Global Learning Cities in Asia-Pacific and in Europe: Policy Insight to an UNESCO Network and the Role of HEIs in the Development of Learning Cities

19 April, 2018

Dr. habil Balázs Németh PhD
Associate Professor of Adult and Lifelong Learning
Institute of Adult Education and HRD - Faculty for Cultural Science
University of Pécs
nemeth.balazs@kpvk.pte.hu
Learning Cities and Regions – A Difficult Scenario
Background and Context

• The Impact of the Concept of the Learning Society from the 1970s and onwards (e.g. the role of the Faure-report (1972) and the Delors-report (1996)

• Models of Learning Communities, Learning Cities and Learning Regions in Europe, North America, Australia, and Asia and the Pacific

• The role of the OECD from late 1970s onwards and that of the EU before and after the Millenium to connect the lifelong learning initiative to spatial developments of learning.

• Learning City initiative to spread from developed UN Member States to Developing Member States where an accelerating interest is reflected by both political groups and by the public.

• The Impact of the Third Mission of HEIs in Reconfigurating Partnerships
Context of Presentation

Examination two UNESCO UIL Global Learning Publications – comparison of 9 European and 8 Asian-Pacific Learning cities

- Unlocking the Potential of Twelve Learning Cities (2016) Hamburg: UIL
- Unlocking the Potential of Urban Communities Vol II. (2017) Hamburg: UIL

Responding to the following questions:

A) Background policy progress
B) Comparative analysis of case studies of 17 learning cities to respond to
   - What joint questions and conditions can be identified between the identified cities representing Europe and Asia?
   - Can one identify European/Asian similarities?
   - Where can one identify differences?
   - Which assumptions can be developed for similarities, differences and transnational link?
Historical Context – The Faure Report - 1972

Learning to be
The world of education today and tomorrow
Unesco
Historical Context – OECD Impact in 1972 and 1973

OECD *Educating Cities* project (1972)

Major Steps in the Building of Learning Cities and Regions
(according to Longworth)

• The Age of Innocence (1990-1996)
• The Age of Experimentation (1996-2000)
• The Age of Advance (2001-2003)
• The Age of Understanding (2003-2009)
• The Age of Innovation (2009-2013)
• The Age of Global Learning Cities (2013- )
A Learning Cities Charter

WE RECOGNISE THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING AS THE MAJOR DRIVING FORCE FOR THE FUTURE PROSPERITY, STABILITY AND WELL-BEING OF OUR CITIZENS.

We declare that we will invest in Lifelong Learning within our community by:

1. DEVELOPING PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN ALL SECTORS OF THE CITY FOR OPTIMISING AND SHARING RESOURCES, AND INCREASING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
2. DISCOVERING THE LEARNING REQUIREMENTS OF EVERY CITIZEN FOR PERSONAL GROWTH, CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY WELL-BEING
3. ENERGISING LEARNING PROVIDERS TO SUPPLY LEARNING GEARED TO THE NEEDS OF EACH LEARNER WHERE, WHEN, HOW AND BY WHOM IT IS REQUIRED, LIFELONG.
4. STIMULATING DEMAND FOR LEARNING THROUGH INNOVATIVE INFORMATION STRATEGIES, PROMOTIONAL EVENTS AND THE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE MEDIA
5. SUPPORTING THE SUPPLY OF LEARNING BY PROVIDING MODERN LEARNING GUIDANCE SERVICES AND ENABLING THE EFFECTIVE USE OF NEW LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES
6. MOTIVATING ALL CITIZENS TO CONTRIBUTE THEIR OWN TALENTS, SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ENERGY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CARE, COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, SCHOOLS AND OTHER PEOPLE
7. PROMOTING WEALTH CREATION THROUGH ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANISATIONS TO BECOME LEARNING ORGANISATIONS
8. ACTIVATING OUTWARD-LOOKING PROGRAMMES TO ENABLE CITIZENS TO LEARN FROM OTHERS IN THEIR OWN, AND THE GLOBAL, COMMUNITY
9. COMBATTING EXCLUSION BY CREATIVE PROGRAMMES TO INVOLVE THE EXCLUDED IN LEARNING AND THE LIFE OF THE CITY
10. RECOGNISING THE PLEASURE OF LEARNING THROUGH EVENTS TO CELEBRATE AND REWARD LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT IN ORGANISATIONS, FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS
Longworth to signal two major difference in between Europe and Asia in the context of learning cities

The Difference between Asia and Europe

People in the West are proud of their individuality and their freedom to do as they please….but learning city development in Asia tends to be more a collective, where people act in the interest of the community and the city. This means more people involved, more rapid advance and solidarity of purpose which does not exist in the West.

The second difference has to do with having a vision. In Asia they see their city as a learning city, they see the learning city a framework for building a healthy city, a green city, a resilient city, a city of culture, a smart city, a city of well-being and any other adjective they can care to adopt. This to gives a unity of purpose among the many, rather than a piecemeal and restricted approach we adopt in Europe.”

The Development of Key Features of Learning Cities

The Initiating Process of UNESCO-led Development of New Key Features of Learning Cities:

A normative instrument for measuring learning cities is the result of a long consultation process.

**UIL held a workshop on developing a framework for the Key Features of Learning Cities from 3 to 5 July 2012**, with experts representing partners including PASCAL Observatory, Bertelsmann Foundation, CISCO Systems, Beijing Municipal Education Commission, National Centre of Education Development Research of China, Kuwait University and the Cape Higher Education Consortium, as well as some UIL professional staff and consultants, participated in the workshop.

(Source: Key Features of Learning Cities - Introductory Note, UIL 2013. p. 3.)
Descriptors of Learning Cities

• The Impact of the Scale in Urban Development, Production and Changing Social Relations affected by the Structures, Modes and Available Sources of Learning;

Main descriptors of a Learning City to effectively mobilise its resources in every sector to:
• promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education;
• re-vitalise 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
• foster a culture of learning throughout life.

In so doing it will create and reinforce individual empowerment and social cohesion, economic and cultural prosperity, and sustainable development.

(Source: Key Features of Learning Cities - Introductory Note, UIL 2013. p. 2.)
Monitoring Learning Cities

Markers of Learning City Development:

• To support in *a meaningful way the development of lifelong learning* within and across member cities;

• To determine up to a certain level how much progress is being made *to implement lifelong learning for all* in many of the world’s communities;

• *To facilitate international comparative analysis and experience-sharing and mutual learning* among member cities.

(Source: Key Features of Learning Cities - Introductory Note, UIL 2013. p. 3.)
Key Themes of the Conference:
• Making a case for building a learning city;
• The building blocks of a learning city;
• The major strategies for building a learning city.

Relevant feature:
More than five hundred mayors, city education executives and experts from more than 100 countries met in Beijing, China, from 21 to 23 October, at the International Conference on Learning Cities to discuss ways to make cities more responsive to the learning needs of citizens. The conference concluded with a call by delegates for UNESCO to establish a global network of learning cities. Reference: http://uil.unesco.org/home/news-target/press-release-international-conference-on-learning-cities-beijing-china-21-23-october-2013/39735dc1dc6394fef4b37240ddcdb5fc/
From the Preamble:

We know that cities play a significant role in promoting social inclusion, economic growth, public safety and environmental protection. Therefore, cities should be both architects and executors of strategies that foster lifelong learning and sustainable development.

We acknowledge that cities differ in their cultural and ethnic composition, heritage and social structures. However, many characteristics of a learning city are common to all. A learning city mobilises human and other resources to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education; it revitalises learning in families and communities; it facilitates learning for and in the workplace; it extends the use of modern learning technologies; it enhances quality in learning; and it nurtures a culture of learning throughout life.

We envision that a learning city will facilitate individual empowerment, build social cohesion, nurture active citizenship, promote economic and cultural prosperity, and lay the foundation for sustainable development. (Beijing, 21–23. October, 2013. Pp. 2-3.)
Soonghee, Han and Atsushi, Makino reflecting on differences in between European and Asian learning cities

**Cities are civilizing processes**

Soonghee, Han:
„The metaphors of the knowledge society and personal competency development are major icons of learning city policies in Europe. But these icons are less obvious and less relevant for Asia where the issues of social inclusion and community rebuilding are more important. A learning city is an accomplishment of civilisation, of being cultivated and learned, not just being a skilled employee.”

Atsushi, Makino:
„Actually, you could say that the recent discovery of learning cities in Asian countries, and especially in countries like Japan and the Republic of Korea, has restored the value of understanding how a society constructs and reconstructs itself by way of the relations of the people and communities, by virtue of human learning and education.”

Further Global Dialogue in Mexico in September 2015 – with UNESCO Support

Save the date:
The 2nd International Conference on Learning Cities will be held from 28 to 30 September 2015 in Mexico City, Mexico.

Join us in Mexico City!
I. DEFINITION AND SCOPE

2. Adult learning and education constitutes a major building block of a learning society and for the creation of learning communities, cities and regions as they foster a culture of learning throughout life and revitalize learning in families, communities and other learning spaces, and in the workplace.
UNESCO Publication Global Learning Cities – 2016
Amongst 12 learning cities, four Asian-pacific and three European cities were awarded as UNESCO Global Learning Cities in 2015 in Mexico City
Awardees from Asia-Pacific Region in 2015:

- Melton, Australia
- Beijing, China
- Balanga, Philippines
- Namyangjou, Republic of Korea

Awardees from Europe in 2015:

- Espoo, Finland
- Cork, Ireland
- Swansea, Wales (as part of the UK)
• Case study points:

**Intro** – General overview
- Main issues to be tackled
- Motives for becoming a learning city

**Learning city strategies and policies**
- Vision and objective
- Legislative framework
- Governance and partnership

**Implementation**
- Provision of lifelong learning

**Example of innovation or good practice**

**Mobilization and utilization of resources**

**Impacts and challenges**
Sixteen new cities to receive the UNESCO Global Learning City Award in 2017
New UNESCO Publication Global Learning Cities – 2017
Amongst 16 learning cities, four Asian-pacific and six European cities were awarded as UNESCO Global Learning Cities in 2017 in Cork
Awardees from Asia-Pacific Region in 2017:
- Surabaya, Indonesia
- Hangzhou, China
- Okoyama City, Japan
- Suwon, Republic of Korea

Awardees from Europe in 2015:
- Gelsenkirchen, Germany
- Limerick, Ireland
- Bristol, England (as part of the UK)
- Pécs, Hungary
- Larissa, Greece
- Camara de Lobos, Portugal
• Case study points:

Introduction

Developing Plan

Creating a coordinated structure involving all stakeholders

Mobilizing and utilizing resources

Making learning accessible to all

Organising celebratory events

Monitoring and evaluation

Achievements and the way forward
Joint questions and conditions

What joint questions and conditions can be identified between the identified cities representing Europe and Asia?

Joint questions?
• What are the motives for becoming a learning city?/What are the plans for development?
• What are the visions and objectives?/What resources are mobilized?
• What is the provision of lifelong learning?/How is lifelong learning made accessible?

Joint conditions?
• Demographic, social challenges;
• Economic competition and skills shortages
• Environmental constraints.
European and Asian similarities

Can one identify European and Asian-Pacific similarities?

- Learning city-region recognised as collaborative frame to reconfigure community, to improve lifelong and intergenerational learning, skills development, and to improve work-life balance, good health and culture-based activities in social, economic and environmental focuses.
- Learning city-region models to help developing inclusion of underrepresented and vulnerable social groups;
- Learning city developments go beyond traditional reductionist economic interests and pure employment and skills development perspectives to be replaced by more cohesive models to represent local ad regional needs embedded into development programmes, plans and, accordingly, participatory urban campaigns for raising both participation and performance in learning, community engagement and work.
- Learning city-region labels community actions to celebrate learning for, learning through, and learning by active citizenship
Where can one identify differences?

Can one identify differences?

• Scale of participation and involvement of local citizens;
• The level of social and political engagements to support earning city-region innovations;
• The ways of learning city-formations addressing issues challenging lifelong learning with intergenerational and intercultural scopes;
• The ways and modes
• The potential of learning city movement and political recognition, media appearance, economic influx, etc.
• The way how stakeholders look to the social and economic benefits and returns of learning city-region spendings of resources and/or time.
• Understanding of the impact of LCR developments in SDGs from SDG4 and beyond
• Regional collaborations, transnational exchanges in learning city developments (e.g. Asia-Pacific workshop on LCs through GwangMyeong City)
Potential transnational links between educational policies and professionalisation

Building bridges between Europe and Asia via connecting educational policies and professionalisation:

Role for ASEM LLL, PASCAL Int. Observatory, ICAE,

- Learning city developments claim more professionals with special skills and competences in community development, education of/for senior citizens, intercultural programme development, etc.

- There are a growing claims that educational policies should incorporate dimensions towards learning city-region RDI as part of rising demand from cities, having engaged into UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, to establish proper knowledge platform to collect and share professional experience.

- Improvements of professionalisation of educators working in learning city programmes may accelerate the roles of universities through professional development of teaching staff, of community developers,

- Civil society groups may be involved to generate a wider discourse and public debate upon how to strengthen bottom-up focuses of education policy formation.
Assumptions on similarities, differences and transnational link

Some reflections to similarities, differences and transnational links:

• All cities from Europe and Asia-Pacific having been analysed developed specific plans and programmes for the development of the learning city and started to react to global trends for integrating economic, social/community and ecological dimension which are strongly influenced by SDG aspects, local-regional public claims.

• I have recognised a rather converging developments of policy, practice and related professional implications, however, different city-region models claim specific structures, modes, collaborative actions for interventions upon using resources and public engagement and participation in a profound way.

• Regional, transnational dialogues need to be expanded and therefore, intercontinental partnerships and exchange on good practices need to be connected with Agenda2030, Education2030 and to Europe2030 focuses across ASEM LLL and other designated platform to develop urban contexts of learning by using all forms of digital technologies supporting knowledge transfer.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Focus 1</th>
<th>Focus 2</th>
<th>Focus 3</th>
<th>Focus 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melton Australia (City)</td>
<td>Social inclusion</td>
<td>Cultural devel.</td>
<td>Economic devel.</td>
<td>Environmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
<td>Competitiveness</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Demography</td>
<td>inclusiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balanga, Philippines</td>
<td>Economic development</td>
<td>Empowerment of citizens</td>
<td>Family-orientation</td>
<td>Sustain learning environ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namyangjou, ROK</td>
<td>Community development</td>
<td>Sustainable growth</td>
<td>Quality of life/cult. particip.</td>
<td>competetiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Espoo, Finland</td>
<td>Quality learning paths</td>
<td>Quality education</td>
<td>Quality life for citizens</td>
<td>multiculturalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork, Ireland</td>
<td>Skills development</td>
<td>Integration of migrants</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>digitalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swansea, Wales (UK)</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Demography</td>
<td>Inclusion/poverty reduction</td>
<td>Sustainable development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hangzhou, China</td>
<td>Well-being through LLL</td>
<td>Sustainable econ. Growth and innovation</td>
<td>Inclusive learning</td>
<td>Learning communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okoyama, Japan</td>
<td>Balanced community and environmental devel.</td>
<td>Community learning centres (Kominkan)</td>
<td>Inclusive and Sustainable communities</td>
<td>Intercultural exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suwon, ROK</td>
<td>Comprehensive learning ecosystem with access</td>
<td>Literacy and voluntary programmes</td>
<td>Focus on learning opport. for senior citizens</td>
<td>Open learning spaces to promote skills developm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gelsenkirchen, Germany</td>
<td>Reconnecting citizens with the environment</td>
<td>Revive economy</td>
<td>Creating employment opportunities</td>
<td>Sustainable urban development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick, Ireland</td>
<td>Inclusion and access to L.</td>
<td>Quality learning environm.</td>
<td>Celebratory events</td>
<td>Limerick as an LR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pécs, Hungary</td>
<td>Environment – green city</td>
<td>Culture, arts and heritage</td>
<td>Intergenerational learning</td>
<td>Inclusive learning and edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larissa, Greece</td>
<td>Inclusive learning environment</td>
<td>Strengthen community through inclusive city</td>
<td>Open and collaborative learning environment</td>
<td>Eco-friendly city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camara de Lobos, Portugal</td>
<td>Community with learning opportunities</td>
<td>Sustainable growth and social entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Social inclusio, public health and well-being</td>
<td>Focus on disadvantaged communities and families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>