

Setting the basis for the Educational Innovation Network in the city

On Board Phase 2, Kick Off Meeting Report

Introduction

The six Project Partners of the URBACT III On Board Transfer Network: Albergaria-a-Velha (PT), Halmstad (SE), Nantes (FR), Poznan (PL) and Tallinn (EE) celebrated their Kick Off Meeting of Phase 2 on the 5 and 6 February 2019 in Viladecans (Barcelona, Spain), the Good Practice city and On Board Network Lead Partner.



- *Working session at the library of the Meeting venue, Miquel Martí i Pol Primary School*

This was the first of a total of seven Transnational Meetings to be celebrated throughout the On Board project life (2019-20), to allow adapting and transferring the Educational Innovation Network to the respective network cities. Each of the On Board Transnational Meetings will produce a related report addressed to facilitate transfer the learning and recommendations to the local level.

What follows is an abstract of the key contents shared during the 2-day exchange and learning sessions as well as onsite visits to education projects of Viladecans, mostly initiatives being developed in Miquel Martí i Pol Primary School, the education centre

that hosted the Transnational Meeting. All the presentations and references can be further expanded with the help of the meeting materials annexed or referred to, accessible at <https://urbact.eu/onboard>.

As presented in the Transferability Study, the On Board Network transfer methodology is based on 3 main pillars, which in turn, are groundwork for each of the Transnational Meetings:

1. The analysis of the different **education stakeholders** involved in the Educational Innovation Network good practice, one examined stakeholder at each Transnational Meeting;
2. The gradual **transfer steps** towards building the Educational Innovation Network structure, its governance and internal and external communication; and
3. The actions taken at the local level to translate the **learning into actual transfer steps**. Adjusting and accommodating what is needed in the respective transfer cities.

Complementing these 3 levels of work, participants in the Transnational Meetings will:

4. Meet education stakeholders from the local groups in each of the host cities and **visit education projects** in schools, companies, public premises, etc. to have first hand knowledge of how these are developed.
5. Listen to **keynote presentations** on state of art education topics providing both inspiration and understanding of education trends today.

At the **Kick Off Meeting in Viladecans**, the overall objective was to set the basis for the transfer of the Educational Innovation Network Good Practice to the respective Transfer Cities and to help laying the political foundations and city commitment for the whole transfer process. Specific meeting objectives were:

- Understand the role of the Municipality in the development of the Educational Innovation Network in Viladecans and the city integrated approach to Education
- Get trained and start developing the Transfer Cities' Plans and the Lead Partner Improvement Plan
- Outline the expected improvement of the Good Practice to be achieved by Viladecans
- Outline the expected results derived from the Good Practice transfer process in the Transfer Cities and start developing a set of indicators for all Network Partners that allow them monitor and assess the expected results
- Visit education projects and agents on site and interact with members of Viladecans URBACT Local Group

The Project Partners agreed to sign the **On Board Joint Political Declaration** expressing the commitment of all Network partners with innovative education and the Good Practice transfer process.

Below is the report of the contents shared and presented. Some recommendations have been extracted from each of the blocks addressed in this first meeting, which are presented the boxes as the On Board Check List.

1. Stakeholders' analysis. The role of the Municipality in fostering Educational Innovation

The stakeholder under the spotlight was the **City government** itself, with special interest on the **public authorities** as they are the main leading agent for the local education policies and ultimately responsible of the Educational Innovation Network project in the city. This is the reason why Mayors, Vice Mayors and Councillors for Education, as well as Heads of Education Departments were invited to attend. This section presents the contents and visions shared by the authorities of the host city.

- **Vision and leadership**

The role that local authorities have had in Viladecans was central in mainstreaming Education in the local policies. The City government envisioned a modern and innovative education sector that was able to improve educational success and create the right environment and conditions to allow building the Educational Innovation Network as the local hub to promote policies and projects in this area.

The Mayor of Viladecans, Carles Ruiz, as well as the Fourth Deputy Mayor and Councillor of Mayorship, Education, and Health, Gisela Navarro, introduced the broad city strategy concerning education but also other development areas to improve the wellbeing of the citizens. This gave the context and background to understand Viladecans specific challenges.

Coming from relatively low levels of socio-economic indicators, the city government has sought to improve the life conditions through two main prioritised policies: a) modern and better-adapted education, and b) economic development leading to jobs creation. These two areas have been closely interlinked and permeating all other policies.

The Mayor stressed the Council holistic approach to education, which aims at making the whole city an on going comprehensive educational environment, where each agent, public and private, contributes to promote learning and in turn, can learn from others. As an example, he presented one of the most recent and ambitious initiatives in the city consisting of transforming public spaces into open-air education parks, by means of developing different urban projects.

This conception of an educating city is only possible with the participation of different services and policies intertwining and complementing each other to support a city-wide project, not one exclusively led by the Education Department.



Carles Ruiz, Mayor of Viladecans, Gisela Navarro, Councillor for Education and Raquel Valle Headmistress of Miquel Martí i Pol Primary School.

Gisela Navarro, reinforced the idea of the wide-ranging education work in Viladecans as a guiding principle. She stressed the work towards achieving educational success, as different and much wider than the traditional school success (see the Local Plan for the Improvement of the Educational Success, 2014). Under this broader 360º perspective, every one in the city is responsible and can come into play to contribute to improving education.

Because of its bird's eye perspective and knowledge of local agents, the Municipality is aware of the challenges of the city education and the stakeholders. It is a node that can facilitate communication and joint work of the educational community, comprised of formal and non-formal education agents. In this way, the Education Department in Viladecans orchestrates the resources to create the education opportunities.

Along this comprehensive approach to Education, Viladecans adopted other equally important principles related to quality and modern education that can prepare young students to face today's trends of globalisation, digitalisation and ongoing technological and labour market developments:

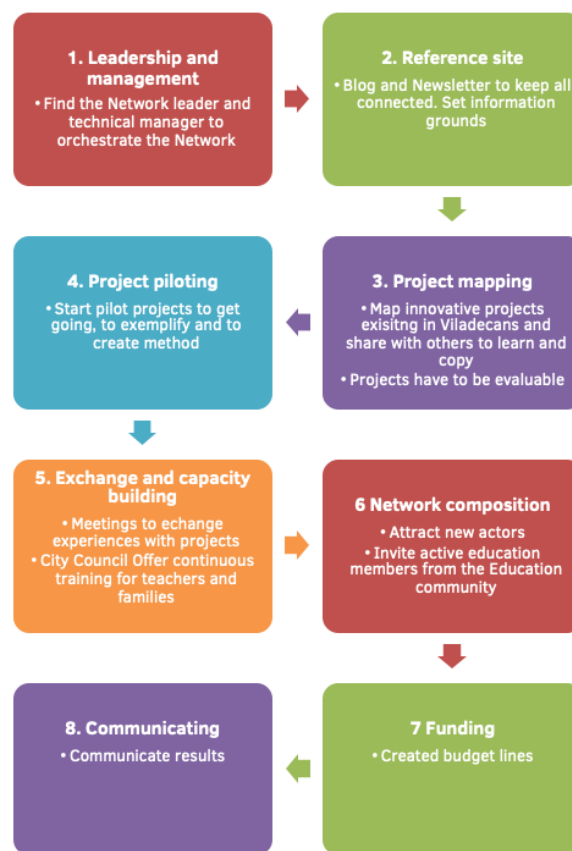
1. Aware of the importance of the technological and digital skills needed today, it was considered crucial to enable XXI century education standards in all schools in town, with a strong focus on information, media and technology literacy.
2. Today's constantly developing and changing labour market requires life skills that schools should also consider offering.

As a result of the above considerations, and in order to carry out the Education Project it had envisioned, the local government conceived the idea of the Educational Innovation Network. The Network featured 3 main aspects:

- Innovation: the Network and its projects had to contribute to improve education results and, in the longer-term, the socio-economic indicators in the city

- Technology: as an element for progress and of motivation. Technology is changing the word and Education as well.
- Community building: The Network had to facilitate engagement of the education community and reach out to all citizens, on a physical and virtual form.
- **Educational Innovation Network building steps**

Viladecans did broad research to find cases and good practices within and out of Europe, that responded to the model of Educational Innovation Network, as the City had in mind. But it did not bring relevant examples. So the City started building its own project following the building steps below:



The evaluation component is a key element - as it is in the broader Viladecans Successful Education Plan approved in 2014. Because a high amount of public resources were invested in education, it was necessary to ensure obtaining results and be able to show them.

The Network outcomes had to be evaluable in qualitative as much as quantitative terms. The level of satisfaction and happiness of the students is considered as important for the students' personal development as the academic results are. The work on indicators is still at an incipient level and one of the improvement aspects that Viladecans wants to advance out of the On Board Network project.



On Board Checklist:

Visioning and leading in local education: enable the conditions for the Educational Innovation Network

✓ *Position Education as a priority in the city's strategic documents and mainstream so other policies and strategies developed are aware, consistent and respond to education priorities*

✓ *Foresee the sufficient resources to support this Education strategic position in the city*

✓ *Seek the engagement of local public and private, formal and non-formal education stakeholders while acknowledging and supporting work already being carried out*

✓ *Keep a high international profile of your city and the education policy so you gain visibility and prestige that contributes to attract interest and resources.*

- **The vertical approach: collaboration with higher government levels**

Joan Bassolas, Manager of the Fundació Ciutat de Viladecans, and Susana Closa, Director of the Presidency Area offered an insightful presentation of the approach the city took in embedding the Educational Innovation Network in the local governance and connecting it to the work developed at the regional level.

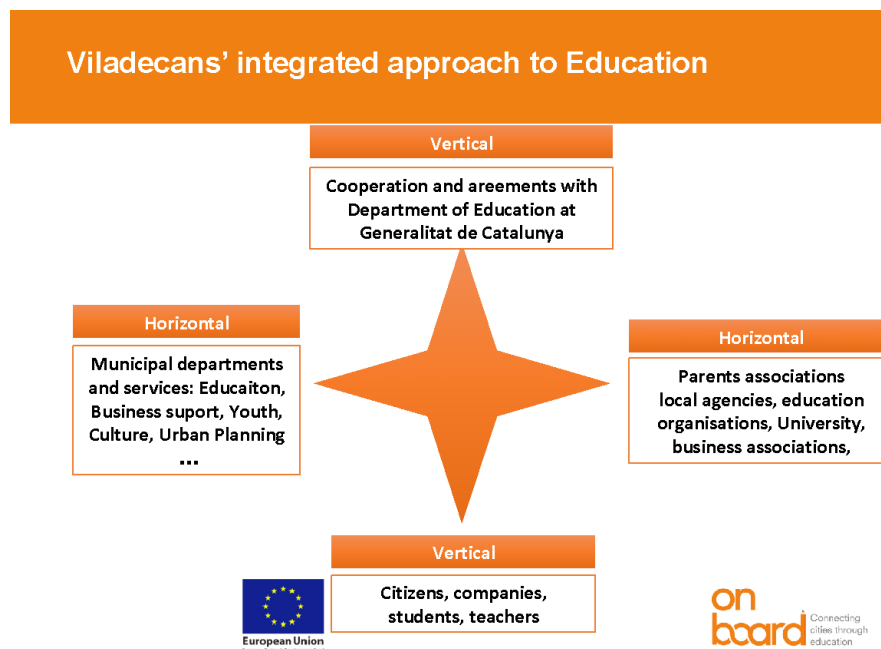
In the Spanish legal framework, main responsibilities for education belong to the national and regional government levels (see distribution of basic education competences in Annex). However, the case of Viladecans shows that, despite cities lack these competences, local authorities can build appropriate alliances and complicities with levels of government that have education responsibilities, thus somehow avoiding the strict regulation frame.

Viladecans has created a good working relationship with the Education Department of the Generalitat de Catalunya, the Catalan regional government so as to advance their own objectives in education. There has been a process of building trust and mutual understanding between the political authorities. This resulted in the signing of relevant agreements that helped Viladecans take the lead in educational innovation in the city, in spite of having few competences.

Among the most relevant and impactful initiatives developed was the Plan for the introduction of technologies for knowledge and learning in educational processes. The Plan consisted in a EUR 500.000 Council investment to introduce technology in the schools and promote the pedagogical renewal in all educational centres. The Generalitat validated and facilitated the associated training programme for teachers and students.

As relevant as the support received from the Catalan Department of Education, was the consolidation of trusted and long-term teamwork. To local teachers, the two governments

appeared as a team with the same agenda, and not as two separate administrations.



On Board Checklist:

Cooperation with higher levels of government to advance educational innovation in the city

- ✓ Identify the counterparts in the higher levels of government (regional, national) to look for opportunities of collaboration and to position your city as key partner in educational innovation topics.
- ✓ Allow performing as test bed for research, technologies applied to education and new methods and resources so as to show new trends to other education institutions.

- The horizontal approach: linking the dots and creating the interfaces to reach the educational community

To facilitate understanding of how the Educational Innovation Network was linked up within the local administration, the team in Viladecans presented its integrated approach of the Network. Members of the EIN Coordination Team explained their work and how they interact

with different education stakeholders in the city.

Viladecans municipal corporation has had a good tradition of working in a cross cutting form. Thus, in order to mainstream the education model envisioned, the city promoted links between education and other local policies and projects and created governance that mobilised and tied together different municipal departments, services and resources towards improving educational success. When building the Educational Innovation Network, the project followed the same rule.




The Network was structured as a cross sectional body with a Coordination Team acting as a driver; with a mixed composition of members from different municipal departments and services, including the Foundation Ciutat de Viladecans. This allowed to bridge among a diversity of stakeholders and provided a better understanding of the needs and expectations of all collectives.

The authorities wanted to reach out to teachers and the education community with the aim of integrating their views, knowledge and experience, fostering a participated approach that enriched the project. A team formed by the Mayor, the Education Councillor and the Coordinator of the EIN visited all the schools and other education agents in the city, and established a direct and more personal dialogue, asked about their expectations and potential interest in the Educational Innovation Network project.

All the existing experience was mapped in a “who is doing what in education” in the city, which showed examples of projects for other agents to learn and replicate. It also helped to provide more suitable support for improvement.




In terms of management, the Network was based in the Foundation Ciutat de Viladecans due to the ongoing work that this entity was doing in training and providing education resources for digital and technological literacy to different collectives in the city, also students. In addition, being managed from within the Foundation, there was more flexibility in operating resources and projects. Below are Coordination Team members and roles:

Coordination Team

 <p>Joan Bassolas EIN's coordinator Fundació Ciutat Viladecans</p>	 <p>Ruth Cebador Families Assoc. Coord. (Education Dpt)</p>	 <p>Maria Robles Enterp. Local Agency (Companies Dpt.)</p>
<p>Coordinate the actions and projects of the XIE as well as the work of the team.</p> <p>It provides a more strategic vision and takes care of the most formal and institutional relations.</p>	<p>To advice and support to Families Associations.</p> <p>Collect the needs expressed by the Families Associations.</p> <p>Project: AMPA 2.0</p>	<p>To support the companies of the municipality.</p> <p>Constant relationship with companies and proposals for action in projects.</p> <p>Project: Co-mentoring of research projects</p>

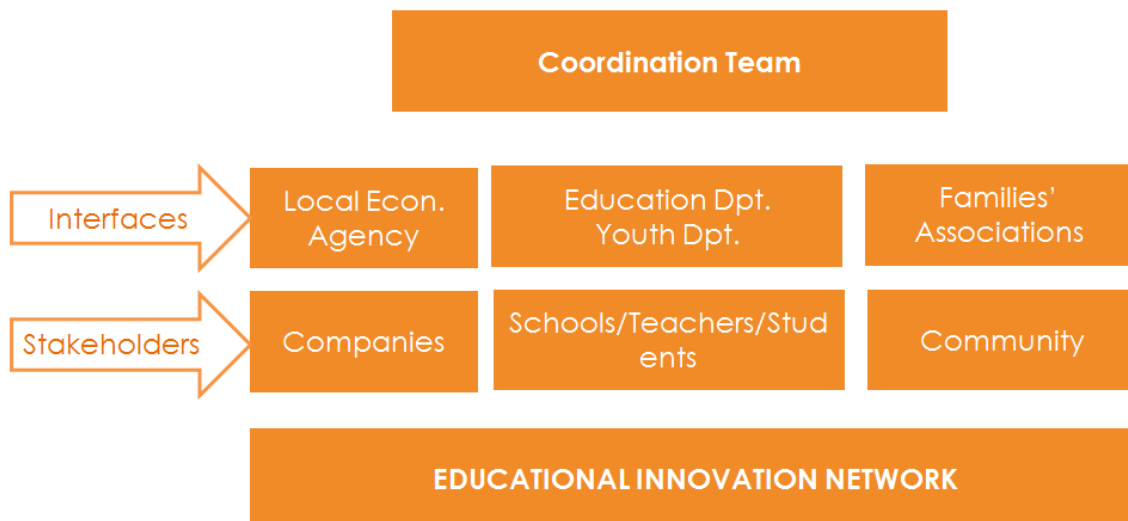
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Coordination Team

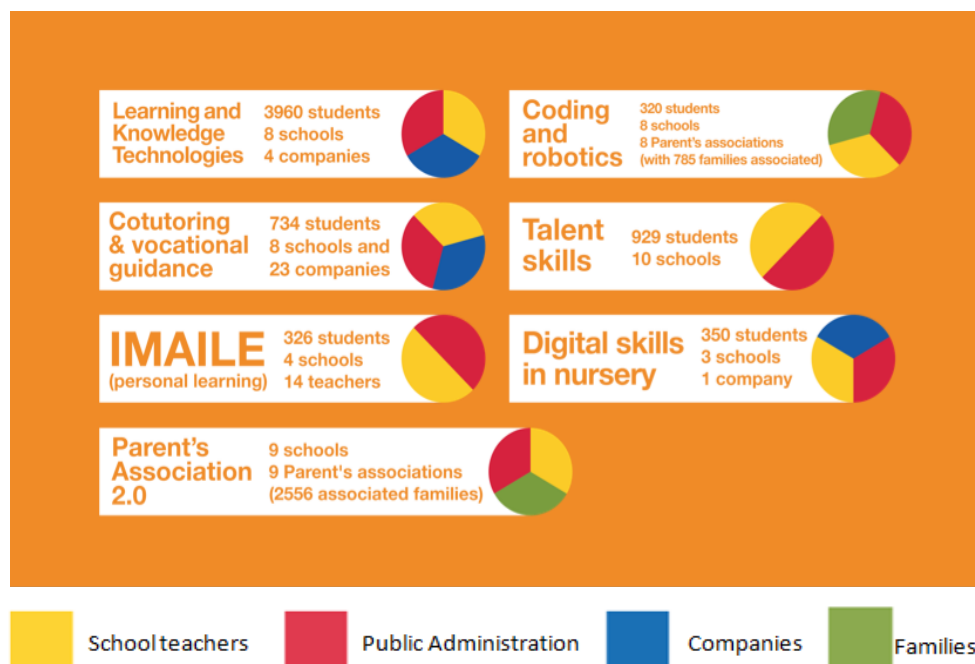
 <p>Mireia Pujol Youth Department</p>	 <p>Jordi Castellano EIN Communications Fundació Ciutat Viladecans</p>	 <p>Clara Moreno Innovation Projects (Education Dpt.)</p>
<p>To link with young people.</p> <p>Direct relationship with young people trough High Schools and Resources' Center for Young People Can Xic.</p> <p>Project: Jornada d'Orientació Professional</p>	<p>Communication of EIN projects and schools' experiencies through a weekly newsletter.</p> <p>Search for educational resourches to published it on the official website.</p>	<p>To link with primary, secondary and nursery schools.</p> <p>To monitoring of the consolidate projects and promoting new projects.</p> <p>Collaborate with the weekly newsletter.</p>

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Each of the representatives from the municipal departments: Education, Families Associations, Business Support Agency and Youth, composing the Coordination Team interact with the related group of stakeholders, thus acting as interfaces.



Participants and members stand for themselves and not represent an institution or collective. This was key to allow everybody to contribute with his or her own ideas, knowledge and work capacity and also to be able to select more than one person from a school or entity.



- Summary of Educational Innovation Network projects developed within the first 3 years.

On Board Checklist:

Build the educational Innovation Network on the existing experience

- ✓ *Invest time in dialogue with the education community to understand their own needs and expectations and gather their considerations on the Educational Innovation Project.*
- ✓ *Map local education projects to disclose the local experience and to avoid repeating or overlapping. Acknowledge and incorporate this wealth of experience in the Network to promote a bottom up approach.*
- ✓ *Appoint the Coordination Team selecting the most suitable representatives from the different municipal services and ensuring that their role as interfaces reach out to the comprehensive education community in the city.*
- ✓ *Find the Network leadership that can be the catalyser in the education sector. A Network Coordinator that has prestige and recognition among the local education stakeholders, with the skills and capacities to make the Network an innovation driver.*
- ✓ *Agree on a number of pilot projects to 'get the ball rolling' and raise interest and awareness among education agents*

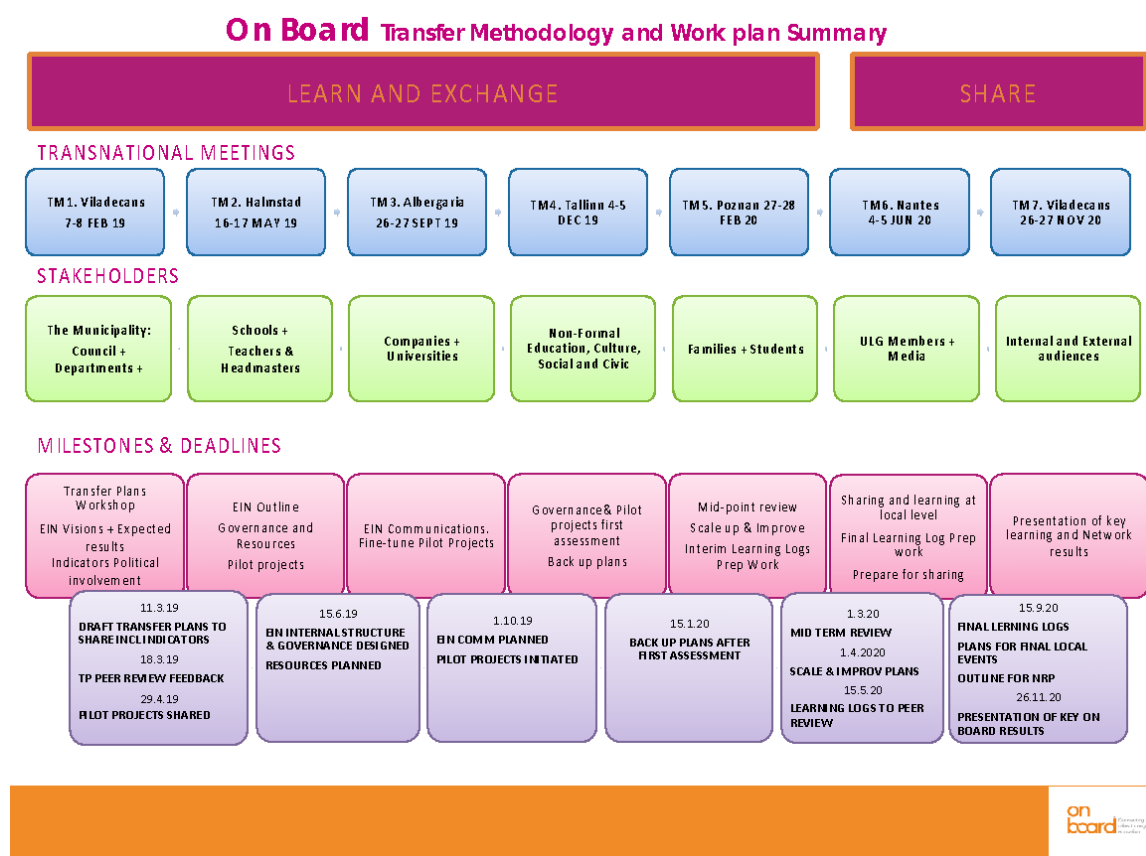
2. Transfer Steps: planning for the transfer and developing monitoring indicators

▪ Transfer and Improvement Plans

The Transfer Plans are the detailed application of the transfer methodology at local level. They contain the roadmap of what is going to be done in the Transfer Cities with internal deadlines: what, who, when.

Before the celebration of the Phase 2 Kick Off Meeting, all On Board cities had already celebrated 1 or 2 meetings with their respective groups of education stakeholders to share the Transfer Plan guidelines and discussing workplan and milestones according to each Partner's priorities. A workshop session at the meeting in Viladecans allowed review the process and start drafting the respective roadmaps.

On its side, another session was dedicated to help the Lead Partner city of Viladecans address its own Improvement Plan for the Educational Innovation Network Good Practice. At this session the group of Viladecans ULG members joined the meeting and got input from members of partner cities (see section below). All drafted plans will be peer reviewed by the end of March.



▪ Meeting with the ULG

One of Viladecans reasons for leading the On Board Project was to improve the educational Innovation Network. This is the reason why the EIN Coordination Team in agreement with the On Board Project team decided to produce its own Good Practice Improvement Plan to be developed throughout the transfer process.

At a local meeting of the URBACT Local Group, celebrated on the 1st October 2018, Viladecans education stakeholders discussed 4 aspects that they considered worth tackling in order to improve the EIN. The 4 topics were:

1. Open the Network to new stakeholders. Potential members to include: Non-formal education, leisure entities, youth associations; libraries, museums, theatres and cultural institutions; neighbourhood associations; social enterprises, cooperatives
2. Sustainability. Members creating their own interactions and partnerships
3. Students as active EIN members: Participate in decisions on EIN activities and projects
4. Develop indicators: For monitoring EIN impact in Viladecans, in qualitative terms, not

only to assess quantitative educational results

At the joint meeting, during the Kick Off in Viladecans, the local participants (ULG) shared these 4 areas of improvement to receive feedback from the international visitors. In groups, they discussed the potential actions to address each of them and helped Viladecans identify the scope of work and achievements during the On Board Transfer Network. Results will be used to develop the Improvement Plan.

- Defining indicators for Educational Innovation Network transfer and impact monitoring

On Board work plan foresees the development of a set of [indicators](#) to assess the impacts resulting from the Good Practice transfer process and to measure the longer-term results of advancing innovative education in the city. Addressing this issue from the project onset should allow partners to envision the final outcomes they expect to achieve from the On Board project as well as to develop the required baseline information.

Paul Fenton, On Board Ad Hoc expert, delivered a session aimed at defining a set of indicators for their respective Educational Innovation Network implementation and impact assessment. Paul Fenton's full reporting notes and presentation are included [here](#).

The purpose of indicators is to measure progress and achievement, allowing for realistic appraisals if work approaches need adjusting. In the case of On Board, they reflect the aims of the Good Practice transfer, locally and at network levels, and support this transfer by offering Project Partners and URBACT programme verifiable evidence that the inputs, progress and results of the transfer have been achieved.

The topic of education indicators, while stimulating discussion and concretizing focus on some local projects, generated doubts about the work expectations these indicators would imply involving other stakeholders. Because the necessary municipal political commitments are still at an early stage, Partners found the topic a bit beyond their immediate scope and control of decision. Therefore, further work was required to specify/identify the most relevant and practical indicators

The session aimed at finding measurement tools for assessing two different levels of project results:

1. How will you prove/verify what you did/achieved on your transfer journey?

These set of indicators refer to the EIN Good Practice Transfer assessment. In this case, Paul Fenton developed a proposal of monitoring indicators following Transfer Network milestones and key transfer steps, that Project Partners can adapt and use throughout the project implementation as a tool to monitor progress and to showcase On Board transfer network results (see Annex 2).

2. What combination of data/sources will tell others you succeeded in reaching your objectives?

These indicators measure improvement as a result of the Educational Innovation Network implementation in the city. This level of impact analysis will show mid to long-term results. With regards to this type of indicators, a work session will be dedicated in the next Transnational Meeting, scheduled for Halmstad, May 2019, so as to finalise the set of results indicators that genuinely respond to each partner city expected changes and advancements in education out of the Good Practice implementation.

On Board Checklist: Developing project indicators

✓ *Articulate the final result you expect to achieve out of the Educational Innovation Network implementation in your city. For example: Improved academic success in primary and secondary schools in one district; better digital and technological literacy levels among students in the city; increased number of local students employed in local technological companies; increased level of girls students in ICT higher education careers...*

✓ *Define the specific objectives and actions for the achievement of your expected results in Education*

✓ *From the onset, select the indicators that will help you monitor the actions and results and define the verification means and sources of the data and information. Then gather/create the baseline information.*

✓ *Follow the RACER criteria: Relevant – Accepted – Credible – Easy to Monitor – Robust*

✓ *Use the information revealed by the assessment process to prove the achievement of objectives, modify patterns for continuous improvement,*

3. Preparation work for the transfer process

In order to support the Good Practice transfer process, all Project Partners fill the Learning & Actions Template at the end of each of the Transnational Meetings. This is meant to help translate the relevant learning and tools gathered into actual steps at the local level.

Project Partners answer the template questions:

- What was important learning for our city from the Transnational Meeting?
- Why is it relevant for our city transfer process?

Then they are asked to propose related actions to recommend to their respective local groups when they go back to their respective cities. The Learning and Action grids resulting from this Kick Off meeting are shown [here](#).

- **On Board Policy Declaration**

As an expression of this modern and comprehensive approach to education and to establish a common understanding and starting point for the Good Practice transfer to all Project Partners, local authorities of the On Board cities formally approved a [Joint Political Declaration](#), a common positioning showing commitment and support to innovative education, the development of the 360º perspective, and the Network in their respective cities.



- *Signature of On Board Policy Declaration in Viladecans, 5th February, 2019. City representatives who signed the document: Mr. Carles Ruiz, Mayor of Viladecans; Ms. Myriam Nael, Deputy Mayor for Education of Nantes; Mr. Vadim Belobrovstev, Deputy Mayor for Education of Tallinn; Mr. Antonio Augusto Amaral Loureiro e Santos, Mayor of Albergaria-a-Velha, Ms. Jenny Axelsson, Deputy Mayor for Education of Halmstad and Ms. Katarzyna Kierzek-Koperska, Deputy Mayor of Poznan*

4. Visit to education projects and meeting local stakeholders

- **Project Visits**

Miquel Martí i Pol Primary School (ages 3 to 12), host of the Kick Off Meeting, is one active school of the Educational Innovation Network. Ms. Raquel Valle, the school Headmistress, introduced the philosophy and aims of the school project, consisting of a twofold objective of Educational innovation and Social inclusion.

In addition to the work within the classrooms, the school looks for a good communication and understanding with other education centres in the neighbourhood and with the parents. Families are also part of the children school life, they complement and strengthen the values received from teachers.

The group of On Board participants did a guided tour to visit the school and its projects.

- 1. Smart Classroom**

2. New Learning environments
3. Parents' Association
4. Musical collaboration between Primary and Secondary students
5. Local companies co-mentoring upper secondary students
6. La Pineda Municipal Nursery School
7. Robotics
8. Arts makers

A brief summary of each of them can be seen [here](#).

5. Learning in the school: improving the educational experience from the pedagogical, environmental and digital dimension

Below are main ideas from the thematic presentation by Guillermo Bautista, Ph.D. Professor-Researcher at the Department of Education and eLearning Centre - Open University of Catalonia and Programme Director of the Masters Degree for Teacher Training in Primary, Secondary, Vocational Training and Languages.

This is the first of a series of thematic presentations on Educational Innovation that will be included in the Transnational Meetings.

In this case, the author presents a number of key elements and criteria to consider when starting Educational Innovation projects. These are the result of joint research of different Catalan Universities and are being applied to the projects initiated in Viladecans, more specifically in Miquel Martí i Pol Primary School.

First premise is that an educational Innovation project in education has to a) know why we need to innovate; and b) look for the scientific evidence to provide information.

Bautista introduced the trends influencing education model nowadays, consisting mainly in:

- Changes in the culture of the productive system, e.g. we buy intangibles, not things. Technology thus is tangent to all sectors and activities
- Technology has an impact in our lives that needs to be assessed
- Borders of the education centres are fading
- Educational reforms have been top down and without the expected results
- Research - basic and applied- is providing knowledge on how we learn, i.e. neurology, psychology.



He also presented clues (and criteria) for a more successful education:

- Rethink the teacher – student relationship where the student is an active subject, not a passive or reactive one
- Take into account the interests and context of the students
- Emotional aspects have a very important influence in the learning, and it has to do with the personal situation and feelings at home and in the school
- Effort is a key component
- Neuro-education: when we interact with peers is when we show more predisposition to work. Group work improves our contribution
- Formative assessment, not summative assessment that too much based on exams and marks.
- Proactive learning and students inquiry raises interest and is more productive
- Learn with technology and how to use it. What do we need from the technology in the classroom? We need digital literacy to understand the potential and uses of technology.
- Technological tools allows creating different learning scenarios: active and interactive learning

▪ Smart Classroom project

The latest research has identified the need to redesign to adapt the learning environment. Schools need to create the learning spaces that have the conditions to improve the wellbeing of the person in the school: environment, light, temperature, etc.

The Smart classroom approaches education from different interacting dimensions:

- ✓ Space: Which is the most appropriate space for learning
- ✓ Environment: light, colour
- ✓ Digital: using technology

The project developed in Viladecans was based in a cooperative and research work that

analysed, discussed and agreed a list of Smart Classroom principles, among them, flexibility, adaptability, comfort, connectivity and personalization



From February to June 2018, the team of school professionals in Miquel Martí i Pol Primary School closely worked with the universities' research teams to design a learning space that is being piloted during the current 2018-2019 course. The Educational Innovation Network is going to transfer the project to other schools in the city during the next academic period.

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ANNEX 1: THE CATALAN EDUCATION SYSTEM, MAIN EDUCATION COMPETENCES DISTRIBUTION

Education competences in Catalonia are partially decentralised.

Education competence distribution

- State Government: General frame and core curriculum 40%
- Autonomous Government: Concretion, organization, teaching staff management and supervision, planning and flexible curriculum 60%. (Catalan Education Law, 2009)
- Local Governments (City Councils) Collaborate with Autonomy Government in planning, school enrolment and non-academic activities. Compulsory competences at the municipal level include only maintenance and *consiergerie* (care taking service) of primary school centres'. Cities can also encourage Schools Councils and create Education Municipal Councils, as is the case in Viladecans.

Type of schools according to ownership

- State schools: public state funded
- Mix or Concertades: private funds and receives public state funds
- Private independent schools, self-funded

Catalan education policies focus on

- Competences: providing students with the skills they need in a complex and changing world, for their professional success, personal and academic growth and for an active and global citizenship.
- Inclusion: Ensuring social cohesion with inclusive education, and enriching citizenship in diversity

Objectives:

- General
 - Increase school success: basic skills, multilingual schools, ICT, teachers training
 - Vocational training
 - Strategic
 - Extend the new vocational training and lifelong learning model.
- Decentralize the public education service management