

Seminar D Speakers and Abstracts

Seminar D- 'Learning Cities'

at Room D 165, 1330-1500 on 29 May 2012

Chair: Professor Jarl Bengtsson

D1: Korean Learning Cities - The Driving Factors of Learning City Project in Korea
Professor **Dr. MinSeung Jung**, College of Education, Korea National Open University

In recent years, Korea has made a compressed economic growth propelled by advanced ICT. Any kind of social development in Korea is supported by Confucian cultural legacy in which society and nation is modelled on family. Such a culture makes social project charged with collective passion.

In this context, Lifelong Learning City (LLC) project in Korea has been launched successfully, and has achieved excellent results. More than 80 cities have participated in this project with an educational upheaval since 2001. They have been revitalizing the life of the residents with learning networks and study circles, innovating basic structures of bureaucratic educational institutions, and conducting alienated people into the legal supporting systems. Korean government changed the blueprint of LLC several times for the more autonomous regional development. LLC became a new brand name of city project that accomplish the enhancement of regional competence as well as social inclusion.

Considering Confucian collective culture, the success of LLC in Korea seems to be somewhat paradoxical. While Confucian culture is related to centralization, institutionalization, and instruction, LLC is oriented to decentralization, individuation, and learning. Korean case suggests that even decentralization and individuation can be achieved by virtue of Confucian collective passion and efforts. This presentation contrives the critical success factors of LLC in Korea and gives several suggestions for better policy of LLC in Asian context.

D2: EcCoWell: Living and Learning in Sustainable Opportunity Cities
Professor **Michael Osborne**, (Pascal International Observatory), University of Glasgow.

This presentation has been prepared to promote discussion of ways in which a number of ideals directed at better life in cities can be integrated in more holistic and connected strategies so that there are value added outcomes in terms of the quality of life and the sustainability of cities.

Its focus is on a seeming convergence of the ideals and objectives built into the concepts of Learning Cities, Healthy Cities, and Green Cities. The paper asserts that there is a common interest in actively fostering potential synergies within these aspirations through the emergence of a new generation of Learning Cities with clear health and environmental objectives and strategies.

We have called these cities EcCoWell cities, cities that aim for integrated development across the landscape of ecology, culture, community, well-being, and lifelong learning objectives and strategies.

Until recently most of our work in this domain within Pascal had been concerned with the Learning City/Region idea, and focused mainly in Europe with the support of the European Commission. For some time the European Union has been supporting lifelong learning as an organising principle for all forms of education: it has put much effort in utilising the learning city (or town/region/community) as a framework for the delivery of lifelong learning for all. Various projects funded by the European Commission have contributed much in showing the range of strategies that can be applied in building innovative Learning Cities and Regions. Information and lessons derived from this experience may now be accessed through the EUROLocal project (<http://eurolocal.info>). Elsewhere, the Learning City concept has evolved in new contexts as challenges have been encountered as, for example, in the development of learning community initiatives in Asian countries such as China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam and Chinese Taipei. Experience has shown that the core ideas in the Learning City concept are sufficiently flexible to accommodate these applications in a wide range of international contexts while at the same time evolving international experience adds to the richness encapsulated in this concept.

With the evolution of Pascal International Exchanges (PIE) we have developed the concept and this paper builds on the experience of the ten cities in Asia, Africa, Australasia, Europe and North America participating in PIE as well as the lessons of a number of lifelong learning projects funded by the European Union, and the extensive knowledge base on Healthy Cities and Green Cities. The growing knowledge across these sectors points to areas where common interests exist, and where value added outcomes could be achieved through more integrated and holistic policies and strategies.

Cities around the world are confronted by a spectrum of unprecedented challenges in a context which has been seen as “a runaway world”, where traditional responses are no longer adequate. Successful Healthy Cities and Green Cities are by their nature Learning Cities in which strategies to build a rich web of connections between necessary sectoral ideals and objectives will benefit all residents in creating cities that are humane, inclusive, and sustainable.

D3: The development of a network of learning cities and a learning city index: rationale and objectives.

Dr Jin Yang, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

In recent years, several studies have shown that the creation of learning cities has become an effective instrument in promoting lifelong learning in the international community, despite various challenges. A nation aspiring to build a learning society or develop a lifelong learning system may use the names ‘learning cities’, ‘learning regions’ or ‘learning communities’ to mobilise or encourage their local authorities. To facilitate the development of learning cities in the international community, a truly global network of learning cities is needed.

Inspired by the Creative Cities Network, launched by UNESCO in 2004, the Healthy Cities initiated by the World Health Organisation in the 1980s, and the Alliance for Healthy Cities, as well as the Green Cities around the world, 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), in collaboration with interested national, regional and international organisations and agencies as well as private sector corporations,

proposes the establishment of the **UNESCO Global Learning Cities Network (UNESCO-GLCN)** to enhance and accelerate the practice of lifelong learning in the world's urban communities.

The overall aim of the establishment of the UNESCO-GLCN is to create a global platform to mobilise cities and demonstrate how to use effectively their resources in every sector to develop and enrich all their human potential to foster lifelong personal growth, the development of equality and social justice, the maintenance of harmonious social cohesion, and the creation of sustainable prosperity.

One of the objectives of the UNESCO-GLCN is to develop a Global Learning City Index and to assess and award a 'Global Learning City' brand to those showing exceptional progress and achievement as learning cities. To be reliable and instrumental, the development of the index needs to reflect – *inter alia* - a variety of principles, policies and approaches in building learning cities in the international community, including political will and commitment, partnership and networking, increasing learning opportunities, combating exclusion and enhancing social cohesion, promoting wealth creation and employability, as well as recognising and rewarding all forms of learning.