

Involving Local Business and the Higher Education Entities; Network Communications; and Get Going with Pilot Projects

ON BOARD, Transnational Meeting 3 Report

Introduction

Albergaria-a-Velha, in the region of Aveiro (PT), hosted the **3rd Meeting of the ON BOARD** Transfer Network, on September 25th to 27th, 2019.

[Albergaria](#) is located in a strategic location, at the crossroads of main highways in Portugal and close to Aveiro and Porto, two important economic and knowledge poles. The city location has facilitated the establishment of companies. Due to this lively business activity near the city, Albergaria has, for some years now, sought to develop entrepreneurship skills among the students. For this, the city has **involved local and regional business actors in education projects** (See section 2: **Local Companies collaborating in Education initiatives in Albergaria**).



The tight collaboration with the **University of Aveiro** (See section 3 **The partnership between the Aveiro University and the Municipality of Albergaria-a-Velha; an example of cooperation to improve Education**) has led to develop a number of projects:

- **Planning** the local Education Strategy
- Supporting the local start-ups incubator as member of the **incubators regional network**
- Providing meaningful **training** for young entrepreneurs.

The experience with these two local agents (business and University) made it relevant to choose Albergaria to talk and learn about the role of these 2 agents in the Educational Innovation Network, and analyse them as another relevant stakeholder to include in the Network. For these, the Project Partners invited representatives from these to areas to share their views and explore the potential interest and contribution to the project.

The Participants and these “special guests” dedicated a full 3-hour session to look into others’ experience and good practices and to propose ideas for effective projects implementation (see section 4 **Local Business and Higher Education Entities in Local Education. Work with our Special Guests**).

All participants had the chance to attend the **Market of Local Innovation EduProjects** organised and presented by the **Albergaria ULG members** themselves. Participants from the invited cities walked around and saw different initiatives ranging from robotics, entrepreneurship skills projects, mentoring of students, etc. (see section 5 **Market of EduProjects and meeting with ULG members**).

As in all ON BOARD Transnational Meetings, participants visited the host city initiatives that today foster educational innovation in Albergaria, some of them adopted or improved thanks to the learning process and exchange from previous Transnational Meetings (see section 6 **Visits to education projects in Albergaria**).

Besides addressing the two selected stakeholders mentioned above, the ON BOARD partners dedicated a whole session to learn about the **communication strategy** for the Educational Innovation Network and its two-fold objective: internal exchange and learning of its members; and dissemination of the Network projects and achievements (see section 7 **Transfer Steps: Developing a Communication Strategy for the Educational Innovation Network**).

Section 8 of the present report (**Peer review on the advancement of Network implementation**) presents the key outputs of the peer review session that helped PP to assess their **main difficulties in transferring and adapting the Educational Innovation Network governance**, in particular the formal structure and the resources. This was a most useful monitoring session in preparation for the Mid Term Reflection process to identify main barriers and potential delays in the transfer process.

This report presents contents and outputs of the meetings as well as **Policy recommendations** derived from it. The ON BOARD Check List boxes offers tips and suggestions to city practitioners on the tools, approach and methods referred to throughout the meeting working sessions.

The information below can be further expanded through the meeting materials referred to at the [URBACT ON BOARD site](#) and links provided. Moreover, for an ongoing update of the project activities subscribe to the [URBACT Newsletter](#).

1. The educational organisation in Albergaria and the school system in Portugal

Cristina Oliveira, representative of the Ministry of Education introduced the [National School System in Portugal](#) and the latest developments in terms of achievements, showing that the **students' results have progressively improved** in the last years. In 2018, Portugal reached the lowest dropout rate ever, the percentage stood at 11.8% against 23% of 2011. The Ministry of Education has a target of 10% for 2020, as set in the European Commission's Europe 2020 Strategy.



Taxa de transição/ conclusão, por nível de ensino e ciclo de estudos, em Portugal

Ano letivo		Nível e ciclo										
		2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Ensino básico	1.º Ciclo	96.0	96.3	96.4	96.3	96.7	95.6	95.1	95.0	95.9	96.3	97.0
	2.º Ciclo	89.5	92.0	92.4	92.3	92.6	88.8	87.5	88.6	91.4	93.3	94.2
	3.º Ciclo	81.6	86.0	86.0	86.2	86.7	84.4	84.1	84.9	87.7	90.0	91.5
Ensino secundário		75.2	79.0	80.9	80.7	79.2	79.9	81.0	81.5	83.4	84.3	84.9

Portugal Educação

14

- Completion rate by level of education and cycle of studies

Rosa Tomàs, Coordinator of the Education Area of the Aveiro Region (CIRA) introduced the **Integrated and Innovative Plan to Combat School Failure in Aveiro**. The Plan is implemented in collaboration with 11 municipalities and the Inter-municipal Community of the Region of Aveiro. The approach of the actions is that of *learning by doing* and it addresses the following elements:

EDUC@RA PROGRAMME. Main work strands of regional education strategy in Aveiro

Scientific and Technological Literacy

With specific focus on teachers' training. An important share of the Plan activities goes to reinforcing teachers' role and training teaching staff on STEM and technological skills

Entrepreneurship & Future Employment

The Plan also foresees promoting competition through contests on innovative initiatives so as to attract schools and students' attention and engage them

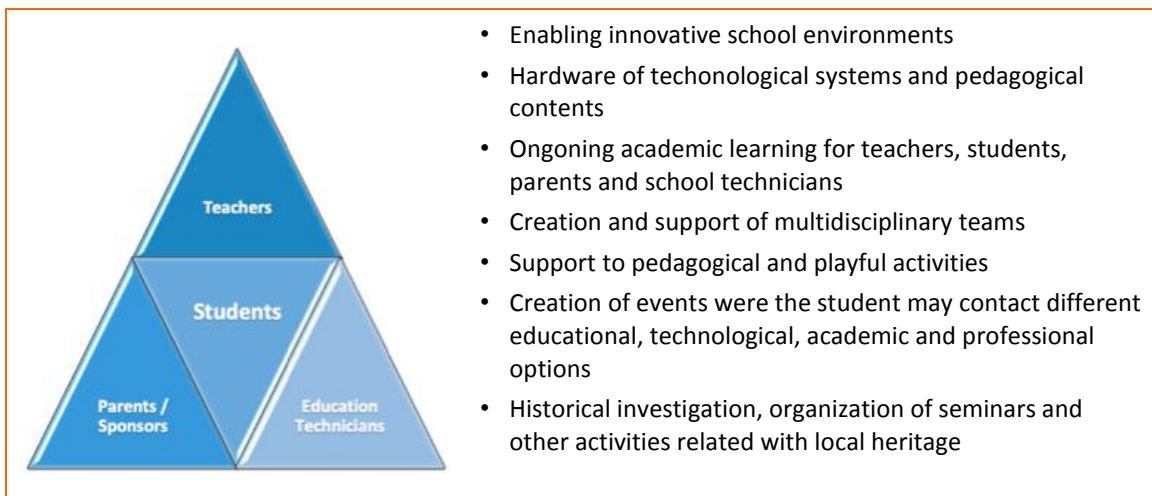
Social and Educational Support

In particular for the communities with higher risk of school dropout or educational failure. The Plan offers students' individualised support and activities are developed and implemented through multidisciplinary teams

Monitoring of education and training activities

By means of keeping an Observatory to collect and use statistical information on the Plan implementation

At the municipal level, activities are described below, which, in fact, reflect how the Plan areas and methods have been translated to the local schools level.



- *Local actions to implement the Local Plan to Combat School failure*

2. Local Companies collaborating in Education initiatives in Albergaria

Members of Albergaria local Group presented local projects addressed at students to develop entrepreneurship skills:

- **Ideas Contest and Mentoring Programme of Albergaria**

Nuno Ferreira, previous ON BOARD project coordinator in the city introduced a local initiative that gives students the opportunity to [develop entrepreneurship project](#) ideas with the support and involvement of local businesses.

The project is structured in 2 Phases:

- Ideas brainstorming, preparation and submission**, which ends with the selection of finalist teams. All groups make a pitch of their idea before a jury composed by school and municipality representatives.
- Mentoring support for students** to develop the selected projects. They will be presented at a final public event where the top 3 entrepreneurship missions will be awarded. In this phase, 36 mentors are available for students (entrepreneurs of Albergaria-a-Velha), with whom the young can have Informal meetings to discuss the business project while developing it.



▪ *Final event of the ideas contest in Albergaria*

The initiative is now in its 6th edition and up to date has involved: **633 Students, 62 Teachers and 173 Projects.**

Students from Albergaria presented two projects that had participated in the latest editions of the ideas contest consisting in smart items developed for daily use, for example, a [backpack](#) with a built-in cover to protect the user from sudden rain or a [shopping cart for the supermarkets](#) that allows keeping the baby in its own trolley.



▪ *Prototype developed by students for the Ideas Contest*

- Support to entrepreneurship skills in local schools

The Ilídio Pinho Foundation is a nation-wide organisation that promotes the **upgrade of scientific culture and entrepreneurship in Portugal** in collaboration with the Ministries of Education and Economy.

The Foundation facilitates training on the topic to all schools to accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship. By means of encouraging **interdisciplinary projects**, the training connects schools to local society, its problems and challenges and its economy.

Its main action regards this objective consists on the organisation of a contest and a national **"Science at School" award**. The award has been increasingly successful and in the latest edition of 2019 has achieved a total of 1390 projects.

Its expected impact is that

- Young people know their **vocation** better and show more enthusiasm for **science-based learning**
- **Teachers and students cooperate** in the development of scientific culture -initiatives are of entrepreneurship of knowledge and science
- **Partnerships** between schools and the local community grow
- Projects drive more **innovation in communities**, by linking businesses and the wider community
- There is a growing **involvement** of Research Centres and Universities
- **Companies are enjoying innovation** and the knowledge generated
- **Encourage young scientists** around the world who came out of Science at School
- There is a creative **integration** between the primary and secondary school system, the higher education and the research, until their economic use in business



▪ *Winner project at a former Science at School award Edition*

3. The partnership between the Aveiro University and the Municipality of Albergaria-a-Velha; an example of cooperation to improve Education

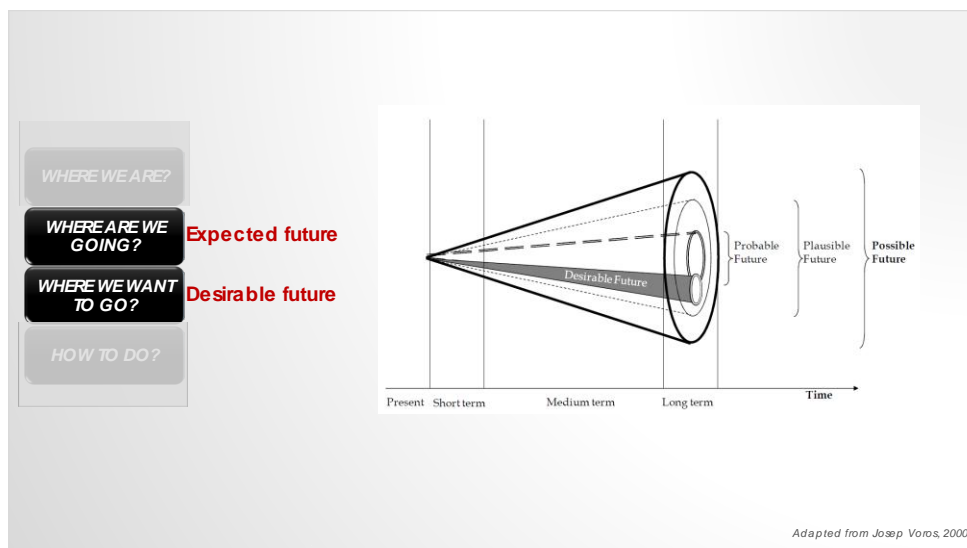
In a short presentation, Professor Rui Neves and Professor João Marques, from the Group of Studies on Territory and Innovation, at the Aveiro University, introduced their collaboration with the City of Albergaria to develop [2 education instruments for the city](#).

- a. The **Educational Chart**: the prospective planning instrument regards material and tangible aspects, such as equipment and facilities to be located in the municipality.
- b. **Education Strategic Plan**: to establish the guidelines of the education policy, and to promote the educational identity of the territory. It contains the planning instruments that define a set of local educational policies with the community, promoting the educational identity of the municipal territory.

Both instruments are key to help setting the vision of the local education in the city for the next 20-year period. It defines priorities and promotes participation in the definition of these priorities.

The speakers introduce the key project development steps:

1. **Where we are now**: The project requires diagnosis and characterization of the educational territory, including demographic and socioeconomic profile of the Municipality. This is the document driven-analysis
2. **Where are we going**: Sets the prospective study considering the demand of the students and impacts on the offer of the local schools network, size, etc. The decisions on the future needs are made together with the political team.
3. **Where we want to go**: Consisting of a participative process to develop the Strategic Educational Vision. Entails interviews, group work and the process ends up with a vision of the future in education.
4. **How to do it**: This last stage consists of the development of the Educational Action Plan, including the 4 priority axes: participation, inclusion, qualifications and entrepreneurship skills. It defines the governance models as well

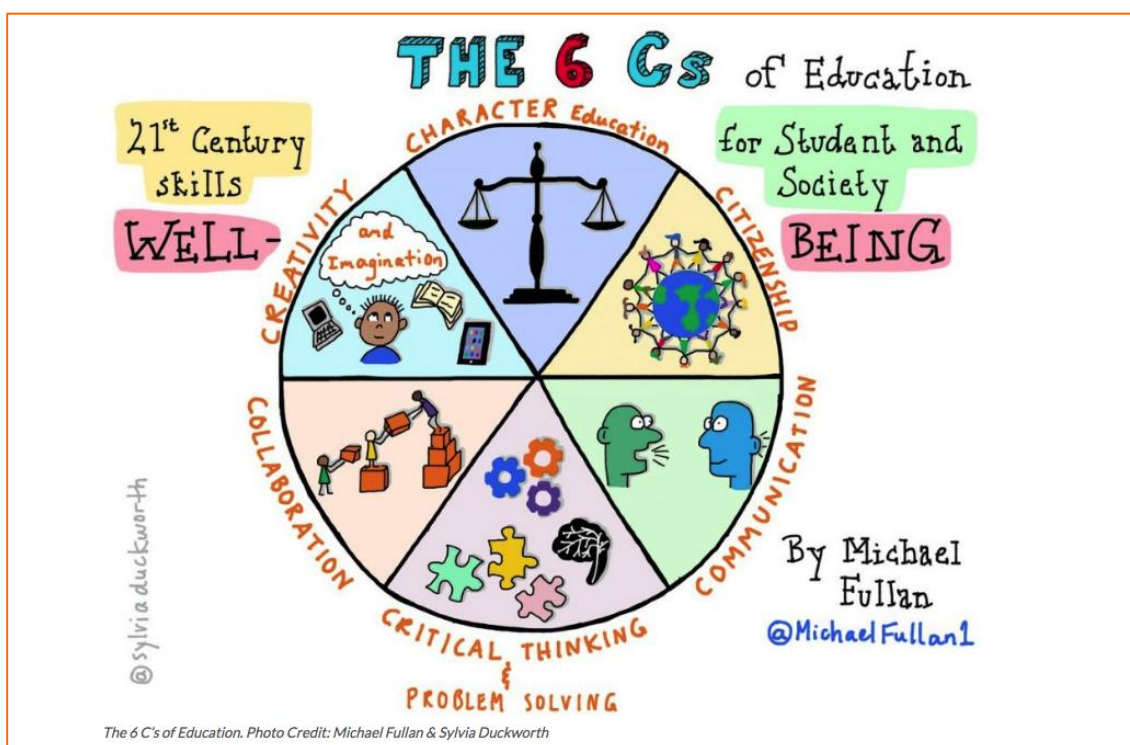


4. Local Business and Higher Education Entities in Local Education. Work with our Special Guests

- Introduction

The Educational Innovation Network foresees the engagement of local stakeholders assuming that education takes place **within and out of school** walls. Children and young achieve knowledge and develop their values both during school and non-school hours, in their leisure time, with their relatives, in the neighbourhood, etc. The **city is thus, a teaching agent** that provides permanent input and experiences. In this holistic 360° vision, both **private and public agents** can contribute to improve the learning experience and the education success of the young.

Moreover, some skills and competences such as **critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication, collaboration...** are not explicitly addressed through the formal curricula in schools. Still, they are key to adapt to today's trends and rapidly changing environments.



- The 6 Cs of the 21st Century Skills

So, the ON BOARD project recognises that schools alone cannot assume the responsibility of training children in all life-required facets and need the participation of other local stakeholders, each contributing from its own know-how and resources.

One way to do this is through **connecting students learning to the real life problems**, context and environment, and enable the participation of non-usual education “allies” from the city and neighbourhood. Collaborative relations with civic, economic, cultural agents in the city will

put young in contact with richer and reality-like challenges.

Also, by **experiential learning** (learning by doing) in collaboration with non-school/non-professional education staff, students will more easily be active and engaged learners. In the end, it is about offering students full opportunities to be citizens, i.e. responsible and active members of the society.

Considering the above-described concept of an educating city, there are ways in which **local companies** and the **University**, as potential education agents in the city, can contribute to the education of the local students. **The Educational Innovation Network can facilitate this**, creating the mechanisms and resourcing the support required.

However, one needs to take into account the interests, motivation and availability of these local agents themselves, in particular companies. Since Education is not at the centre of their ordinary activity, and theirs is a for-profit orientation it is necessary to understand how can they find this collaboration interesting, in other words, *'what is in it for them'*.

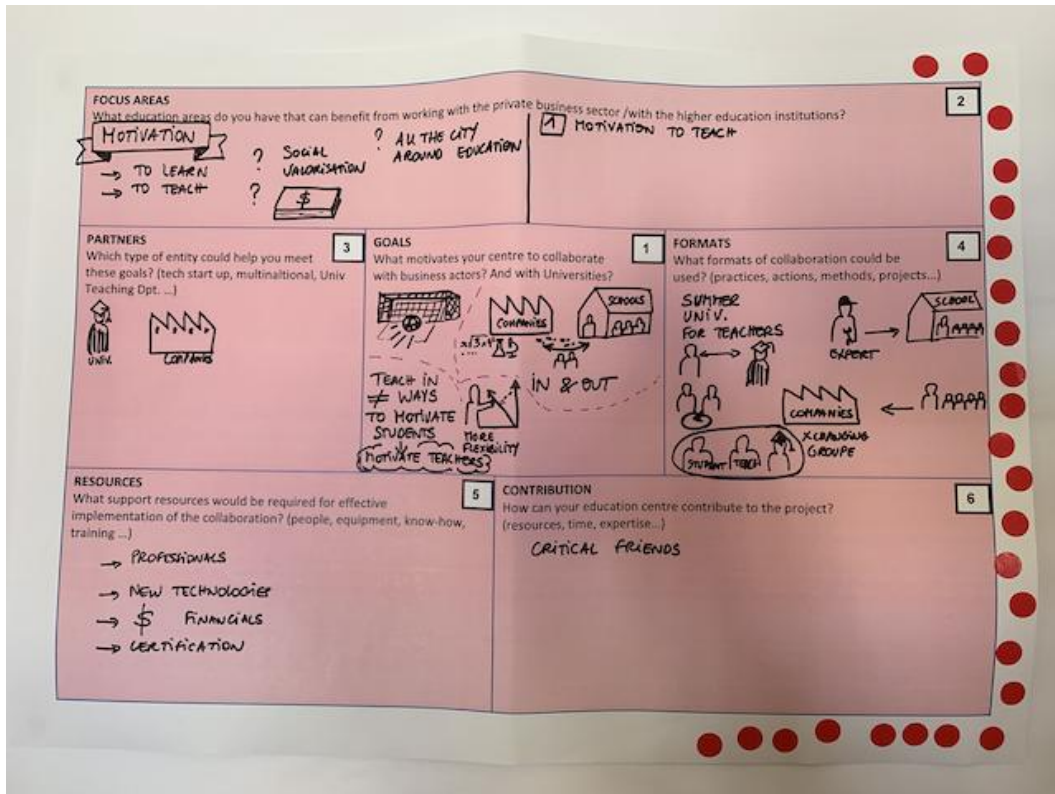


- *Meeting session with members of the business, knowledge and education sectors to find opportunities for collaboration*

To organise the discussion regards the potential interest and motivation of these two agents, and understand possible ways of collaboration, the group split in three sub-groups: University, Business and Education Centres, and with the help of a canvas template, they structured the debate on the basis of the following aspects:

1. **Goals and motivation** of University and companies to participate in educational projects; interest and potential benefits for education centres.
2. **Focus areas** of this cooperation: skills developing, teachers' training, research, mentoring...
3. **Partners that need to be involved**
4. **Formats** this collaboration may take
5. **Resources needed** to develop such projects
6. **Contribution** each specific actor can provide

Concrete proposals in different drawn and written format, were developed and can be found [here](#). An example is included below:



- Canvas presenting a proposal of 3-party cooperation in education to improve motivation for innovative and collaborative projects

- Key proposals and conclusions

The list below is the result of the subsequent dedicated time to debate and share the proposals from each of the 3 groups. It contains highly relevant suggestions and meaningful conclusions on the participation of these actors in education. The ideas are structured per agent and in theme areas:

- **Local companies**

- What are local companies potential motivation and interests to participate in educational projects?
- How can Local Business contribute to advance 360° Education and make it innovative, modern and inclusive?

Students' guidance and referents

- Students need **referents** to look at and get inspired. There are clear referents in careers such as medicine, journalism, etc., but there are professional careers not that visible or popular, yet with great demand and good salaries and which usually require a certain degree of specialization.
- Because it is highly necessary to make these professions **visible**, a way to do so is

through collaboration with companies to publicize these needs: awareness, training, practices, etc.

- Companies can help students decide on their professional future by providing **guidance and showing career** paths. Companies may want to promote **entrepreneurship mind-set and skills** among students (as the Ideas Contest in Albergaria does).

Companies' contribution with training

- Local business agents can capacitate the young with **professional expertise** to meet job requirements of the local labour market (as in the Joint-Mentoring Project of Viladecans)
- Providing **meaningful and practical experience** on the specific company's activity/sector, as in the Dual Training system
- Contributing to students' skills in line with today's needs and trends, in particular with the use of **technological and digital tools** (as in the Digitizing STEM Education Project of Söndrumsskolan, Halmstad)
- Diversify and broaden the scope for potential entrepreneurs through learning about different **entrepreneurship models** in social economy: social entrepreneurship, cooperativeness.
- There are companies (such as Click-it in Viladecans) with a specific budget heading for investment in education, however, small, family-owned businesses, often have limited time or human and financial resources to develop this type of activities. A way to involve them in Education could be through starting up **business associations** that facilitate more feasible and punctual type of company collaboration. Also defining **collaboration programs** where each company participates in a specific activity.

Incentives for companies

- Companies usually seek a quick **return on invested resources**. Rewarding collaboration in educational projects may be a way to acknowledge their role and raise their interest, i.e. offering points in local public procurement processes.
- Other incentives such as a **reduction in corporate rates** might be helpful in increasing interest in collaboration.
- Some other (bigger) companies involved in education programmes do not do this for profit but for ethical issues and because social recognition is important. **Corporate responsibility** and school project **sponsorship** is a way to be involved in local educational projects.
- Some companies often see in **students their future skilled employees**, since they have trouble to find workers with the specific required training, some companies need to invest time and efforts to form a senior. Also, once it is trained, they have trouble retaining them. So, it is useful to **collaborate with educational centres can facilitate the suitability of the training and skills**.

- Tech companies can work with schools that perform as **test beds** for new educational products /devices.

Companies and teachers collaboration

- **Teachers' awareness of job opportunities.** Teachers often ignore the work situation and labour market needs. In order to keep them aware **seminars, job shadowing** or short **summer-camps to connect companies with teachers** allow catching up and understanding collaboration opportunities.
- In Tallinn **headmasters** from the educational centres make a **stay of 3 months in a local company** to understand and learn about management and to be able to transfer the knowledge and skills to other teachers and the students in their centre. In this period, the city council provides a substitute for the educational centre. They are usually young companies with rapid growth.
- A possible way to bring companies closer to schools is through the **families** of those students who have or work in companies and who can establish some type of relationships and a common project.

▪ University, research

- *How can the higher educational institutions, i.e. the University, contribute to advance 360° Education and make it innovative, modern and inclusive?*

Applied research methods and solutions

- Innovative projects and changes in the teaching and learning process have to **rely on research and needs assessment**. Faculties and education research centres can provide this support by means of applied research solutions on the most engaging and effective education methods and tools, such as the Smart Classroom or the Emotions Project in Viladecans or the Critical Friends project in Halmstad (see Viladecans and Halmstad Meeting Reports, respectively).
- Together with teachers, researchers can develop **joint analysis of learning styles and capacities**, test learning environments (new architecture, light, furniture distribution), etc.
- It is important to develop **multidisciplinary teams** in the applied research to avoid desk research conclusions not connected to the real patterns in the school classroom.
- Universities are often closed to businesses. They do not have access to the real needs. **Walls must be eliminated between "thinking" and "doing"**.
- Research at the University can inspire and encourage the learning communities.

Planning and monitoring

- The University can have an expert role to **develop education plans and programmes**

that meet the city policy priorities. It can be an **external technical support** also to monitor needs and results (see the example of partnership between Aveiro University and the Municipality of Albergaria to develop the Municipal Education Chart).

- Research Departments can also help **assessing impact of innovative projects** tested in the schools.

Skills improvement

- The University can play a role in facilitating **knowledge transfer** schemes and projects to educational centres and teachers along with lending **equipment and research facilities** (laboratory, technology...) for schools projects and students practices
- The University can also be a local partner in providing **lifelong** learning for teaching staff

Field analysis

- **Anticipating required skills** for the future societies and the market trends, e.g. industry 4.0 and upgrading curriculums to reflect job market needs

Motivation of teaching staff

- There seems to be a higher motivation and engagement when the participant in innovative practices is **the person, not the institution, faculty or University**. In addition, when interest is shown individually, it is easier to skip static and bureaucratic dynamics of the institution.

■ Companies – University – Education Centres

- *Ways in which the three agents can collaborate*
- The three agents can jointly assess labour market needs and existing gaps in filling the jobs in the local companies. The University, in agreement with the schools and the local authorities, can then play a role to contribute to avoid brain drain and retain talent by proposing education plans and curricula that help **harmonising jobs' needs and offer**.

* * *

On Board Checklist

Favour the participation of Local Business agents in local educational projects

Guidance for the young

- ✓ Offer guidance to students and teachers for a more suitable and well-thought options for the professional life of students
- ✓ The **Educational Innovation Network** can facilitate the interaction between students, teachers and local companies so the private sector shows professional options, provides relevant information on the required skills, offer guidance on career paths and trains on specific capacities.
- ✓ Collaboration schemes between local companies and educational centres can facilitate both the suitability of the training and skills required as well as teachers' awareness on job opportunities.
- ✓ Mediation and technical advise from the municipal business support services can help local authorities to tap onto the local companies experience and views to provide understanding on skills requirements for new 'XXI century' jobs.
- ✓ Cities can identify champions among the private sector to lead the educational innovation projects in the city.

Incentives for companies to be active educating members in the city

- ✓ The City can promote, acknowledge and encourage companies to engage in education initiatives by means of rewarding their collaboration, i.e. offering points in local public procurement processes, reduce corporate rates...
- ✓ The Education Department can mediate with headmasters at educational centres to facilitate and enable tech companies to work with schools performing as test beds for new educational products /devices.

On Board Checklist

Seek the participation of higher educational institutions in local educational projects

The University as an external research and expert resource

- ✓ Facilitate interactions among different EIN stakeholders, also between Universities and local businesses so it is easier to overcome barriers between "thinking" and "doing".
- ✓ Rely on the University as an external expert resource to support strategic planning and impact assessment of innovative projects.
- ✓ The City/schools can count on the assessment developed by expert research teams at the University and mediate with education centres to allow applied research solutions in the classroom.
- ✓ Similarly, joint analysis methods with teaching staff and students can offer first-hand evidence on different educational topics and methods, for example learning styles or learning environments.

Skills improvement

- ✓ Get the support of higher education entities for knowledge transfer and lifelong learning for teachers and other educational agents, also EIN stakeholders.
- ✓ Agree with the University on the schools' access to equipment, research projects, training, etc.

Field analysis

- ✓ Research can also anticipate future required skills and help design upgraded curricula; assess local companies' needs and contribute to avoid brain drain and retain talent by harmonising plans of needs and offer.

5. Market of EduProjects and meeting with ULG members

Albergaria's Local Group organised an exhibition of local projects to showcase the most successful initiatives being implemented in education.

Because some of the participant cities had selected projects from Albergaria to pilot the Educational Innovation Network in their respective cities, they were able to ask questions regards implementation details.

Below are images taken during the Market of EduProjects, all ON BOARD Eduprojects which have been shared by all Project Partners can be consulted in the [Basket of Educational Innovation Projects](#).

- Educational Innovation Projects. Exhibition in Albergaria's ULG



- Our future: Let's find out – Rui Pedro Marques



- Social Entrepreneurship



- Portable Learning Labs, by Edgar Borges



■ “πGo” (PIGO) Project



■ Tech@School – Patricia Marques

6. Visits to education projects in Albergaria

- Local Business Incubator and Training Services Centre

Carla Semedo, Operational Manager at the Business Incubator of Aveiro presents the Aveiro Regional Business Incubator Network (IERA). Albergaria is member of this Network and benefits from all support for training and knowledge made available to run its own local Business Incubator.

IERA capacitates entrepreneurs and advances knowledge and qualified and innovative entrepreneurship involving various agents in the territory and different government levels, including:

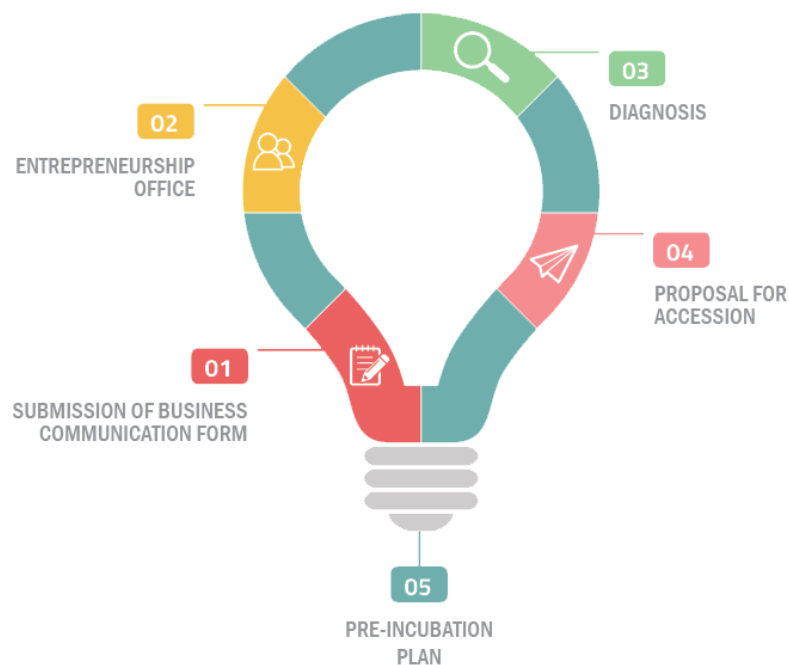
- Technicians, for training and networking
- Entrepreneurs: incubation services, training, awareness & networking events and contests



In line with the educational priorities of the Aveiro Region, the IERA is a strategic challenge assumed by 11 Municipalities of the Aveiro, the Intermunicipal Community of the Region (CIRA), the Aveiro District Industrial Association (AIDA), the Trade and Industry Chamber (AIDA) and the University of Aveiro (UA), with the objective of promoting entrepreneurship and social innovation by means of providing support services to new business ideas and companies.

In the Network, 12 individual business incubators share not only the same strategy but also a common methodology and actions. Each hub is autonomously managed but integrated in the same equipment and services.

The new business ideas are centralised in an application and follow the same process:



Services provided include:

- Legal Advice and Support
- Definition of Business model and plan
- Company Creation & Starting Activity
- Branding & Communication strategy
- Business Management
- Intellectual Property Protection
- Internationalization Process
- Mediation with investors and financial entities

As of today, a total of 131 projects from 118 companies have been channelled through IERA.

Adriana Costa, Executive Director of the University of Aveiro Incubator guided the group of Special Guests through the Incubator services at the University of Aveiro. Nuno Ferreira was the guide at the Business Incubator of Albergaria-a-Velha, member of the IERA Network.

- Smart and Snoezelen Classroom projects for better results and better physical and sensory stimulation

Guided by Dr^a. Catarina Mendes, Deputy Mayor for Education, the group of city representatives visited two educational centres, one is the Avenida School, where the Smart Classroom is being piloted, following National Programme for Promoting the School Success and in the same line of the Smart Classroom Project in Viladecans.

The second visit was at the Snoezelen Class, a Sensory Integration Room for young with physical or neurological disabilities. The project, introduced by Mariana Letra, is the result of a Corporate Social Responsibility initiative consisting of two different rooms with specific equipment and devices to stimulate the users physically and sensory.





- *Physical and sensory stimulation rooms at Snoezelen Class*

7. Transfer Steps: Developing a Communication Strategy for the Educational Innovation Network

It is worth starting the analysis of this transfer step by saying that the Educational Innovation Network does not only require internal administrative adjustments and resources but also complete new structures in place which entail a certain degree of management autonomy, visibility and permanent interaction of its members. In this regards, the communication of the Educational Innovation Network has to adapt and respond to these organisation needs and functions.

At TM3 in Albergaria, after an introductory session on potential communication tools, targets and purposes, and following the presentation of Viladecans' case, all ON BORAD partners were asked to start planning their own communication strategy for the Educational Innovation Network. Participants dedicated time within city groups to reflect on the most suitable communication tools and consider the resources needed. They started drafting their own strategies. Below is a summary of the briefing sessions.

- **Tools, targets audiences and communication purposes**

The EIN Communication strategy should respond to a two-fold **objective**:

- a. Internal communication with the purpose of keeping all members updated and informed and feed them with new education contents and methods
- b. External communication, to disseminate the achievements of the Educational Innovation Network among non-members and broader city audiences

	Internal	External
Purpose/ Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate coordination of the core group - Inform members on newly generated contents - Keep communication channels open for feedback from Network members - Keep permanent interaction with local education agents - Encourage contributions - Strengthen sense of belonging to the learning community and shapes the Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise awareness in the City on educational innovation and Education 360º - Inform citizens of the EIN activities - Engage new members to the EIN - Give visibility of EIN members' communication actions - Show positive impact of education projects and EIN actions - Give arguments for fundraising - Link to other resources and agents within the City and elsewhere
Target	EIN stakeholders, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal Departments - Schools (Teachers, Heads, Principals) - Companies - Social, cultural, sports... entities - Parent's Associations/ Families - Experts/researchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-EIN schools in the city - Other new potential members - Citizens - Local/regional authorities - Other national and international audiences: cities, EU institutions, education networks

In terms of the methods and tools to be used, it is useful to understand how each type of communication tool/activity can contribute to a specific purpose;

- a. Keep education agents active and get their feedback
 In the first case, we will need tools to support collaboration relations; tools that make communication interactive. The use advantage of these tools is that we can target a smaller audience with potentially lower costs, and that it will help acquiring feedback. These methods require higher efforts and more time dedication but are much more effective and impactful.
- b. Disseminate a message
 In the second case we will require unilateral type of tools, to simply communicate messages. The advantages are that they can potentially target larger audiences at a lower cost and that they can rely on the credibility of the mass media. Very importantly too, they can be used as monitoring tools and for indicators (metrics).

Finally, each of the methods and tools included in the two above groups can be classified as Physical or Virtual. A summary of the tools and its purposes is below:

	Keeping activity & getting feedback	Reporting & spreading messages
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dialogues, Face-to-face conversation - Training - Group discussions - Informal gatherings - School visits on site - Round tables, meetings, conferences - Thematic/Network Meetings - Workshops, Open days - Exhibitions, Education/Youth Fairs - Demonstrations and prototypes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infographics - Newspapers and magazines - Press releases, Newsletters - Brochures, Booklets, Flyers, Letters - Posters, Stickers, Banners
Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website -webinars (with possibility of real time feedback/interaction) - Internet debates, World Cafes, Blogs.... - Telephone calls, e-mail information service (question and answer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online Newsletter - Website and blogs: videos, interviews, articles... - Intranet - Social media - Podcasts/interviews - Online PTs/Slideshare/Pinterest - Radio, Television, Video

- **Viladecans EIN communication strategy**

Viladecans introduced its own communication strategy. The presentation included the channels and platforms, both **physical** and **virtual**, to interact with EIN members in order to keep them informed, to share knowledge and projects, to present results and achievements, and to train and motivate their members and other city actors.

The Educational Innovation Network Coordinator, Joan Bassolas, and the Municipal Education Technical Officer, Clara Moreno, presented the EIN communication elements and reasons for choosing them. Key messages from the presentation:

- **Support is purely digital:**
 - The EIN does not have a **physical space**. Members meet in different spaces from Viladecans and they communicate online. This may be complemented in the future since the Council foresees establishing a tech library, which could be the physical educational reference spot in Viladecans.
 - During the implementation of the EIN, the communication and the digital strategy was developed with the professional support of [P.A.U Education](#). This is an organisation of expert teachers in new technologies using technological advances to help the teaching-learning process. They have a strong focus on integrating the tools to improve as much as possible the understanding and assimilation of all subjects taught in the classroom.

- **The goal is manifold:**
 - **Create a learning community** with a sense of **belonging**, with permanent interactions between the members of the different areas, for them to establish collaboration relations and make contributions on their own initiative.
 - **Be in the spotlight**, and get the attention of the entire educational world; local and throughout Catalunya.
 - Put the educational innovation in the centre of interest of the social agents.
 - Communicate in an **innovative way** that allows to identify the network as an expression of innovation. Also complement **institutional communication** in education by helping to value it.
- **Channels inform but also enable bi-directional communication:**
 - Web space www.viladecans.cat/XIE for all network members to access information and contents. Contains projects, interviews and ideas
 - Newsletter, with 1500 readers, for constant and periodic communication. It includes sections such as: General themes (description of activities or projects of the EIN in its day to day), relevant people on education sometimes linked to the EIN, activities and projects of the school centres,...
 - The EIN uses the City Council social media for a greater impact
 - Youtube channel, the EIN video repository youtube.com/FundacioViladecans. Videos can also be found at the City Council website (linked to the articles).

#Viladecans
 @ViladecansTweet
 @ViladecansCity
 —
 @OnBoardCities
 www.urbact.eu



- **Messages format**
 - **City Council Social Networks** using concise messages, with a direct and sticking language; use of emoticons and gifs
 - **Twitter** threads to explain more in depth content or interesting events in the city
 - **Sharing** content from other profiles related to the educational innovation field
 - **Attentive** to news for comments and new content generation
 - **Councillors** and the **Mayor** participate in messaging



- **Meeting points for keeping activity & getting feedback**

Besides using the virtual tools, the Educational Innovation Network started in the city with a series of meetings that helped set the strategic lines for the work to come. These key gatherings helped gain the interest and engagement of the educational community:





- October 2013: Kick off meeting and commissioning
- November 2014: Define the road map from 2014 to 2018
- Follow up meeting early 2020: Define the roadmap 2019 - 2023 and collect the steps made so far

- **Organisation and resources**

The staff dedication to the communication tasks is shared between the municipal staff (Dpts. of Communication and Education), and the staff from the Fundació Ciutat de Viladecans, where coordination is located:

Weekly dedicated time to edit videos, write an article for the Newsletter, record an interview:

- Joan Bassolas, Fundació Ciutat de Viladecans – Coordination - **30'**
- Clara Moreno, Department of Education – Relationship with the centres, contents development, video recording and web update - **4h**
- Jordi Castells, Fundació Ciutat de Viladecans– Editing, video recording and web update – **8h**
- Silvia Espin and Marta Salido, Department of Communication– Social networks and web update – **5h**

Camera	Canon EOS 80D	
Microphone	Rode lavalier	
Tripod	Manfrotto	
Program used for the videos' edition	Final Cut	

- **Communications development and adjustments**

The two speakers from Viladecans also reviewed the main changes that the communication strategy has undergone to adapt to the strategic communication approaches of the Council. The most important change in Communication, since the Network inception has been the site migration from a stand alone and unlinked webpage www.xieviladecans.cat to www.viladecans.cat/xie, a webpage embedded within the municipal website.

This move responded to the need of making it visibly part of the comprehensive educational strategy of the City.

- **Monitoring indicators for the Communication strategy of Viladecans EIN:**

- Youtube Channel Fundació Viladecans: 263 subscribers + 226 videos posted since 2014
- Newsletter: 1.475 subscriptions
- Webpage: The most visited pages include the Blog articles as well as the section on the innovative Eduprojects in the local centres.

- **Tips and recommendations**

After the presentation of Viladecans Communication model for the EIN, the PP are asked to start planning their own strategies according to the main elements introduced by Viladecans and taking into account potential features considered at the initial presentation:

- a. Resources available: human, technical, economic
- b. Model: Centralised / Decentralised / Externalised
- c. Structure: organisation and staff
- d. Objective/s: purpose/s of communication
- e. Target audiences: internal / external
- f. Channels: physical / virtual / personal
- g. Additional resources needed

On Board Checklist

Educational Innovation Network Communications. The backbone of the Learning Community of Practice

- ✓ *Allow both virtual and physical communication spaces, in particular, meet personally the educational champions at the inception stages of the Educational Innovation Network to create a sense of belonging and make them feel co-responsible of the city-wide project.*
- ✓ *Create a solid image, be consistent in terms of communication messages, timing, approach... become a reliable referent as an educational information source.*
- ✓ *Promote the visibility of members, validate the members of the Educational Innovation Network and create champions and leading roles.*
- ✓ *Allow involvement of authorities in posting messages, encouraging participation, tweeting...*
- ✓ *Use communication tools to strengthen the sense of community and partnership in local education.*
- ✓ *Besides information and dissemination, use communication as a means of capacitating the educational community. Involve experts in contents development.*
- ✓ *Create incentives to help you communicate, disseminate, retweet...*
- ✓ *Review and rethink as needed the communication strategy and tools to adapt to new objectives and next stages of the EIN.*

8. Peer review on the advancement of Network implementation

Although a comprehensive review survey and session was planned towards the Mid Term Review Meeting in Tallinn (EE) in December, all PP shared the initial difficulties in pair groups concerning the governance and resources dedicated to build their respective Educational Innovation Networks. Topics addressed in pairs included:

- Main aspects raised in terms of difficulties in building the EIN:

Topic	Comments/difficulties	
Educational Innovation Network level of formalisation	Difficulties in finding a structure that sustains the Network in time	The issue of sustainability will be addressed in TM5 (Poznan) since this is a growing concern and also an improvement topic for the Lead Partner. The group will propose and discuss different models, possibilities and support elements that facilitate the continuity of the EIN beyond the ON BOARD project
Educational Innovation Network staff and functions	Missing the leading person to coordinate the project Lack of staff dedication time to the Network project	Still some cities rely on the staff from the municipal department of education, who already have ordinary staff duties. This needs to be considered since, the activity of the Educational Innovation Network entails time dedication in sharing, project implementation, training facilitation and communication.
Membership	Missing stakeholders as members of the EIN, i.e. non-formal education entities, the University, Cultural entities	The ON BOARD project still has some Transnational Meetings ahead that will address other local stakeholders, Tallinn dedicated to local entities and Poznan dedicated to Families and Students. The group will debate and learn about ways to engage more local agents in the Network
Pilot Projects Progress	Selected projects but not fully prepared for implementation	Some PP are experiencing a certain delay in the starting of the pilot projects but are confident in their implementation and the use of these first testing initiatives
Resources	Lack of resources to establish and formalise the network Lack of time to develop joint work and plans with other Network Members	At a later stage of the Network project, the group will address the different possibilities of accessing alternative funds to the public budget for innovative projects. An external expertise support will be sought.
Indicators	All PP except the Lead Partner are experiencing some delay in developing the local indicators for the Network	Viladecans introduced their own experience to develop educational indicators for the city (not only the Educational Innovation Network impact). Nonetheless, the process is still in course and is expected to be finished beginning 2020 before being submitted for political approval.