

## JOURNAL

## PROJECT

WISH MI - Wellbeing  
Integrated System of  
Milan

📍 Milan, Italy

## TOPIC

Urban poverty

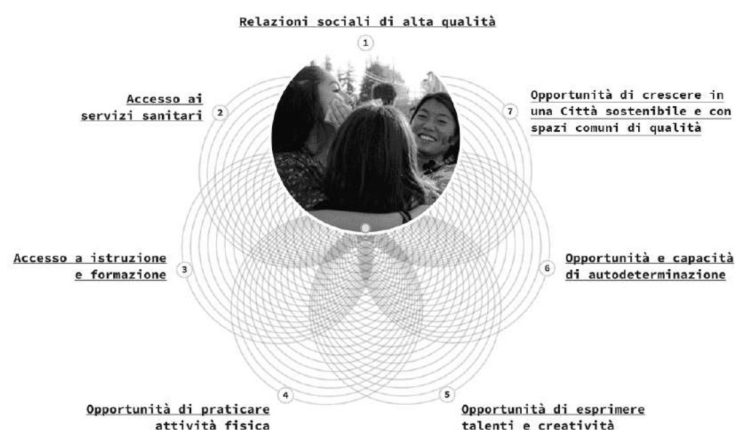
EDIT 25 JUNE 2021

BY EDDY ADAMS, UIA

EXPERT

# WISH-MI Journal 1

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Milan is a city of 1.4 million people, 230,000 of whom are minors. It has a wide and growing rate of inequality, with 30% of its population either in or at risk of poverty. In 2018 one in ten young Milanese (21,000) lived in absolute poverty, and many of them lack access to the facilities and opportunities that might improve their future situation. It is likely that the pandemic has worsened this situation for many.

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# 1. Why is the city of Milan developing a wellbeing strategy for young people?

## 1.1. The scenario for Milan's young people

The city of Milan has 1.4 million inhabitants, 230,000 of whom are minors. Although it is the powerhouse of the national economy, Milan has a wide and growing rate of inequality. Average and median income levels are higher than the Italian average, however the gap between the better and worse off is widening. The Gini index for Milan is 53.2% compared to a national rate of 38.2% nationally. Almost one third (30%) of the city residents are at risk of poverty<sup>[1]</sup>.

The City of Milan is concerned about how this affects its young people, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Although the data is imperfect, they illustrate the scale and impact of poverty and inequality on minors. In 2018, 1 in 10 lived in absolute poverty, amounting to over 21,000 young people. These figures are likely to be an underestimate and will have risen as a result of the COVID pandemic.

Further scrutiny of the available data helps paint a picture that is complex and fast-moving. For example, it has been clear for some time that the traditional Italian family structure is changing. 45% of Milan's households comprise one person, which is indicative of the growth in the proportion of older people, and the preference of growing numbers of citizens to live alone. At the same time, 11% of the city's households are single parents whilst between 2021 and 2016 there was a 26% rise in marriages amongst divorcees, creating reconstituted families. In short, the traditional extended Italian family structure with close ties is now much less common.

This dynamic rate of churn is impacting upon young people in a way that is not yet fully understood. However, it is likely that social fragmentation and familial shifts are creating a climate of uncertainty and emotional tension for children. Again, the ongoing pandemic period is only adding to this.

These tectonic societal changes affect all young people, but particularly those with lower levels of social capital and resilience. For the most vulnerable, the situation is worsened by unequal access to educational opportunities. This is most evident in those priority areas with high levels of deprivation and rising rates of diversity. For example, Milan data from December 2019 identified 14,680 children aged between 0 and 6 not accessing any educational provision.

City education data confirms a phenomenon where white Italian families are leaving these neighbourhoods, effectively creating a segregated school system. 56 schools in the city (32 primary and 24 secondary) have been identified as having high failure rates as a result of this phenomenon.

In some neighbourhoods, migrant children account for 40% of the school roll [\[2\]](#) The data also show that these children have a 117% higher probability of dropping out of the education system, compared to the average city rate of 10.6%.

However, it is not only schools that prepare children for a fulfilling adult life. The European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC) has recently produced one of many reports [\[3\]](#) confirming the benefits of extra-curricular activities and non-formal education. However, the most marginalised children are also disadvantaged here. In Milan, many of them grow up with parents who have low levels of educational qualifications, basic Italian language skills and little understanding of the public support system. This includes low awareness of the wider range of cultural and recreational facilities that help young people identify their talents and which provide a balanced approach to childhood development.

## 1.2 Milan's ambition

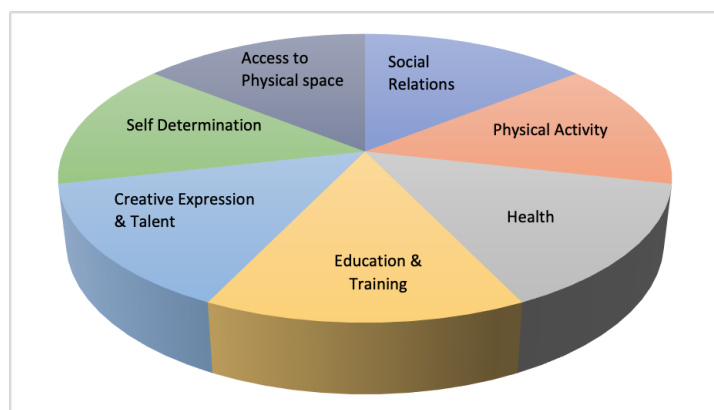
The City of Milan has acknowledged the need to address this situation. It has concluded that without focused, active intervention the situation for its youth will only worsen, with potentially long-term negative consequences. The city has also acknowledged the need for a radical approach, on the basis that incremental change is unlikely to be sufficient to avoid the worst case scenario. So, what does this look like?

The city's ambition, spearheaded by the WISH-MI project, starts with the acknowledgment that the current service offer to young people in need and their families is fragmented. Evolved over many years it is predicated on a model where each department has its own priorities, budgets and targets. The culture can broadly be described as 'top down' where public officials determine the shape and scale of available support packages. Over time, this has created a system which is labyrinthine, hard to navigate and often inefficient. It also creates a service-user experience which is passive and disengaged.

WISH-MI aims to tackle this in an ambitious way to improve the life-chances of all young people in the city. This will involve a holistic approach to the concept of youth wellbeing, that is described further below. The approach is underpinned by four goals:

1. Rethink and redesign city policies and services for young people, so they are delivered seamlessly across departmental silos
2. Increase minors' opportunities to access wellbeing services
3. Establish Physical and online platforms to facilitate access to integrated service provision
4. Create mechanisms to enable the city authority to listen to children and families in order to promote service co-design.

The overall aim is to improve the wellbeing of the city's children, comprising the following pillars.



Source: The 2020 Integrated Wellbeing System Strategic Plan, City of Milan

In the following section we explore the city's approach to measuring results relating to these.

## 1.3 The wider EU context

The United Nations (UN) has established the global framework for humankind's priorities through its [Sustainable Development Goals](#). This call to leave no-one behind places particular emphasis on supporting the most marginalised and vulnerable. Children are specifically identified amongst these, and the SDG framework puts them at the top of the agenda.

All 17 of the SDG domains relate to children. The top five (No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Wellbeing, Quality Education and Gender Equality) are particularly pertinent, and consistent with the priorities of WISH-MI.

Sadly, despite the EU's relative wealth, we remain far from achieving these goals for our children. The most recent

Eurostat data shows that Europe's children are more likely to be living in poverty than adults. In 2019 an estimated 22.5% of minors were at risk of poverty compared to 21.5% of working-age adults and 18.6% of older people (65+).

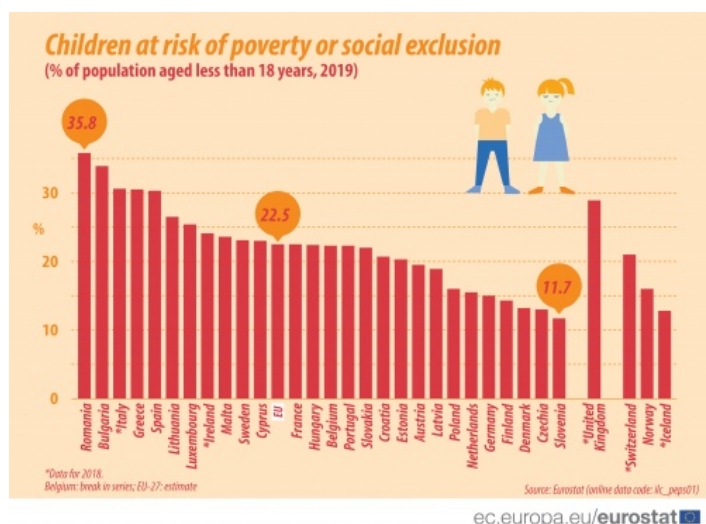


Chart 1: Source, Eurostat

As chart 1 shows, children in Italy were behind only Romania and Bulgaria in terms of national data. [Eurostat analysis](#) identified a number of factors influencing the risk of poverty which included:

- Household composition – for example family size, single parent families etc
- Employment situation
- Levels of parental education
- Migrant background

Although the situation remains highly fluid across Europe, available data suggests that the pandemic has worsened the situation for many young people. In fact, they seem to be amongst the most affected sections of the general population.

For those young people in the labour market, the pandemic has had profound consequences. Recent [analysis](#) shows that youth unemployment rates rose in the final quarter of 2020 whilst remaining unchanged for older workers. The fact that young people are overrepresented in sectors badly hit by the pandemic – such as travel, retail and hospitality – helps explain this.

The impact has been no less profound in other aspects of young people's lives. Unprecedented disruption to the education system is a notable case. As schools closed and learning shifted online, those children with comfortable home environments, parents with high social capital and the latest digital tools were best equipped to manage this turbulence.

Schools are also places of interaction and young people's social networks have also been badly affected during this period, seemingly with significant consequences, at least in the short term according to the [Eurofound Living and Working with COVID-19 survey](#). The absence of social interaction seems to have disproportionately affected the mental health of Europe's young people. In April 2020, 55% of youth were at risk of depression compared to 48% of the general population. They also recorded higher than general rates of anxiety (22% against 18%) and higher levels of loneliness and pessimism.

Stepping back to take account of the bigger picture, EU urban policy had already acknowledged the key structural challenges that the pandemic has clearly exposed. The [New Leipzig Charter](#) acknowledged the risk of widening inequalities in Europe's cities already identified by the EU's [Urban Agenda Partnership on Poverty](#). The latter places particular emphasis on the need to tackle child poverty in its final Action Plan and recommended the establishment of a European Child Guarantee. At the EU level the new [Cohesion Policy](#) Priority Objectives also underline the importance of resources directly targeted at a 'More Social Europe'.

In the new EU programming period the Cohesion Fund will be complemented by the EU's [Recovery and Resilience Facility](#) (RRF). Each of the EU27 Member States is submitting a plan detailing how its share of these resources will be used. For example, the Italian RRF Plan totals €191.5 billion, structured around six areas: digitalisation, innovation, competitiveness and culture; green revolution and ecological transition; infrastructure for sustainable mobility; education and research; cohesion and inclusion; health.

It is against this challenging macro context for Europe's children that Milan has launched its wellbeing strategy for minors.

## 2: How will WISH-MI improve the wellbeing of Milan's young people?

### 2.1: What do we mean by wellbeing?

There are many existing definitions of wellbeing. For example, the World Health Organisation (WHO) defines it as:

"a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"

This holistic notion is reflected in the working definition of the term being used by the WISH-MI project:

"Dynamic and bio-psycho-social condition of maximum possible health for the subject in relation to their living conditions, the living environment and the possibility of determining and maintaining the very condition of well-being."

Two dimensions to this are factored into Milan's approach. The first relates to the perception of the individual, in terms of their sense of wellbeing vis a vis the seven pillars of the WISHMI project. Implied within this is the extent to which the individual has a sense of control over these factors through participation in collective activity. This first factor is therefore internal and intrinsic to the individual.

The second dimension relates to the external conditions which also have an effect on the first. This includes the provision of local services, spaces and social networks that can promote this positive sense of wellbeing, and young people's access to them.

WISH-MI comprises a set of actions designed to trigger a systemic shift that will have positive results in relation to the sense of wellbeing amongst the city's young people. The city's focus on youth wellbeing is, in itself, groundbreaking with significant implications. For example, from the public service perspective, it cuts across those established policy silos which can often lead to fragmented service provision. It is also important to underline that this is proposed as a universal offer. WISH-MI is not a model which targets (and often stigmatises) specific social groups. All young people have the right to this offer, regardless of their socio-economic situation, their residential status, neighbourhood, gender or health profile.

### 2.2: What does WISH-MI look like on the ground?

The operational dimension of the project is shaped by four clear goals:

1. Rethink and redesign public-funded services to attain a more integrated and streamlined approach to promoting youth wellbeing in the city

*In practice this means moving towards a more collaborative culture with shared budgets, targets and activity across departments and between organisations.*

2. Increase the number of minors who have access to wellbeing support in Milan

*This means ensuring that young people and their advocates are aware of the wide range of services available under WISH-MI's 7 pillars, that they understand their entitlement to these and can easily access them. Implicit in this is the need to ensure that those facilities have been tailored to the needs of their service users.*

3. Establish integrated spaces (physical and online) to encourage access to services

*This means experimenting with the composition of these holistic integrated services. This will require thinking about what's available and how it is provided – whether in a physical or digital setting. The pandemic period has generated much thought around remote-service provision and this intelligence can be applied to the design of these facilities, alongside the active input from young people.*

4. Improve the capacity to listen to the voices of young people and their families whilst building their capacity as active citizens

*This goal represents a step change in the city authority's relationship with young people. Achieving it would require capacity building aimed at service providers as well as with young people and their advocates. It would also mean rewiring the communication channels between minors and the city authority. The co-design of a visual identity for WISH-MI, discussed below, represents an important part of this.*

Four headline actions are being put in place to deliver these WISH-MI goals. These are:

### **1.City authority restructuring: reshaping policies, structures and the strategic approach to wellbeing services**

An important dimension of WISH-MI is to reframe the way in which investment decisions are made and implemented in relation to Milan's young people. This package of actions will include the establishment of a new governance model, new ways to combine and assign resources and the introduction of new performance metrics.

The aim is not to create a temporary experiment, after which everything returns to how it was before. Instead, these actions are designed to demonstrate the art of the possible, creating organisational precedents that can be scaled and replicated within the wider city authority.

### **2.The co-design of a visual identity for WISH-MI**

In the case of WISH-MI, the visual identity is not a cosmetic afterthought or an example of superficial branding masking a 'business as usual' approach. Instead, this element of work represents an integral component of the project, which is baked in from the start and designed as a clear signal of intent for the primary audience – the young people of Milan.

### **3.The development of a participatory digital platform**

WISH-MI intends to create an online one-stop shop for the wide range of wellbeing opportunities available to young people in the city. The idea is to create a comprehensive offer that extends beyond those services funded through the city authority. The platform's structure and functionality will be co-designed with young people but it is envisaged that the components will include:

- A marketplace to match supply and demand for services
- A digital play space, using gamification to engage young people and introducing a digital voucher scheme to allow them to purchase services, as well as to offer the potential to offer services to others
- A space for young people to be heard
- A mechanism to gather feedback and to monitor service usage

### **4.The design and establishment of 7 wellbeing community hubs**

The digital space will be complemented by the establishment of a network of community hubs hosting services and providing physical space for innovative service design in local neighbourhoods.

Although the pandemic has delayed the initial implementation of this action, work has been undertaken and the key points from this are shared in the following section.

## **2.3: The focus of activity in the initial period**

Milan, like all parts of Europe, was badly affected by the pandemic from the early spring of 2020, with the city recording the highest number of cases (269,728) in Italy to date (31st May 2021). The closure of government agencies, businesses and the impact on the city's economic and social life had a profound effect on the initial project implementation period. As a consequence, WISH-MI is behind its original delivery schedule, with core elements – such as outreach activity, community engagement work and the procurement of key contracts – all affected.

However, the speed of implementation is picking up and in the meantime WISH-MI has pushed ahead with the delivery of key actions under each of its four operational areas. The headlines from these are set out in this section.

### **City authority restructuring: reshaping policies, structures and the strategic approach to wellbeing services**

Although the WISH-MI concept pre-dated the pandemic, there are hopeful signs that it might provide a beacon for public service redesign in the recovery period. As in most places, COVID-19 exposed weaknesses in existing service provision, prompting an increased focus on the development of better integrated public sector provision.

Senior decision makers in Milan City Authority have identified the WISH-MI model as one to support and build upon, as a potential demonstrator across the municipality. A national government fund targeted at minors has allocated €19m to the city of Milan, and the new governance model established through WISH-MI has provided the vehicle to assign these resources. This model comprises a newly established Personal Care Services Coordination Board, chaired by the Director of the Social Policy Department.

This new structure includes the relevant wellbeing services which sit across the city authority's departmental structure. Through this mechanism, Milan will encourage working across departmental silos, with this initial

funding package providing an initial platform.



Figure 1: Source, City of Milan

This structure - and the approach it represents – has been articulated in a Deliberation which stipulates the embedding of the WISH-MI Strategic Plan in the city's 'Piano di Zona 2021-23', which is a key programming document in relation to the city's social policies. At the time of writing, the deliberation is about to be signed.

Recognising the need to build staff capacity to support this shift in operating practice, an important next step is a range of training services aimed at relevant city authority staff.

#### **The co-design of a visual identity for WISH-MI**

As we've already noted, the visual identity for WISH-MI is regarded as a key component of the overall approach. This goes beyond simply creating a brand that is eye-catching for young people. Cosimo Palazzo, Milan's Social Policy Director explains it like this:

"For us, the digital identity is a statement of intent. It is not just for us, the city authority, but must be something that creates a much wider sense of ownership in the project. And this is something we have to do at the start: it can't be some cosmetic communication afterthought. That's why we're doing it now – which to some may seem a bit strange – and why it's so important that we involve young people in the right way, from the very beginning."

The plan is to fully engage young people in this design process. However, like many participative approaches, the impact of the pandemic has meant that this dimension is running behind schedule. But, digital alternatives have been examined and tested, and in the spring of 2021 some initial engagement work was undertaken.

Fortunately, COVID19 has had much less effect on the other early dimension of this work, which comprised an extensive review of effective visual branding aimed at young people. This activity, conducted by the Communication Design for Welfare (DCxW) team at the Politecnico di Milano, assumed a global perspective. Using WISH-MI's 7 pillars to frame their scanning activity, the team has identified a deep seam of materials which will be used to inform the design of Milan's own visual identity.

#### **The development of a participatory digital platform**

The city is now pushing ahead with this element of WISH-MI after initial procurement delays due to the pandemic. A co-design process for the digital platform is under way, involving young people, families, social professionals and service providers. The city's emphasis is on listening to stakeholder perspectives on:

- User typologies
- Service clusters
- The 'phygital' (physical and digital) user experience
- The user interface, within the wider communication and visual identity system

The WISH-MI objectives provide the framework for this co-design activity. In terms of service clusters, five themes are emerging:

- School +
- Sport
- Health
- ART
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)

An open call to refine and package these is being let in July 2021, while the co-design activity continues. At the same time, development work is under way around the platform itself, with the City of Milan [\[4\]](#) designing the overall specification and leading on the development of the first two functionalities which will be the digital marketplace and the voucher system. This is scheduled to go live in September with other functionalities, such as gaming, coming onstream in 2022.

### **The design and establishment of 7 wellbeing community hubs**

Work has already been conducted to segment Milan's youth population in order to help shape the design of both the digital and physical facilities. The focus and approach remain universal and open to all. However, the needs of a 6-year-old differ from those of someone aged 15. Other factors will also help WISH-MI design and refine its service offer so that it best meets the needs of what is a diverse user base.

At the highest level, the city has developed a paradigm, illustrated below, to inform the design of its user framework. This identifies four age categories (including NEETs aged 15-29) as well as applying three key transversal aspects.

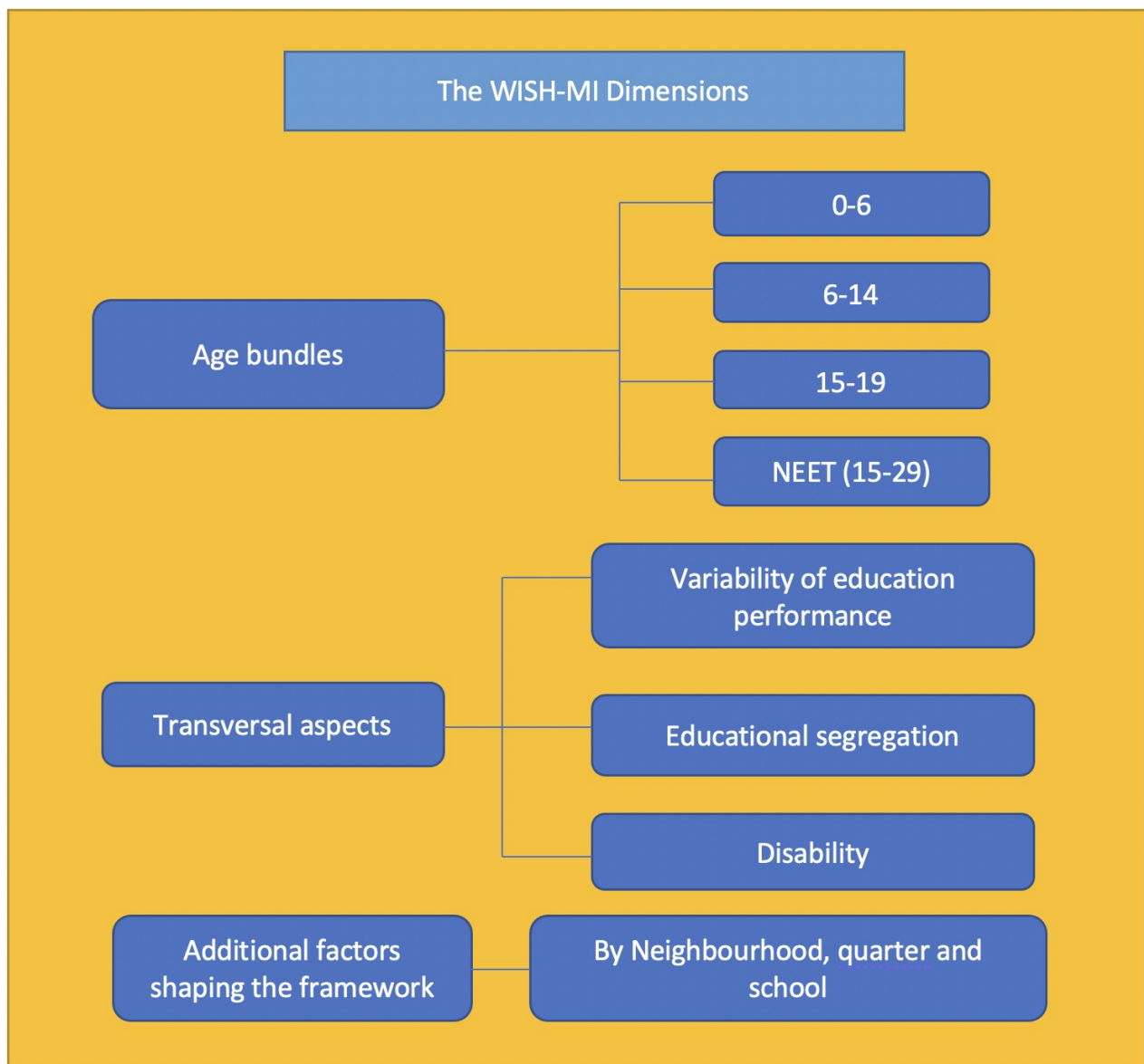


Figure 2: Source, City of Milan, Strategic Plan for youth wellbeing, 2020

This framework is complemented by a set of indicators assigned to each age group as well as to the three transversal groups, as shown in Annex 1.

Applying this framework, WISH-MI partners have started building a profile of the youth population in three selected city neighbourhoods (Padova and Loreto, Comasina and Bruzzano and Ponte Lambro). These neighbourhoods have been chosen as the locations of the initial 3 WISH-MI community hubs, with a further 4 to be identified. The neighbourhoods were selected from a long list, using criteria such as the level of existing institutional relationships, local partnership models and a mapping of existing services for young children. Two priority factors influenced the final selection: Neighbourhoods with some existing service provision but below 'saturation' point and the availability of a physical space to accommodate the community hub.

Milan aims to draw upon effective approaches to youth co-design across Europe. To this end the city hosted a [webinar](#) with this focus, showcasing examples from Rotterdam, Athens and Finnish cities.



Figure 2: Source, City of Milan, Strategic Plan for youth wellbeing, 2020

## 3: The UIA implementation challenges

UIA has identified 7 implementation challenges linked to urban innovation. These are generic, cutting across all policy areas, and in each journal we will reflect on WISH-MI's activities in relation to these.

### 3.1 Leadership

Systemic innovation creates winners and losers. Whilst those wedded to existing structures are fearful of change, others welcome the opportunity to shake up and improve them. Supportive leadership makes a significant difference to innovations aiming to disrupt the status quo.

Although affected by the pandemic, WISH-MI has benefitted in this initial period from strong leadership within Milan City Authority. Timing appears to have been a factor here, as the principal dimensions of the UIA project reflect the aspirations of senior decision-makers to address service fragmentation and other challenges exposed by the COVID crisis. The timely availability of national funds earmarked for young people has provided further impetus.

The Director of Milan's Social Policy Department has championed the model and has supported WISH-MI's strategic plan to have a high profile within the city's 'Piano di Zona 2021-23.' This message from the top is no doubt helpful, as is the energetic leadership provided by the city's Social Policy Director. Going forward, some of the key questions under this challenge will include:

- How do we sustain senior level commitment to the project?
- How do we create an effective leadership structure across policy areas?
- How do embed support so that we proof the project against changes of personnel?
- What does WISH-MI tell us about the type of leadership required to drive complex innovation projects in large city administrations?

### 3.2 Public procurement

For many years public procurement was widely perceived as an administrative procedure that inhibited

innovation. Slowly, this is shifting, as the scale and power of public procurement is seen as a key mechanism to encourage innovation, for example in relation to environmental and social-justice challenges.

At this stage, the city of Milan has not designed and let as many service contracts as anticipated, due to the delays created by the pandemic. However, as the situation changes some early messages are emerging. One is the need for a new and bespoke service offer, for example around the capacity-building for city authority staff. Another, linked to this, is the limitations on the existing supplier base and the need to adopt a creative approach from the outset to this kind of service commissioning.

Some important questions relating to procurement will soon be at the forefront of the project's agenda, such as:

- How can we design a service specification that provides an adequate framework whilst also allowing the provider to build innovation into the proposal and eventual contract?
- How can we reflect our principles of co-design and user-participation in our procurement process?

### **3.3 Cross-departmental working**

WISH-MI forms the vanguard of Milan's ambition to support working across policy silos. As such, it should not be regarded as a 'project' but as a proto-type which will be tested and embedded for others to follow. To succeed, the structures to enable this must be in place from the start. It is therefore encouraging to see the establishment of this new permanent multi-disciplinary team that forms the nucleus of the WISH-MI operation.

However, as we have already noted, systemic change creates winners and losers. Consequently, there is often resistance to such shifts, not uncommonly from middle-management who perceive themselves as being at risk. As experienced professionals, they often know how to 'play the game' and their approach to subverting innovation is often subtle, hidden by a superficial enthusiasm for the project.

- How can WISH-MI anticipate and respond to the resistance it is likely to face from some quarters?
- How can staff across departments be supported to work in different ways?
- What incentives can be built into the performance appraisal framework to encourage and reward changed behaviours and working practices?
- What indicators will be used to measure progress?

These are some of the initial project questions relating to this central aspect of the WISH-MI model.

### **3.4 Participative approach for co-implementation**

A central ambition of WISH-MI is to transform the relationship between Milan's young people and the publicly-funded service providers they engage with. This is another facet of the initiative seeking to be 'more than a project' and to catalyse a lasting effect across the city. No one can doubt that this commitment sits at the heart of WISH-MI.

The operational expression of this has been limited by the project delays already discussed. This has led to some frustration within the delivery team, which has only managed to undertake preliminary parts of this work. On the plus side, it has allowed additional time to scope out effective approaches that can help shape Milan's own participative process with young people and their advocates.

In the coming months, as this strand of activity takes off, key questions will include:

- How can we design appropriate co-design methods for minors across the age spectrum?
- How do we ensure that the most vulnerable and marginalised young people in Milan can genuinely help shape service provision?
- How can the WISH-MI partners collaborate with trusted youth organisations to engage harder to reach sections of the young population?
- What mechanisms can be used to support sustained youth engagement and ongoing co-design?

### **3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Innovation is not an end in itself. In the context of urban policy, it aims to achieve better results, optimising the use of our resources. Evidence of impact is therefore central to any UIA project's success, and it is advisable to 'start with the end in mind', by establishing a clear monitoring and evaluation framework from the beginning<sup>[6]</sup>.

In this respect WISH-MI confronts a number of challenges. The first relates to timescales. As the project targets minors, the effect of its interventions may not be easily measured within the relatively short lifespan of the UIA project. The second relates to data. Although we live in an age of abundant data, it is not always possible to gather and package this in the way we would like – for example in terms of timeframes and territorial levels. The third relates to the challenge of attributing impact to the project's interventions at an individual level.

Notwithstanding these, WISH-MI has created a framework based around the project's 7 pillars. As we have noted, it has segmented the city's youth population by age and other factors, and work is now under way to create a baseline snapshot, drawing upon existing data sources. This cuts across the key domains of health, education and social policy. A suite of indicators (shown in Annex 1) has been generated for each age cohort.

An initial report on the preliminary quantitative analysis was submitted in February 2021 and further baselining work, including primary research within communities, is in the early stages as the world re-opens after the pandemic.

Leaving aside the methodological challenges already considered, key questions for us to revisit in future journals will include:

- How useful has existing data been to provide the baseline analysis for WISH-MI?
- Where have the gaps been and how has the project addressed these?
- How will WISH-MI measure the effectiveness of its digital and physical facilities?

### **3.6 Communication with target beneficiaries and users**

Some innovation projects adopt an under the radar approach. Through this, they hope to avoid too much attention, enabling them to disarm opponents and, if successful, present results which make the case for change. As we have already seen, this is not the WISH-MI model.

The prominence of the project's visual identity activity, together with its front-loading within the project set out what has been described as a 'statement of intent.' This assertive approach to communication has a number of advantages. First of all, it makes a clear ambitious commitment, and it also makes a splash. It is deliberately attention-seeking, suggesting a confidence that will make it hard to ignore.

On the other hand it is not an approach without risks. Inevitably it creates a high level of expectation, most notably amongst young people who are the primary audience. Managing this may create challenges ahead, particularly if things develop more slowly than young people expect. Another risk is that the boldness of WISH-MI's approach will provide an early warning signal to those less in favour of the project. Any prospects of stealth have already been blown, giving the doubters and sceptics more time to prepare their defence.

On the ground, there are other aspects to this UIA challenge. With regard to the visual identity, the audience for this includes the savviest of brand consumers. As digital natives, bombarded with sophisticated messaging from birth, these young people have a sixth sense when being sold to. They also have highly attuned antennae for most well-intentioned public campaigns designed to 'get down with the kids. In other words, they will be hard to please.

Flipping this over, many innovation projects approach communication as a distant afterthought, an accusation that can't be levelled at Milan. Placing this issue at the heart of its work presents some challenges but is, on balance, a pre-requisite to achieving its overarching goal.

The area will remain one for close scrutiny in future journals, and key questions will include:

- What co-design methods have most helped shape the visual identity of the project?
- What range of media was employed to communicate the visual identity?
- How effective was the visual identity in helping WISH-MI achieve its goals?
- How did the project measure the impact and effectiveness of its visual identity work?

### **3.7 Upscaling**

UIA projects are funded as experiments that can influence change across Europe. From the start, it is therefore helpful to consider the scope for upscaling, transfer and replication. How can we apply the lessons from this work on a larger scale? How can a successful project be adapted and replicated in other cities?

There is a defined scope to WISH-MI: it targets young people using publicly funded services; its focus on wellbeing comprises a limited set of city authority departments and policy areas; it initially adopts a focus on specific

neighbourhoods for the location of its physical spaces. Clearly, within Milan itself, there is potential to scale the lessons of a successful project in each of these respects. As the principal challenge will be familiar to cities across Europe – and indeed beyond – there is also scope for replication and transfer of a successful model.

In relation to this challenge, future journal questions will include:

- Can Milan's approach to young people be applied to other sections of the city's population? If so, how?
- How can the cross-departmental model be scaled across the entire city administration?
- How can the limited territorial scope of WISH-MI's physical spaces be extended to other parts of the city?
- What are the resource implications of these potential upscaling goals?

## 4. Next Steps

This initial journal provides a baseline snapshot of the WISH-MI project. Its publication is later than planned, reflecting the frustrating start through the pandemic period. However, as we have noted, COVID19 has exposed many of the structural weaknesses already identified by WISH-MI and, as such, has validated its focus and goals.

Looking ahead, future journals will track the implementation of the project on a regular basis. This will provide an opportunity to scrutinise specific dimension of WISH-MI, as well as to home in on the way it addresses the implementation challenges set out in the previous section.

### Annex 1: WISH-MI Group indicators

#### *Indicators by Age Cluster*

| Age clusters  | Analysis indicators  |
|---|--|
| <b>0-5 years old</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access and participation in educational services</li> <li>• Access and participation in health services</li> <li>• Access to psychological wellbeing services</li> <li>• Participation in free-time activities: recreational, cultural, sporting etc</li> <li>• Access to common spaces</li> </ul>                              |
| <b>6-13 years old</b><br>(attention to the bridge points of 5 and 14 years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in free-time activities: recreational, cultural, sporting etc</li> <li>• Access to instruction and training</li> <li>• Access to psychological wellbeing services</li> <li>• Access to common spaces</li> </ul>   |
| <b>14-18 years old</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social mobility</li> <li>• Access to instruction and training</li> <li>• Availability of and access to educational guidance services</li> <li>• Access to psychological wellbeing services</li> <li>• Participation in free-time activities: recreational, cultural, sporting etc</li> <li>• Access to common spaces</li> </ul> |
| <b>15-25 years (NEET)</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of risk factors related to being NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)</li> <li>• Access to instruction and training</li> <li>• Access to psychological wellbeing services</li> <li>• Access to common spaces</li> </ul>   |

#### *Indicators by Group*

| Strategic Challenge   | Analysis indicators  |
|---|--|
| <b>Educational segregation</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of foreign national pupils enrolled in school (up to compulsory attendance age)</li> <li>• Presence of foreign national pupils resident in the neighbourhood*</li> </ul>                 |
| <b>Educational performance and educational guidance services</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INVALSI test results in each school</li> <li>• Pass/fail rate in each school</li> <li>• Pupil dispersion and dropout rate in each school</li> <li>• Access to career guidance services</li> </ul> |
| <b>Inclusion activities with children with additional support needs</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to instruction and training</li> <li>• Access to social inclusion services</li> </ul>  |

\* Here, 'neighbourhood' is defined using the Italian national NIL (Nuclei di Identità Locale) classification which divides Milan into 88 neighbourhoods

[1] Source: Welfare Plans for the City of Milan, [Welforum.it](http://Welforum.it), January 2020

[2] The latest Milan Strategic Plan notes that the proportion of migrants in some school rolls is as high as 90% due to phenomenon of 'white flight', with maximum segregation indices of 25-35%.

[3] Benefits of Extra-Curricular Activities for Children, European Commission, 20021

[4] Information Systems and Digital Agenda Dept

[5] The result of this webinar, packaged as the first WISH-MI Zoom-In, is on the [project website](#)

[6] A useful reference here is the report, [Monitoring and Evaluation Practices: UIA Lessons Learnt](#) 2021

Urban poverty

See on UIA website

