

SUMMARY

The Escola de Música-Centre de les Arts (EMCA) a tool for urban social cohesion through the development of the arts

L'Hospitalet is a city neighboring Barcelona, which has grown in three waves of migration. At present, with 262,798 inhabitants it is Catalonia's second city, with 28% of its population born abroad and with some of the city's neighborhoods where the non-EU population exceeds 40%, and where according to Eurostat the [European Union's highest urban density](#) is reached (53.119 inhabitants per km²).

The EMCA L'Hospitalet uses the arts as an instrument of cohesion, social mixing and enhancing academic achievement in more economically deprived areas. With this objective, which has been



operating for 12 years, work is carried out in a new 21st-century educational-facility model, combining education for all citizens and intervention in schools in the city's most disadvantaged neighborhoods, providing positive effects on academic achievement, integrating pupils with a migratory background, and their equal opportunities.

This process reaches completion when, following continual intervention within the school timetable, pupils decide to continue practicing music, dance or theatre at the Music School. They have no economic barriers there – with discounts for those lacking funds – and they come into contact with other students of the same age who got into the arts encouraged by their families. The art ensembles underpin the real cohesion between citizens from all cultural backgrounds and in all economic circumstances offering spaces to get together and share identity among communities in a way not naturally occurring in the city



The community-based arts education has made it possible to increase these pupils' academic success, strengthening and involving non-EU communities in particular who are have fewer social roots in the city. The Local Authority provides the instruments – meaning poverty is no obstacle to playing an instrument or having dance gear available – families get closer the school and the city's venues, drawn by performances their children are in, forging connections that will counter social exclusion for economic or cultural reasons, and creating community spaces making each concert a community celebration.



The EMCA manages to involve a significant share of citizens from throughout the city last academic year, 339 concerts took place with an audience of 33,900 people.

Infrastructure is also important, and the site of the EMCA itself is located in an area that was subject to intervention within the framework of the ERDF's Urban Projects Initiative along with the eight schools taking part, creating a major network of cultural infrastructure capable of revitalizing their environment.

Projects such as the 'Music School - Arts Centre' (EMCA) allow culture to be placed at the centre of cities' social change, to bolster links between their citizens, boosting cohesion and tackling issues of getting along and urban segregation.

Some of the main indicators of the EMCA's results and impact are:

2005-2015 results data:

- ⇒ **Activities 2005-2015:** 50,000 persons (pupils and participants in community projects).
- ⇒ **Participants in schools program 2005-2015:** 1,750 pupils in the 8 participating schools.
- ⇒ **EMCA staff:** 56 professionals
- ⇒ **Pupils receiving assistance:** 43%
- ⇒ **Pupils hiring instruments:** 63%
- ⇒ **Art stable ensembles:** 7 gipsy jazz groups, 18 pop-rock bands, 6 big bands, 3 theatre companies, 1 folk music group, 5 percussion groups, 1 world music group, 2 wind groups, 1 brass band, 3 string groups, 1 ukulele orchestra, 1 symphonic orchestra, and 1 gospel choir

Impact data (2015-2016 academic year)

The schools taking part in the programmes have academic success 10 points higher than the remainder of the city's other schools with similar characteristics, and two points above the total average of all schools in Catalonia. Various studies (McBrien, 2011) reveal that musical education in schools boosts pupils' autonomy and responsibility, a sense of being a group, and helps improve basic skills particularly mathematics:

- ⇒ **Academic success in high-complexity schools* taking part in the programme:** 81%
- ⇒ **Academic success of high-complexity schools* not taking part in the programme:** 71%
- ⇒ **Academic success of all educational schools in Catalonia:** 78%

*High-complexity schools are those earmarked by government of Catalonia as requiring special educational resources due to their low socio-economic or socio-cultural level.

Important milestones

- ⇒ [Nit de Santa Llúcia](#) issued by TV3 tv channel, December 2016
- ⇒ Django Festival Liberchies (Belgium), May 2016
- ⇒ European Youth Music Festival "Emusik." Sant Sebastian, May 2016
- ⇒ International Gipsy Festival, Tilburg (Netherlands), May-June 2015
- ⇒ Tribute to Terry Riley, music and dance *In C Chrysalis* at Mercat de les Flors, May 2015



⇒ "[Et toca a tu](#)" with the professional OBC Orquesta. L'Auditori. March 2015



⇒ Recording of the song "[El cor que ara es trenca](#)" with Antonio Orozco, of the disc La Marató de TV3 2014 (215,000 copies sold). Telethon to support the research of heart disease. December 2014

- ⇒ Festival "[Ciutat Flamenco](#)", a tribute to Carmen Amaya. Mercat de les Flors, May 2013
- ⇒ "[II Jornades Educació avui](#)" Jaume Bofill Foundation. CCCB February 2014.
- ⇒ European Youth Music Festival "Allegromosso." Italy, May 2012
- ⇒ Opening of the Sonar festival in L'Auditori June 2011

Prizes and awards



- ⇒ Second prize at the Le Monde-Smart cities "Urban innovation awards" in the cultural action category 2017
- ⇒ Selected for Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation Call "Art Citizen" to be helped in financing the project. April 2016
- ⇒ "Conviure a Catalunya" prize of the Association of Former Members of the Parliament of Catalonia. Barcelona, April 2015.
- ⇒ Finalist Cercle d'Economia Foundation prize. Barcelona, May 2011