

**LEARNING CITIES. PARTICIPATORY-FOCUSED COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT IN ADULT AND LIFELONG EDUCATION**

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ABSTRACT

This paper will analyse the conceptual evolution and development of learning cities and regions in adult education research work. Adult education research has got a great potential to investigate concrete mechanisms of learning city-region constructions and to estimate the changing nature and structures of learning city-region models based on the examples of two learning cities, Cork in Ireland and Pécs in Hungary.

Therefore, the paper tries to discover some major aspects of learning city-region models and different learning city-region collaborations at local-regional levels, emphasized by the OECD and UNESCO, which may enhance both participation and performance in learning of adults, but also, the learning of other age groups affecting transgenerational dimensions of learning and that of community development.

KEY WORDS

learning cities; adult education; lifelong education; research in adult education; community development.



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**CIDADES EDUCADORAS. DESENVOLVIMENTO COMUNITÁRIO NA
EDUCAÇÃO E APRENDIZAGEM DOS ADULTOS DE CARÁCTER
PARTICIPATIVO**

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RESUMO

Este artigo analisa a evolução do conceito de cidade e região educadora e o desenvolvimento desta ideia na investigação em educação de adultos. A investigação neste domínio pode contribuir para a compreensão dos mecanismos de construção concretos das cidades e regiões educadoras; pode ainda permitir interpretar as mudanças da natureza e da estrutura dos modelos de cidade e região educadora a partir de exemplos como os de Cork, na Irlanda, e de Pécs, na Hungria.

Este texto procura destacar os aspetos mais importantes dos modelos referidos e as relações que se estabelecem nos níveis local e regional, destacados pela OCDE e a UNESCO. Nestes casos, a participação e a aprendizagem dos adultos podem ser promovidas, assim como a aprendizagem de sujeitos pertencentes a outros grupos etários, enfatizando-se por esta via dimensões da aprendizagem transgeracional e do desenvolvimento comunitário.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

cidades educadoras; educação de adultos; aprendizagem ao longo da vida; investigação em educação de adultos; desenvolvimento comunitário.



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Learning Cities. Participatory-focused Community Development in Adult and Lifelong Education

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THE RISE OF LEARNING CITIES AND REGIONS

The birth of learning cities and regions can be routed back to 1972, when the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) initiated a seven city project called Educating Cities. Vienna, Edinburgh, Kakegawa, Pittsburgh, Edmonton, Adelaide and Gothenburg put education into the focus of their strategies and policies in order to develop economic performance. And that experience was turned into an example model for other cities around the world. There have been many positive impacts from that project but perhaps it's a fate of all projects, or perhaps it's the effect of politics, that, in the 1990s, only in Gothenburg did stakeholders remembered their original aims and project-based results.

It really took until the 1990s to particular steps were taken to develop in a much broader dimension. Longworth (1999) labelled this period as *the age of innocence* – when researchers considered that something was afoot but not quite what it was. Two conferences took place in the first half of the decade to gear up the initiative, both of them helping to push back the limits of knowledge and action. The Gothenburg gathering in 1992, also sponsored by OECD, was a follow-up event to succeed the Educating Cities project. It initiated, consequently, the international association of educating cities, currently based in Barcelona, and now with a membership of more than 370 cities world-wide.

The Rome conference itself was proposed and organised by the European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) and the American Council for Education in 1996 and this, in its turn, generated the World Initiative on Lifelong Learning (WILL). Today, both ELLI and WILL are not existing, but they promoted directly the advancement of learning city knowledge during the 1990s. ELLI was basically offered guidance to developing some of the early charters for learning regions – charters that demonstrated the commitment of a city-region to improve learning opportunities and methodologies for all its inhabitants. It resembled this – the grounds for a wide dialogue on promoting the local culture of learning. Cities as far apart as Adelaide, Halifax in Canada, Espoo in Finland and Dublin applied this charter formula and exploited it for their own goals to develop lifelong learning in their communities and neighbourhood regions.

Then the middle of the decade could experience the realisation of the European year of Lifelong Learning in 1996 – it was taken very seriously by ELLI and relatively many universities – as there was a funding initiative and programme contacted to it – yet, its value was unfortunately forgotten by many relevant organisations and institutions across Europe. In spite of this, there is no doubt that the cornerstones of today's work on learning cities and regions are based in the early works on adult and lifelong learning



given an impetus by the European Year. And 1996 did result in a renewed awareness of the impact of education and learning, more particularly to the scope that a world of rapid political, economic, technological and environmental change in turn takes rather quick steps both in the practice of learning and in the provision of education. At the same time, a huge number of quality initiatives were either marginalised or ignored, the process still emerged on to the age of experimentation into the late 1990's when National Learning City networks began to raise – firstly in the United Kingdom and joined by those later in Finland and Sweden. Therefore, North European approaches signalled very much 'the centre of gravity' of lifelong learning and learning city focuses.

With several distinguished exceptions, Southern, Central and Eastern Europe have taken much longer to realise the direct reward of creating learning cities and regions. In this new age of experimentation, Learning City-Region projects began to be financially supported – one of them TELS (Towards a European Learning Society) delivered, what it called a Learning Cities Audit Tool, and analysed the performance of 80 European municipalities. Unsurprisingly, it reflected that the words 'Learning City and Learning Region' were almost unknown, indeed, in more than two thirds of those 80 cities, they were completely missing. At this time too, there were several conferences and learning city launches – at places like Liverpool, Espoo, Edinburgh and Glasgow and many others. Learning Festivals celebrated the joy of learning in Glasgow and in Sapporo, Japan.

At the time when Europe stepped towards the new millennium, the *age of advance* accelerated mainly by the European Commission's Lisbon agenda, which put lifelong learning at the forefront of European policy. The development of learning cities and regions was one key strategy of that policy – and so the European policy paper on the local and regional dimension of lifelong learning was published in 2002. This important document was built on the results of TELS and written by Norman Longworth. The document clearly stated that "Cities and regions in a globalized world cannot afford not to become learning cities and regions. It is a matter of prosperity, stability, employability and the personal development of all citizens" (EC, 2002). They were clear and forward looking words indeed and a striking challenge to every local and regional authority to have read them which, because of the nature of information transmission, were unfortunately very few.

The OECD also geared up the process in 2001 with its learning regions project in five European regions – Jena in Germany, Oresund in Sweden and Denmark, Vienne in France, Kent in UK and Andalusia in Spain. Among its findings was the perhaps surprising statement that secondary education would apparently be strikingly important for regional development and the more predictable one that there was a need to encourage creativity at all levels of education. This particular conclusion referring to regional development highlighted the influential role and potentials of public education upon the development of basic and vocational skills amongst the members of individuals and towards knowledge transfers within communities. And that's a theme that crops up time and time again in learning region folklore – creativity, innovation, vision at all levels of education.

Despite the fact that many cities and regions are still well behind the mark in the new millennium, the movement to create learning cities and regions threatened to become an avalanche – as a couple of examples among many, Germany established around 76 learning regions as part of the 'Lisbon-process', while every city, town and

municipality in Victoria Australia became a learning entity. Moreover, the Chinese government decreed that every large city in China should become a learning city by 2010 and beyond. Not too late from this, the IDEOPOLIS was born, described by Tom Cannon and his collaborators as

A City or Region whose economy is driven by the creative search for, and the application of, new ideas, thinking and knowledge, and which is firmly rooted to the creative transfer of ideas, to opportunities, to innovation, and eventually to production. (Cannon, Nathan, & Westwood, 2003)

These initiatives accelerated most researchers into what might be called *the age of understanding* and many of them finally thought they got it – or knew, or thought they knew – what was being a learning region, at a time when number of European projects increased. From every part of the Commission – Learning Cities and Regions became included in the Framework research programmes and a lifelong learning element had to be included in the vast majority of the Commission’s Social and Development Funding. Also, there became a great need for tools and materials that would help cities and regions to get that understanding. Therefore, some relevant Socrates projects developed those learning tools for city and regional management and learning materials to help them propagate the message to others. And yet, the OECD would have you believe that all regions seek to sustain economic activity through various combinations of lifelong learning, innovation and creative uses of information and communication technologies. (OECD, Learning Regions project, 2003).

SOME THEORETICAL FRAMES ON LEARNING AND THE LEARNING ECONOMY

In order to promote an understanding of the concept of learning cities and learning regions, it is worth indicating, that there are four major different impacts on the idea itself. The first impact on the reconceptualization of learning and learning economy/ learning organisation can be traced to what now must be seen as a seminal paper by Lundvall and Johnson (1994) on the learning economy. Its approach to different types of learning and the difference between codified and tacit learning is well articulated – something not new to those in the fields of education and adult learning. A special interest in this paper by Lundvall and Johnson is the explicit connections made to economy. While the role of learning in production and work is not new, generally it was largely ‘assumed’ and occurred invisibly (Razavi, 1997). What Lundvall and Johnson (1994) and others (Edquist, 1997; OECD, 2000) have identified and stressed in newly emerging knowledge economy is that learning is now a fundamental process and resource.

A second impact on learning cities and learning regions derives from the application of learning within and across organisations (Senge, 1990). Economic geographers as well have emphasized on what forms the transfer and sharing of knowledge and ideas across



informal networks within industry clusters (sometimes referred to as collective learning) seems to be a critical aspect of creativity and innovation (Keeble, Lawson, Moore, & Wilkinson, 1999). Since innovation is a basic element in the knowledge economy, ways to promote, support and enhance innovation are important (Edquist, 1997). As for case studies of 'technopoles' and industrial complexes in Europe (Cooke & Morgan, 1998), in the United Kingdom (UK), the USA and Canada (Wolfe & Gertler, 2001), there is growing evidence and awareness that learning is the fundamental process at work in the new knowledge economy. Far from a presumed and hidden force, it still needs to be made explicit, strengthened and backed up.

Apart from matching clusters and communities of practice, the work of economic geographers signalled a third important aspect of the conceptualization of learning cities and learning regions – the spatial context. Florida (1995) set the idea of learning regions and others (Boekema, Morgan, Bakkers, & Rutten, 2000) described (this idea) as the basis of regional innovation systems. A very special idea was framed here – that in particular local learning, which was fostered and supported through good learning infrastructure (i.e. a regional innovation system) enabled the locality to compete in a global economy. This recognition of the regional scale provides an important link to local economic development and the importance of learning, social capital and human capital in community development. By setting this link, it is open to move beyond a potentially narrowly defined regional innovation system which only focuses on business and industry to take a wider whole-of-community approach where increasingly learning and learning processes can be the vehicle to equip and empower whole communities (Amin & Thrift, 1995). Allison and Keane (2001) broadened the spheres of activities and influence for learning to underline a learning communities approach to local economic development. In this approach an explicit link between learning initiatives, partnerships and governance, social capital and building local capacity together with capabilities and economic prosperity is developed. This is located at the centre of local economic development and several community case studies in urban and rural areas and demonstrates how this approach may promote local economic development. Parallel to this special approach to local economic development is the work of scholars in the field of education research.

Tooke (2000), for example, argues that the broader value of learning has been recognised by those who work in and focus on education, lifelong learning, adult and community education. Obviously, this scholarly tradition brings in a timely and useful critique to the concept of learning regions provoking an effort to embrace wider social and community development issues. The TELS Project (Longworth, 1999) and the UK Learning Towns Project (Yarnit, 2000) clearly presented four critical objectives for learning and learning initiatives which encompass (i) economic prosperity; (ii) social inclusion; (iii) sustainability; and (iv) governance.

These objectives resemble the most frequently indicated ones in local economic development strategies. It is the interconnection of these different dimensions of "learning" which result in a framework for a whole-of-community approach to learning cities, learning regions to underline the economic and social life of communities in the global economy. In this broader conceptualisation, the scope of actions and value of learning goes well beyond a limited definition of industry clusters and issues of competitiveness, innovation (as important as these are). As the flow of learning initiatives, described by Yarnit (2000), Longworth (1999), Longworth and Franson (2001),



Allison and Keane (2001), learning makes its way through/in the community in different manners. With each of these activities, the community may learn and develop sustainably. Learning enables communities to face change, adapt and transform on their own. When the concept of learning cities, learning regions is understood in a broader framework, it opens up exciting potential and possibilities for many communities, particularly, when considered against reductionist narratives on exclusively economy-centred structure, by turning to more balanced models.

UNESCO'S GLOBAL LEARNING CITY INITIATIVE

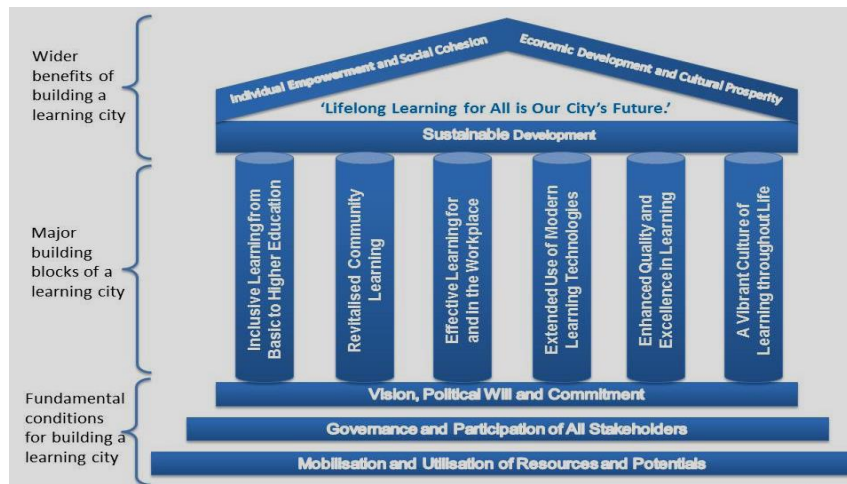
Almost ten years after the OECD's Learning Regions project, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), another inter-governmental organisation (IGO) initiated a new plan to realise a global learning city networking based on the mere fact that more than a thousand cities in the world have developed into or are building Learning/Educating cities. This obviously shows that the building of cities, which put learning at the forefront of their policies and strategies, has become a significant world-wide phenomenon.

Cities rarely work in isolation and practical examples have reflected that those cities that are members of a dynamic network of local authorities at national, regional and international levels, have accelerated their growth and competitiveness as learning cities. Most of these national, regional and international networks, while playing important roles in spreading the concept of learning cities, also have need of expertise networks or research organizations involved in developing tools and materials promoting and expanding the concept, and in establishing creative on-going working links between cities.

There are also many cities still unaware or uncertain of the benefits that a truly global network of learning cities can bring to the development of lifelong learning and the learning society. For these reasons and more this initiative is timely. As UNESCO's centre of excellence for promoting lifelong learning, and in response to Member States' call to adopt a more pragmatic and instrumental approach to building a learning society, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has recently proposed the establishment of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (UNESCO GNLC) to enhance and accelerate the practice of lifelong learning in the world's conurbations. This idea was clearly represented by former UIL Director, Arne Carlsen, who with his team made significant efforts to make this whole issue become a worldwide campaign to integrate better participation and performance in lifelong learning.

The overall aim of the establishment of UNESCO GLCN has been to create and develop a global platform in order to mobilise cities and demonstrate how to use their resources effectively in every sector to develop and enrich all their human potential for fostering lifelong personal growth, for developing equality and social justice, for maintaining harmonious social cohesion, and for creating sustainable prosperity. UNESCO GLCN is intended to be a timely and innovative initiative to offer appropriate means by which cities can develop themselves into learning cities and create better environment – for themselves and for their citizens (UNESCO, 2013).





Graphic 1. The Framework of the UNESCO Global Learning City Index.
Source: www.uil.unesco.org

LOCAL RESPONSES TO GLOBAL INITIATIVES WITH THE AIM OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: THE PÉCS LEARNING CITY-REGION FORUM

Based on a decade-old international project partnership, to have dealt with Learning City-Region innovations in association with PASCAL Observatory¹, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, the University of Pécs and its Faculty of Adult Education and HRD initiated the establishment of the Pécs Learning City² Region Forum in 2013 to develop a direct tool in certain areas of pedagogical/andragogical work targeting training trainers, educators and facilitators of learning in local communities.

The project was incorporated into the project of the University of Pécs, financed by the Hungarian Government's Social Renewal Operative Programme (TÁMOP 4.1.2.B – Developing Teachers-Educators/Pedagógusfejlesztés), focusing on the Development of Teachers.

Its so called K4 project's sub-group decided to develop structural models for collecting and sharing good knowledge and experience for teachers, trainers, mentors and facilitators engaged in the promotion of quality learning and skills-development in formal, non-formal and informal settings. Therefore, the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum started its activities in the Fall of 2014 in three major fields by accelerating partnerships and dialogues:

- *Atypical/Non-formal Learning platform.* This platform tries to help cultural organisers, curators, managers to be more successful with their

¹ Please find more on PASCAL Observatory, an international network to promote place management, social capital and lifelong learning at: <http://pascalobservatory.org/> (Accessed 10. 10. 2018).

² Please find more on the Case of Pécs as a Learning City at with relevant Case Study: <http://uil.unesco.org/city/pecs> (Accessed 10. 10. 2018).

educational programmes organised for adults and also for school-teachers engaged in the development of cultural programmes for children. Such a collaborative frame involves more than 8 organisation/institutions and their representatives in order to identify innovative learning methods, tools, methodologies with atypical contexts.

- *School and Environment platform.* This platform supports dialogue amongst professionals developing specific environment-oriented programmes for local youth and their parents so as to become nature-friendly, and conscious in protecting their environment. There is a specific focus to help school-teachers as adult learners building such orientations in the classroom and use available sources, programmes and curricula, etc. to achieve that goal based on collected best practises. Around 9 member organisations/institutions work actively in the Forum through delegates, professional experts by providing platform-based exchange of ideas upon bringing closer school – pupils, their families to environment and environment-friendly, green thinking, actions and change-management with attention to interdisciplinary thinking and human behaviour.
- *Inclusion and Vulnerable Groups' platform.* This platform helps teachers to engage in collaborative actions providing dialogue to understand problems emerging from working with young children with learning difficulties, e.g. autists.

The three dimensions of the Forum's platforms have enabled us to recognise some key barriers to collect and share good practices upon particular development works of partner organisations and institutions, which are:

- low levels of culture of mutual partnerships and collaborative actions to share experience and to develop professional skills, competence of educators/teachers, trainers and facilitators;
- limited time available for educators/teachers, trainers and facilitators to develop skills and share exchange knowledge, experience.
- small resources to constrain participation in programmes of the forum and, at the same time, heavy working load dominating majority of working time.

Choices for the development of learning in a learning city-region model include:

- Growing interest amongst decision-makers and stakeholders so as to develop and maintain new and effective ways and methods for useful and problem-based knowledge transfer amongst institutions/organisations in the school sector, labour market, cultural organisations and institutions and other respected informal learning grounds and environments.
- European funds available through the European Social Fund for collaborative actions amongst educational, cultural and environmental organisations for raising participation and providing counselling for better performance in learning.



- Need for Common Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for learning city-region development.
- Necessary improvement of learning conditions and collaborative spaces for young people with learning difficulties through inclusive learning environment.

Recently, the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum has become a member of PASCAL International Observatory's Learning Cities Networks (LCN), more precisely, that of Harnessing Cultural Policies in Building Sustainable Learning Cities in order to continue its ties to this international platform which was formally established in 2007 when Pécs hosted PASCAL's annual international conference on learning city-regions.

CORK LEARNING CITY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNITY WIDE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

It was the Cork Learning³ City Forum and its representation of wide range of stakeholders which established the Cork Learning Festival in 2004. This programme constantly grew into an annual week-long festival of around five-hundred activities offered by different types of providers. Opposite to the case of the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum and its two-days Learning Festival, the scale of participation is rather high and the project reached up to the grounds of framework to get together local innovations practices and engagement with global networks of cities.

The Cork Learning City development is very much based on a special learning environment to represent four circles of learning embedded into a community model. This model reflects a community with strong local resonance and global reaches through UNESCO learning cities network and that of PASCAL International Exchange. Those circles of the learning environment demonstrate certain dimensions of a learning city which overlap with each other, yet signal some specific aspects at the same time. They are the Cork Learning Festival, the UNESCO Learning City Award and Growing Lifelong Learning in Cork, Learning Neighbourhoods as a pilot project of UNESCO in partnerships with PASCAL International Exchange and, finally, EcCoWell, to reflect that learning cities should include environmental, economic, health, well-being and lifelong learning in order to reach for good societies.

The Lifelong Learning Festival of Cork has got deep community routes and has been devoted to participatory actions with intercultural and intergenerational aspirations. In this respect, adult and lifelong learning plays an important role in the making of its programmes and depends on the focus to raising participation in events, gatherings and local discoveries through collecting and sharing good knowledge and experience amongst members of the community based on learning. Moreover, the Festival connects ten Community Education Networks which were established upon the 2000

3 More on Cork as a Learning City with Case Study: <http://uil.unesco.org/city/cork> (Accessed: 10. 10. 2018).

governmental paper, called as *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education* (Department of Education and Science, 2000).

These networks offer actions and programmes as parts of the Festival and have their special approach to some special groups of the community, for example, disadvantaged groups. Distinguished stakeholder groups play an important role in the planning and achievement of their programmes. It must be added here that various forms and ways of communication are regularly used to reach out for the attention to different kinds of people, therefore, not only modern and electronic communication, but also traditional posters and brochures are used to capture the contact of potential visitors and participants. One has to point out that there is a significant free citizen engagement in the Festival based on the principles of equality and inclusion so as to provide an opportunity to participate in learning (Neylon & Barrett, 2013). In this regard, inclusiveness, free entry and open access to all are ongoing themes of the festival (Keane, Lane, Neylone, & Osborne, 2013).

The UNESCO Learning City initiative has also played a significant role in the achievements of the Cork Learning City developments. Both the establishment of the Cork Learning City Forum and the initiation of the Lifelong Learning Festival provided significant forces to realise the vision of people behind the original plans to make Cork a learning city and community. The attention of PASCAL towards learning city developments and innovative approaches made PASCAL to get Cork be involved in its networking. That step brought Cork close to international partnerships which soon accelerated engagement with UNESCO agenda on learning cities in 2012. The example of Cork also reflects outstanding partnerships with wide stakeholder groups so as to engage them with the mission and goals of the project. The Learning Neighbourhoods initiative signalled a serious focus on local people especially in concentrated on the needs of districts of the city and people living those municipal areas of Cork with specific social, economic and cultural conditions and aspirations.

There have been several impacts and challenges to the Cork Learning City initiative and project. But collective actions of the communities of the city strengthened alliances amongst participants and brought higher level institutions into contact with marginalised groups. UNESCO interest may also help the renewal of the commitment of politicians and stakeholders to the initiative. Cork may provide good lessons for Pécs and for other cities which are right at the step to expand their initiatives into a wider public project and movement: start small and build up systematically, keep participation voluntary, ask all participants to publicize their events to provide a special ownership and belongingness to the programmes and networking. Make sure that the kinds of learning showcased are as broad as possible, do not restrict participation to the state sector, publicly recognise and thank all those who organise events and, finally, never forget that it is a festival – fun and celebration are a powerful means of changing attitudes to learning (Neylon, 2016).



SOME ASPECTS FOR COMPARISON IN ADULT AND LIFELONG EDUCATION RESEARCH

While we try to underline here that learning cities and regions are worth to be included into adult education research, our narrative upon the topic comes from mere realities that learning cities today demonstrate a social, political and economic alliance to balance diverse needs through learning. This may bring about and support the development of open and inclusive societies with active citizens opposite to closed and exclusive communities. Communities which label themselves as humanitarian and sustainable in social contexts have to recognise and support learning as a process and learning how to live and to live together regardless to age, sex and social status.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE TWO CITY-BASED CASES – REASONS BEHIND

Pécs and Cork are similar small cities regarding not being capital cities. They were both cultural capitals of Europe during the Lisbon-decade, Cork at the beginning and Pécs right at the very end of that decade. Pécs and Cork have all made use of the particular values of their communities, traditions and cultural activities, institutions and other respected formations so as to reconceptualise their visions and mission through learning.

Pécs and Cork have built on the voluntary work and participation of their citizens to celebrate learning through a Learning Festival. Cork has already achieved several festivals, but Pécs has just organised two of them and is just at launching the third one for late September 2019. Both Pécs and Cork have opened to international partnerships and networking in learning city-region developments and innovations through PASCAL International Observatory, but Cork joined the PASCAL International Exchange network, while Pécs was invited to the Learning Cities' Network (LCN) platform and its cultural platform of PASCAL. Both Pécs and Cork have focused dominantly upon the participatory aspect of learning city innovations, therefore, favoured the involvement of adult and lifelong learners into their programmes and events with specific focuses on intergenerational collaborations.

Finally, both Pécs and Cork have made use of their former cultural capital status to aspire for a learning city title and, consequently, to apply for being selected as an UNESCO Global Learning City and potentially be recognised with a special Global Learning City Award.

As for the differences, Pécs is a relatively small town of one-hundred and fifty-thousand inhabitants, while Cork is a little larger with around two-hundred thousand inhabitants. Cork has got a rather developed and balanced structure of adult education institutions and associations, while adult learning and education in Pécs has got a deformed and constrained structure to mainly focus upon VET and labour market trainings with state monopolies. Cultural institutions, organisations and civic, voluntary groups, in this respect, have got special roles and functions to provide spaces and opportunities for atypical forms of learning in non-formal and informal settings.



Another important aspect and step of comparison is to find reasons for those similarities and differences in the case of Pécs and Cork as learning cities. One has to recognise that the cultural dimension in both cities have provided a significantly vibrant and colourful ground to get the model of learning cities recognised on behalf local citizens and claimed for a necessity of a bottom-up development of learning opportunities based on mostly voluntary activities to be articulated as majority of programmes in the learning festivals. A further aspect of reasons for similarities lay on the strong alliance and engagement of local citizens to show up and be the part of the process of achieving the learning festival of theirs from planning to evaluation supported by dignity, pride, sensitivity to vulnerable groups, attention to values and brave, inspiring actions of collecting and sharing good knowledge and skills.

However, the core reason of differences is due to the fact of different potentials of Pécs and of Cork embedded into different economic status and perspectives, size of city and, moreover, the impacts of different models used in the Pécs and in Cork. Not only the engagement, but also the motivations of both city and university are different in scale and in interests, moreover, the culture and attitudes towards building a learning community is at a much higher level in Cork than in Pécs. Those focuses may help understanding the realities of different choices for Pécs and for Cork to build and develop their learning city models and programmes.

CONCLUSIONS

It is obvious that learning cities and regions can be investigated as frames and special structures, on the one hand, to provide adult learning and education to match learners' and learning communities' needs and, on the other, to incorporate informal learnings of adults and intergenerational tandem learnings into mainstream provision of programmes in adult education and in vocational training. This paper tries to emphasize that researchers in adult and lifelong learning have always been close or even active participants of learning city-region initiatives in many places of Europe and in other continents. Moreover, UNESCO, for many reasons, has connected adult and lifelong learning to learning city developments so as to make use of both the experience and practices of adult educators as developers and advocates of learning in communities and of community learning. May we propose that further developments are needed in this frame through concentrated actions of studies.

This focus, on the one hand, is currently embedded into the UN Agenda 2030 discourse on SDGs, especially into dimensions of SDG11 on Learning Cities. On the other, it is also connected into the frames of a new UNESCO *Handbook for Lifelong Learning: Policy and Practice* to come in the Summer of 2019 with a separate chapter on learning cities referring to implementations at the local level. It may help governments to make use of this concept and demonstrate that in adult and lifelong learning and education there is no one is left behind! This orientation was well reflected in the October 2018 International Consultative Meeting on Lifelong Learning into Shanghai, China organised by UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.



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