</i>	60,749.30
Age structure* <i>in per cent</i>	
0–14	16.5
15–24	13.0
25–59	44.1
60+	26.4
Average number of years of schooling completed by people aged 15 and above*	
Men	12.9
Women	12.7
Average life expectancy at birth in the city region* <i>in years</i>	80.0

\* most recent available data





An aerial photograph of Swansea Bay City Region, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings, a large sandy beach, and the bay in the background. The sky is blue with some clouds. In the top left corner, there are two grey chevron arrows pointing right.

*I feel sure that with initiatives underway, during the next ten years this area of South West Wales will become a more confident, ambitious and well-connected region – recognized internationally as a knowledge and innovation-based society. As the UK pilot Learning City, we are developing a culture of entrepreneurship in our schools, colleges and universities. Learning to be enterprising and innovative is the main driver in our society for future prosperity!*

Sir Terry Matthews, Chair of the Swansea Bay City Region

The Welsh Government has identified two areas that are essential for development in Wales: developing a buoyant economy and supporting social justice. In order to address these themes, Swansea Bay City Region must be innovative, entrepreneurial and inclusive. The principal focus of the Swansea Bay Entrepreneurial Learning City Region initiative is on the development of entrepreneurial capacity through lifelong learning. Lifelong learning in this context includes all formal and non-formal learning across all ages and sectors. The ultimate aim of the Swansea Bay City Region Board is that by 2030, Swansea Bay City Region 'will be a confident, ambitious and connected European city region, recognized internationally for [its] emerging knowledge and innovation economy' (Swansea Bay City Region Website, 2014). Swansea Bay Entrepreneurial Learning City Region is exploring how, by embedding entrepreneurial skills into lifelong learning, it can create innovation, improve the regional economy, and narrow the economic, education and skills gaps between deprived and affluent areas.

## Introduction

### General overview

South Wales has a history of profitable mining and heavy industry embedded within an infrastructure that included prosperous ports and a dense transport network. It was characterized by strong communities in which education was highly valued and a radical tradition of adult education flourished. The region featured a variety of associated social and cultural institutions, many of which, along with the mining industry, have been lost or are in decline.

Swansea Bay City Region, which is located in South West Wales, has some major global businesses and strengths in key sectors with significant growth potential. The region has leading higher and further education institutions as well as important innovation and knowledge economy assets. The area also benefits from a stunning natural environment and offers residents a highly attractive quality of life.

However, the Swansea Bay City Region and Wales as a whole are underperforming economically compared to other regions of the UK and Europe. GVA (gross value added) growth – the primary indicator used to measure an economy's overall performance – in South West Wales has been lower than that of the UK and Wales over the past two decades; in 2010, it was 77 per cent of the UK average and 94 per cent of the Welsh level. Furthermore, the recent international economic crisis has left a legacy of austerity measures that have resulted in cuts to public services. As the public sector is the largest employer in the region, this has had an impact on employment levels. Continuing low economic growth means that Swansea Bay City Region's poor economic performance is unlikely to improve in the short to medium term. This is affecting health, poverty and community cohesion in the region. There is an urgent need for innovation and change.



## Main issues to be tackled

As the foregoing discussion suggests, the main challenge facing Swansea Bay City Region is the creation of employment in the region. According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2013), 'the extent of inactivity, disability and in-work poverty in Wales reflects weak demand for labour. Wales needs job creation to defeat poverty'. Private and public sector collaborations and partnerships are vital for sustainable economic growth and for supporting a diverse range of enterprises and innovation. The Swansea Bay City Region has a history of strong partnerships which provides a firm basis for future development.

Demographic changes are making it increasingly important to create more employment. The key driver of population growth in Swansea Bay City Region is migration. The proportion of people aged between 20 and 24 years has increased by 5,100 (31.4 per cent) over the last ten years, largely due to high numbers of young people moving to the region to study. The development and retention of enterprising young people with higher aspirations and greater ambition is a priority.

The Swansea Bay City Region was created in July 2013 to harness strengths, boost investment and create jobs. The Swansea Bay City Region Board, which reports to the Welsh Minister for the Economy, Science and Transport, includes representatives from the public and private sectors, and brings together business, education, regeneration and local authority partners. All partners are working collaboratively to create a culture of entrepreneurship and develop a city of innovation.

Swansea Bay City Region is committed to ensuring that new opportunities are inclusive of people from disadvantaged communities and that these opportunities reduce poverty in these communities. Swansea Bay City Region has 422 local



communities, with 119 of these (each averaging 1,500 people) identified as being within the 20 per cent most deprived communities in Wales (Welsh Government, 2014b). Some communities of multiple deprivation are characterized by third-generation unemployment and a lack of engagement with education. There is a strong link between poverty and poor educational attainment (Welsh Government, 2015).

Another important issue is finding innovative and transparent ways to measure success that take into account both prosperity and quality of life. Recovering from the recent international economic crisis may involve rethinking long-held understandings of prosperity, whereby factors such as citizens' quality of life, happiness and well-being are used alongside economic data as measures of success. Much depends on finding sustainable solutions to long-term problems. Investment in learning is essential for sustainable development.

*Another important issue is finding innovative and transparent ways to measure success that take into account both prosperity and quality of life.*





Local entrepreneurs  
mentor students

© Swansea University

## Learning city policies and strategies

### Definition of a learning city

The following definition of a learning city is intended to be inclusive, draw upon strengths, address challenges and underpin the entrepreneurial theme for Swansea Bay City Region's learning city implementation:

*An Entrepreneurial Learning City Region learns collectively to develop an entrepreneurial culture which supports innovation and improves the economy, creates employment opportunities, raises aspirations and skills levels, and enhances a sustainable quality of life for all.*

A collaborative approach to learning based on partnership can develop entrepreneurial skills and attitudes to meet the identified challenges. Entrepreneurial behaviours, skills and attitudes such as opportunity-seeking, initiative-taking, selling and persuasion skills, creativity, negotiation skills and networking can be developed at any age and in any economic or educational environment. They can be used in many different contexts and sectors, from large businesses to community enterprises, and from finding solutions in the public sector to collaborative initiatives between sectors.

### Vision and objectives

The overarching vision of Swansea Bay Learning City Region is to create an entrepreneurial culture that will develop the regional economy and create a sustainable quality of life for all. This vision can be broken down into the following key objectives:

Objective 1: To enhance the capacity for innovation through entrepreneurial leadership by private and public sector leaders.

### Motives for becoming a learning city

The challenge for the Swansea Bay Learning City Region is to boost investment and create jobs in the region while developing a model of economic growth that ensures that everyone, including residents in disadvantaged communities, can benefit from enhanced prosperity. If barriers to participation are not addressed, the development of a successful knowledge economy could increase the gap between rich and poor and damage social cohesion. Recent research suggests that a 'trickle-down effect' does not necessarily impact on people living in poverty: 'there is no guarantee that economic growth will reduce poverty: some economically expanding cities experienced unchanged or increasing poverty rates' (Lee et al., 2014).

The creation of employment opportunities is one key to taking families out of poverty. Swansea Bay Learning City Region will strengthen partnerships between public, private and voluntary sectors in the region to ensure that employment and learning opportunities are accessible to all. This will involve developing skills pathways that enable people from the region to access new opportunities. Engagement with learning in general is a prerequisite. Experience in the region has shown that enterprise education improves engagement and motivation and raises aspirations.

Objective 2: To provide professional development opportunities for educators and trainers so that entrepreneurial learning can be embedded into both formal and informal learning.

Objective 3: To maximize experiential learning opportunities available for young people to explore entrepreneurship and to embed the development of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes within formal and informal learning provision (see also Hart, 2013).

Objective 4: To provide support for new start-up businesses and regional companies with growth potential.

Objective 5: To develop innovative, robust and transparent ways to measure success that include factors such as quality of life and sustainability as well as economic factors.

### Legislative framework

The Welsh Government is the devolved government for Wales with responsibility for most key areas of public life, including education, health and the environment. Its policy document *One Wales* states that 'our vision is of a society in which learning throughout life is the norm, where the people of Wales are actively engaged in acquiring new knowledge and skills from childhood to old age' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007). The Welsh Government's website also stresses the importance of lifelong learning, stating that 'lifelong learning is at the heart of the Welsh Government's objectives for creating social justice and economic success'.

Hart (2013) notes that 'the Welsh Government's Youth Entrepreneurship Strategy (YES) Action Plan was launched in November 2010 and focuses on

young people and their journey of entrepreneurship. It aims to raise their awareness, develop their entrepreneurial skills, spark ideas and provide practical information and support for those seeking to start up in business'.

Sustainable Development is an organizing principle of government in Wales. It is also an essential consideration in the development of a learning city, and will be considered under Objective Five. Sustainable development can lead to and also be inspired by entrepreneurial activity. For example, the new tidal barrage in Swansea will generate sufficient electricity for 120,000 households, refine new technologies which can be replicated on a worldwide basis and create a new regional industry with highly skilled employment.

The Well-Being of Future Generations Bill, which was introduced in July 2014, sets 'ambitious long-term goals to reflect the Wales we want to see, both now and in the future. These are for a prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal Wales; with cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language' (Welsh Government, 2014a).

Learning plays a key role in the City and County of Swansea's One Swansea plan, which was devised in 2013 and aims to tackle poverty. More specifically, the plan sets out how the Local Service Board intends to achieve the following six outcomes:

- Children have a good start in life.
- People learn successfully.
- Young people and adults have good jobs.
- People have a decent standard of living.
- People are healthy, safe and independent.
- People have good places to live and work.

*The overarching vision of Swansea Bay Entrepreneurial Learning City Region is to create an entrepreneurial culture that will develop the regional economy and create a sustainable quality of life for all.*



### Energy cluster in Pembrokeshire

In the section entitled ‘People learn successfully’, the key actions include ‘Develop enterprise education opportunities’ and ‘Deliver actions for Swansea Learning City 2014’ (Swansea Local Service Board, 2014).

### Governance and partnership

The Swansea Bay City Region encompasses four local authority areas: Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. Each is responsible for education and lifelong learning delivery and they work together at the regional level for aspects of delivery. The Swansea Bay City Region Board is responsible for planning and implementing regional economic development, employment and skills strategies.

The Regional Learning Partnership (RLP) has developed the Regional Plan for Employment and Skills on behalf of Swansea Bay City Region Board. Within this

partnership, education and regeneration partners come together to plan provision for learners across the region. Members include representatives from Careers Wales and Job Centre Plus, colleges of further education, universities, local authorities, the Welsh Local Government Association, the South Wales Chamber of Commerce, County Associations of Voluntary Service, the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), the Workers’ Educational Association and the National Training Federation for Wales. The partnership has created a sub-group that is responsible for developing entrepreneurship across the region

Swansea Bay City Region has established the Swansea Bay Entrepreneurial Learning City Region Steering Group with representation from local government, education providers and local entrepreneurs. Representatives from the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and PASCAL Observatory visited the group and advised on strategy.



# Implementation

## Provision of lifelong learning

A wide range of developments, both large and small, are contributing to the development of a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. Further information about the development of entrepreneurship in the region can be found in *Entrepreneurship & Enterprise: Opportunities and Observations from South West & Central Wales*, a survey undertaken by the Regional Learning Partnership (Regional Learning Partnership South West and Central Wales, 2014).

As noted above, the first objective of Swansea Bay Entrepreneurial Learning City Region is to enhance the capacity for innovation through entrepreneurial leadership by private and public sector leaders.

Sir Terry Matthews, Chair of the Board of Swansea Bay City Region, is himself a high-tech entrepreneur and a Swansea University alumnus who has achieved global success and supports the development of entrepreneurship in students and graduates through the Alacrity Programme. He provides an example from the private sector of entrepreneurial leadership for the region.

Swansea University's new beach-front second campus will create around 12,000 permanent jobs by 2020. A key feature will be inbuilt support for entrepreneurship and the commercialization of research-led opportunities. Vice-Chancellor Professor Richard B. Davies explains, 'it will transform this region from the heavy industry economy of yesterday to the high-tech knowledge economy of tomorrow.' This initiative provides an example of entrepreneurial leadership in the public sector.

The LEAD Wales programme is a flagship programme that develops the leadership and entrepreneurial skills of owners and managers of SMEs. Participants have

reported an average increase of 26 per cent in their company's annual turnover (LEAD Wales, 2015).

The second objective of Swansea Bay Entrepreneurial Learning City is to provide professional development opportunities for educators and trainers so that entrepreneurial learning can be embedded into both formal and informal learning. The University of Wales Trinity St David's International Institute for Creative Entrepreneurial Development (IICED) brings together international experts in entrepreneurial education to contribute to policymaking and practice. The aim of IICED is to inform international best practice in enterprise, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial teaching, learning and evaluation. The institute has provided expert advice for the EU's competence framework for entrepreneurial education and has made substantial contributions to the Quality Assurance Agency's *Guidelines for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education*. The University of Wales Trinity St David also established the UK's first validated teacher training module in entrepreneurial education, which is featured as best practice in the European Commission's *Entrepreneurship Education: A Guide for Educators*.

Swansea University's Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership is represented on EU advisory groups on entrepreneurship education and provides continuing professional development opportunities for higher and further education lecturers who teach, or want to teach, entrepreneurship in all its forms.

Swansea Bay City Region is making good progress towards achieving its third objective, which is to enable young people to develop entrepreneurial skills. This progress was recognized when Swansea, led by Gower College Swansea, received the UK City of Enterprise Award in 2014. This award celebrated the way in

*The Swansea Bay City Region encompasses four local authority areas: Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire.*

which enterprise education is embedded in Swansea's primary and secondary education, further education, higher education and lifelong learning within the city region.

Examples of learning institutions that offer enterprise education for young people include the Entrepreneurship Academy Wales, which is led by Gower College Swansea and provides enterprise and entrepreneurship education for people aged between 18 and 30. At the University of Wales Trinity St David, 15 per cent of all courses have been devoted to developing entrepreneurial skills since 2014. University staff have also assisted in developing the Welsh Baccalaureate 2015 to include entrepreneurship.

The new Enterprise and Innovation Committee within the College of Medicine at Swansea University has developed a master's degree in bio-entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship skills have been embedded into all courses. Swansea Start brought the first and second 'Startup Weekends' in Wales to Swansea. All further and higher education institutions within the region run many informal events during Global Entrepreneurship Week and the Welsh Festival of Entrepreneurship. Through Adult Learners' Week, the initiative aims to provide experiential opportunities for adults across the region to explore entrepreneurship.

Providing support for start-up businesses and regional companies with growth potential is Swansea Bay City Region's fourth objective. The Welsh Government provides a range of support for start-ups, including a bursary for young people and graduates. Swansea University's College of Medicine supports new enterprises within two Institutes of Life Science. The Data Science Building opening in 2015 will unleash the potential of large-scale data to support meditech enterprise. Companies with growth potential have expressed a need for a single point of contact. A possible solution that is being explored is the establishment of a Centre for Regional Economic Development.

Other organizations providing support for start-ups include Swansea Start, a community for tech businesses and start-ups. Swansea Start has been instrumental in bringing a new tech incubator, the Swansea Tech hub, to Swansea. Coleg Sir Gâr's Innovation for Industry provides support for businesses and organizations of any size to develop new products, processes and services. Centerprise is Neath Port Talbot College Group's student enterprise and business incubation centre. The centre provides a professional, supportive environment for individuals who are setting up their own business and offers access to a range of free facilities and support services.

Dulais Opportunities for Voluntary Enterprise (DOVE) workshop and Glynneath Training Centre are social enterprises in former coal-mining villages that have provided learning opportunities in their communities for more than twenty-five years. Formal education providers work with these centres, which offer strong local relationships, expertise in the needs of local communities and accessible community venues. The VIEW model of community-led social enterprise has inspired communities across Europe and internationally.

Developing a better understanding of what being an entrepreneurial city region involves is crucial for achieving the fifth objective: to develop innovative, robust and transparent ways to measure success that include factors such as quality of life and sustainability as well as economic factors. In order to develop this understanding, Swansea Bay City Region is working with an international group of entrepreneurial learning cities through the PASCAL Learning Cities 2020 network. In addition, Swansea University held an international symposium, which was supported by UNESCO, on Entrepreneurial Learning City Regions (May 2014). The University of Wales Trinity St David followed this in June 2014 with an International Summit for Entrepreneurship Educators. Both events supported regional collaboration and provided an international perspective on local developments. One outcome is a book on entrepreneurial learning city regions, which is currently being prepared for publication.

## Example of innovation or good practice

### The Science and Innovation Bay Campus, Swansea University

#### Objectives

Swansea University's new Science and Innovation Bay Campus, opening in September 2015, will increase innovation and research impacts resulting from growing capacity, industry collaborations, spin-ins and spin-outs, and the development of high-tech clusters in the region. This exciting development will provide a unique opportunity for the region to develop the knowledge economy and enhance opportunities for growth and new employment.

#### Main target groups

Swansea University's Science and Innovation Bay Campus will provide an intensive, open innovation environment that will facilitate the growth of high-tech clusters in Swansea Bay City Region. The campus will provide teaching, student accommodation and research space, the latter with the help of a series of agreements with international and national companies such as BP, TATA Steel and Rolls Royce. Colleges based at the Bay Campus include the College of Engineering and the School of Management.

#### Main activities

Swansea University's US\$677-million beach-front second campus, which is currently under construction on a 65-acre site, will create around 12,000 permanent jobs by 2020. It is part-funded by the European Investment Bank and is expected to contribute more than US\$4.5 billion to the regional economy over the next ten years. The campus will continue Swansea University's tradition of co-location of research and industry to drive innovation, economic growth and entrepreneurship in the region. The integration of academia and industry on the campus will enhance students' applied knowledge and provide 'real-world' experience for students.

Aligned to the development of the Bay Campus, the College University Skills Partnership has been established between Swansea University, Gower College Swansea, Neath Port Talbot College and Pembrokeshire College. This regional partnership identifies skills shortages in knowledge economy sectors and companies with growth potential and develops innovative solutions to meet these needs. The development of a skills pool will attract further inward investment and support new clusters of enterprise.

The impact of such investment was demonstrated by Swansea University's success in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in December 2014, which showed the largest climb up the rankings of any research-intensive university in the UK, up to 26th place from 52nd in 2008.



# Mobilization and utilization of resources

*The Entrepreneurial Learning City Region initiative is also being supported by entrepreneurs from the region, who lead, encourage and mentor new entrepreneurial start-ups.*

Core funding from the Welsh Government provides most funding for entrepreneurial learning in the region. School education and adult community learning is also funded by the Welsh Government through the Local Education Authorities. The government's Department for Education and Skills (DfES) funds further education for people aged over 16, from basic skills and work-based training to foundation level degrees.

Structural Funds provide EU member countries with financial support. The aim of Structural Funds is to help close economic and social gaps between regions by investing in areas where the GDP is less than the EU average. The EU has recognized that West Wales and the Valleys is still recovering from a legacy of economic decline and that Swansea Bay City Region qualifies for Structural Fund support, with a focus on developing the economy.

National Lottery funding is provided to community groups and some formal education institutions in order to support innovative projects that meet the needs of the most disadvantaged groups in society.

The Entrepreneurial Learning City Region initiative is also being supported by entrepreneurs from the region, who lead, encourage and mentor new entrepreneurial start-ups. For example, successful entrepreneurs in the region are invited by the Welsh Government to take part in a role model project, which involves providing workshops and mentoring in schools and further and higher education.

## Monitoring and evaluation

In response to the UNESCO initiative, the *Key Features of Learning Cities* (2013) defines a set of data which has been gathered for the city region, providing a baseline for the measurement of change. In addition, a mapping process of all current entrepreneurial learning has been undertaken by the Regional Learning Partnership, which also provides baseline information.

Data on the development of entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and outcomes with regard to start-ups is gathered annually by each provider of further and higher education in Wales. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2013 Global Report found that 9.5 per cent of young Welsh people were engaged in early-stage entrepreneurial activity in 2012 (Amoros, Bosma and Global Entrepreneurship Research Association, 2014). The UK rate was reported as 8.3 per cent in 2012. The Higher Education Business and Community Interaction 2012-2013 Survey reported that universities in Wales make up 5 per cent of the UK's higher education population but generate 9.1 per cent of all UK graduate business start-ups and 11.33 per cent of active firms lasting three years or more (HEFCE, 2014).

# Impacts and challenges

## Impacts

The impact of the Entrepreneurial Learning City initiative cannot be measured at this early stage. However, it is clear that it is important to raise aspirations and ambition in the residents of Swansea Bay City Region and to ensure that everybody – including people living in disadvantaged communities – can take advantage of opportunities arising from an improving economy. Craigfelen Primary School, located in a disadvantaged community in Swansea, has found that building enterprise into the curriculum is motivational for all children. The enterprise curriculum at Craigfelen was featured as a case study in *An Education System Fit for an Entrepreneur*, a report by the UK's All-Party Parliamentary Group for Micro Businesses. The report notes:

Most notably the school also collaborated with Gower College Swansea in a project where further education students helped the primary pupils to gain insights into entrepreneurial behaviour through a range of activities. The collaboration was supported by Swansea City Council's Building Enterprise Education in Swansea (BEES) network (All-Party Parliamentary Group for Micro Businesses, 2014, p. 36).

## Challenges

The main obstacles to developing, planning, implementing and evaluating learning city programmes are mainly related to a lack of resources. For example, further assistance in devising a development plan would be useful. Swansea Bay City Region also requires funding for celebrating achievements, hosting meetings, visiting other learning cities, publishing research and outcomes and launching a Festival of Entrepreneurial Learning. In addition, Swansea Bay City Region wishes to establish independent evaluations of progress.



Starting young in enterprise at Craigfelen School

## Lessons learned and recommendations

Swansea Bay City Region recommends following these stages in the process of building a learning city:

1. Invite a representative from UNESCO to visit the city and provide initial guidance.
2. Identify significant partner learning cities in your region so that an exchange of ideas can be facilitated.
3. Identify a theme for your learning city initiative.
4. Attend an International Conference on Learning Cities in order to learn from other cities in similar or different contexts.
5. Join a PASCAL Observatory Learning City Network and invite a network representative to assist with further development of the theme for the learning city.

*Student entrepreneurs  
with Sir Terry  
Matthews at Swansea  
University's Start-up  
Market*





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# Guidelines for Building Learning Cities

These guidelines for building learning cities, which were developed in consultation with international experts from all five UNESCO regions, draw on insights emerging from the foregoing twelve case studies. The guidelines aim to provide cities with strategic approaches for building dynamic and sustainable learning cities. They contain a set of actionable recommendations that can be referred to at every stage of the process of becoming a learning city.

The guidelines are divided into the following six key areas of action, which should be tailored to every city's unique context: develop a plan for becoming a learning city; create a coordinated structure involving all stakeholders; initiate and maintain the process with celebratory events; make sure that learning is accessible to all citizens; establish a monitoring and evaluation process; and ensure sustainable funding.

## Develop a plan for becoming a learning city

Strong political leadership and steadfast commitment should be reflected in a concrete action plan.

- Involve city leaders and representatives in identifying the main issues that need to be addressed based on the city's unique challenges and priorities.
- Take stock of what has already been achieved by gathering information on relevant activities implemented by different sectors and stakeholders.
- Develop an understanding of what building a learning city involves by organizing capacity-building workshops for various sectors and stakeholders.
- Devise a concrete action plan and give it a catchy title. This plan should define the medium- and long-term objectives and means of evaluation, using the *Key Features of Learning Cities* as a basis.
- Develop a city charter outlining the actions that need to be taken to improve learning in the city. These actions should be aligned with the central government's strategies for building a learning society.

## Create a coordinated structure involving all stakeholders

All organizations and citizens are stakeholders in a learning city. A structure that involves all stakeholders in building the learning city through dialogue and consensus should therefore be created.

- Establish a learning city development committee comprising representatives from different sectors. This committee should reach a consensus on the principles for developing, implementing, monitoring and financing the learning city.
- Ensure that all stakeholders have clearly defined roles and responsibilities in designing and implementing the learning city plan.
- Create a learning city forum where people can contribute and share experiences.
- Form alliances with other cities, both nationally and internationally, in order to exchange experience, knowledge, ideas and best practice.
- Join the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) and any other networks or associations that could add value.
- Maintain strong contact with the ministry of education or any other related ministry to link the local with the national development.

## Initiate and maintain the process with celebratory events

Generating enthusiasm is crucial to the success of a learning city. The more people and organizations that react positively to the idea of a learning city and engage with it, the better its chances of flourishing are.

- Organize a learning festival in places where people gather. Make this a joyful event and invite all relevant organizations to exhibit their courses, products and materials and offer hands-on activities that encourage all citizens to get involved.
- Hold a conference to deliver the learning city message. Invite one or more twin cities to participate and share their experience, knowledge, ideas and best practice.
- Invite the media to promote and celebrate learning.
- Renew the interest of all stakeholders in the learning city agenda by organizing regular celebratory events.



## Make sure that learning is accessible to all citizens

Learning must be made enjoyable, available and accessible to all citizens so that they are inspired and empowered to continue learning throughout life.

- Provide adequate information, guidance and support to all citizens, including maps of learning provision in the city.
- Establish, promote and maintain community-based learning spaces and provide resources for learning in families and communities.
- Identify and respond to the learning needs and interests of citizens.
- Develop procedures that identify, validate and accredit the learning outcomes of non-formal learning, in particular.
- Provide special support in the form of flexible arrangements for marginalized groups, including families with migrant backgrounds, citizens with special learning needs and unemployed people.
- Help public and private organizations to become learning organizations.
- Foster a learner-friendly environment in the city and its institutions.

## Establish a monitoring and evaluation process to ensure learning city progress

In order to assess progress made in providing lifelong learning for all in the city, it is important to monitor and evaluate performance continuously.

- Define the measures for performance and progress in the city based on your action plan and the *Key Features of Learning Cities*.
- Establish mechanisms for documenting the process, assessing citizens' interests and needs, and collecting data.
- Commission regular reports that capture the lessons learned and make suggestions for improvement.
- Establish collective strategies for informing all stakeholders and gathering feedback.

## Ensure sustainable funding

In order to realize the multiple benefits of becoming and sustaining a learning city, multiple sources of sustainable funding should be secured and allocated in a fair way.

- Secure sufficient financial resources to build and maintain the basic structure of the learning city action plan.
- Develop sustainable cost-sharing mechanisms involving multi-stakeholder partnerships with companies, foundations, philanthropists, international partners, local and national governments, and supranational organizations.
- Make effective use of the learning resources of all stakeholders.
- Conduct cost-benefit analyses in order to compile evidence of the benefits of learning.
- Make special provisions for marginalized groups and individuals.

In order to support cities as they follow these recommendations, the secretariat of the Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), which is based in the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), will lead the following actions:

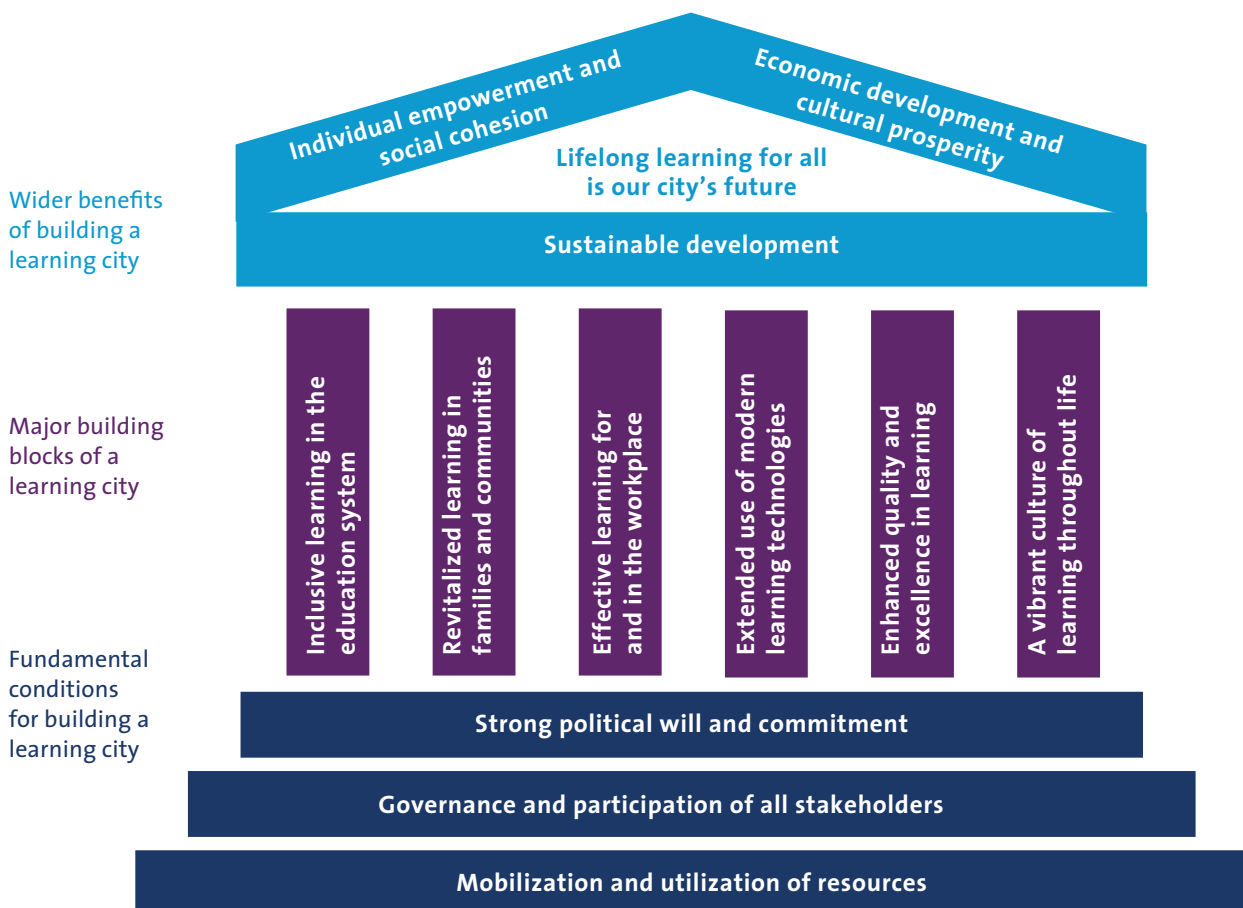
- Facilitating and disseminating research on the enrichment of the concept of the learning city
- Developing tools and instruments for building learning cities
- Serving as a clearing house for successful practices in establishing learning cities
- Developing and providing capacity-development programmes for members and partners
- Promoting policy dialogue and peer learning among member cities
- Advocating the importance of lifelong learning for all as an organizing principle for education policy and promoting policy reforms that support the building of learning cities

Enjoy the benefits of becoming a city that effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education; to revitalize learning in families and communities; to facilitate learning for and in the workplace; to extend the use of modern learning technologies; to enhance quality and excellence in learning; and to foster a culture of learning throughout life.

# Key Features of Learning Cities

The *Key Features of Learning Cities* were adopted at the 1st International Conference on Learning Cities in Beijing in 2013, as was the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities*. The *Key Features* serve as a comprehensive checklist of action points to help municipal governments and other city stakeholders build cities that promote lifelong learning for all. They can also be used as a reference document for

international organizations and national authorities when promoting learning societies, regions, cities and communities. The ‘temple’ below depicts all the elements of a learning city. A more detailed description can be found on the website of the Global Network of Learning Cities (<http://learningcities.uil.unesco.org/key-features/purpose>).





I am very happy to congratulate the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) on the launch of this publication.

Since the 1st International Conference on Learning Cities, which was held in Beijing, China, in October 2013, more and more cities and urban communities around the world have been inspired to build learning cities. This publication showcases exciting learning city developments in each of the five UNESCO regions: Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America, and Latin American and the Caribbean.

The twelve cities featured in this collection have different cultural and ethnic compositions, heritages and social structures, and they face various challenges. What they have in common, however, is that they have all placed lifelong learning at the heart of their development and are thereby unlocking the potential of their citizens.

The establishment of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) sees UIL once again play a world-leading role in promoting lifelong learning policy and practice.

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project

With more and more people living in cities, the need for sustainable economic, social and cultural urban development has become more urgent. The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) is an international platform for cities that are responding to this need by pursuing lifelong learning strategies. The GNLC has compiled this collection of case studies, which brings together examples of cities from all regions in the world that use the learning city approach to enhance individual empowerment, social cohesion, economic development, cultural prosperity and sustainability.

The case studies present good practice, challenges tackled and lessons learned in the following learning cities: Melton (Australia), Sorocaba (Brazil), Beijing (China), Bahir Dar (Ethiopia), Espoo (Finland), Cork (Ireland), Amman (Jordan), Mexico City (Mexico), Ybycuí (Paraguay), Balanga (Philippines), Namyangju (Republic of Korea) and Swansea (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). In examining progress achieved to date in the implementation of the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* and the *Key Features of Learning Cities*, these case studies provide guidance on how to promote, implement and monitor the learning city concept.