

NEWS

PROJECT

CAPACITYES - Children
Against Poverty Awake
the CITY Education
System

📍 Bergamo, Italy

TOPIC

Urban poverty

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CAPACITYES presented to Italian Municipalities - the innovative path undertaken in Bergamo

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The annual national meeting of ANCI, which this year was held in Bergamo, was an opportunity to have a moment of direct comparison with various Italian municipalities. Managers and politicians from different levels of territorial governance were taken on an excursion to visit the first results of the CAPACITYES project. Criticisms and suggestions have been collected to successfully start the final phase of this project

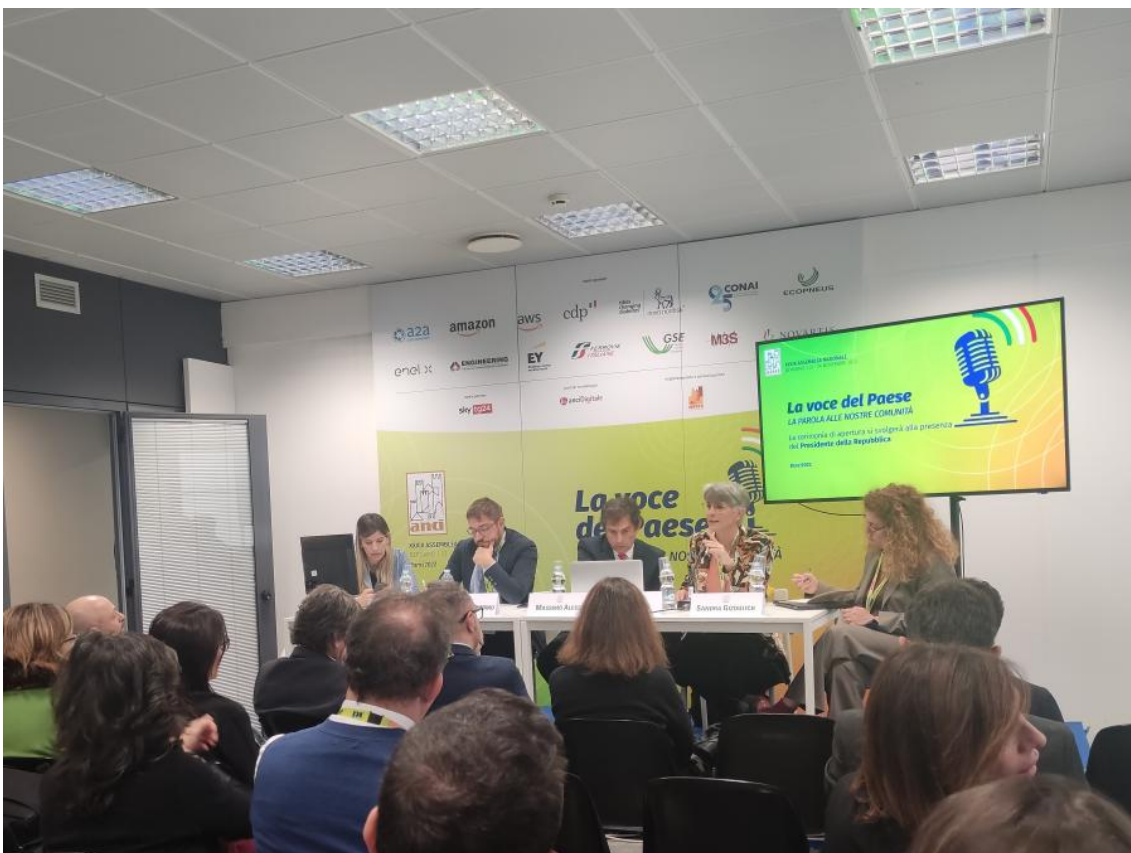
The CAPACITYES project had a moment of enormous visibility on the occasion of the [national ANCI event](#) which was held in Bergamo from 21 to 24 November 2022. ANCI is the national association of all Italian municipalities.

This national meeting was an extraordinary opportunity for discussion and debate, but also for initiative and institutional dialogue, which saw the participation and protagonism of thousands of mayors and local administrators from all over Italy.

Furthermore, there was the contribution of representatives of all institutional levels of the Italian Republic and relevant politicians, as well as economic, social and cultural organizations and forces. During the meeting, there have been two specific ad-hoc meetings focusing on the UIA Initiative and on the upcoming [European Urban Initiative](#). The events provided room to present both the results of the CAPACITYES project and another UIA Project, ToNite (Torino, Urban Security). The current results have been presented by the deputy mayor of Bergamo, Ms Marcella Messina, and the deputy mayor of Torino, Ms Chiara Foglietta. Several managers of important Italian municipalities were present at the meeting who listened carefully to the results of the UIA projects and asked relevant questions on how to participate in future EUI calls. Certainly a moment of concrete dissemination that has sown the seeds for the planning of future initiatives in other Italian cities.



ANCI Event, UIA, EUI meeting, focus on CAPACITyES AND ToNite results.



ANCI Event, UIA, EUI meeting, focus on CAPACITyES

The deputy mayor Ms Loredana Poli summarized the project progress and accompanied the participants in an excursion to [the project's construction sites](#). The construction site of Borgo Palazzo, where the [co-housing experience for families in conditions of critical poverty](#) takes place. This construction site is in an advanced state and the reactions from the guest visitors have been very positive. It has been explained the previous function of the building, it was an abandoned psychiatric hospital, and illustrated the double role of this urban planning action, that is not just re-functionalising the building in se, but to use the UIA projects as catalysts for the regeneration of the entire neighbourhood.



Representative of Italian municipalities visiting the building site in Borgo Palazzo, place of the co-housing experience, former hospital



Representative of Italian municipalities visiting the building site in Borgo Palazzo, place of the co-housing experience, former hospital

In order to better understand the regenerative process underway in the neighbourhood, the representatives of the host cities were led to observe the murals of the Odyssey which unite and define the intervention areas in the neighbourhood. This artistic project had a very positive effect and, in response to the questions received, the project partners explained the meaning of this choice, in particular and remembered how the choice of this ancient and classical story, rooted in European and Mediterranean culture, has [facilitated the involvement of children in the participatory process](#), moreover, it has constituted a symbolic reference story for current migrants: the Mediterranean is still a place of migration, mutual meeting, but often also a place of tragedies, as in the Odyssey.



Representative of Italian municipalities visiting the murals corridor connecting the CAPACITYES regeneration area

in Bergamo

The visit to the second project, Hub4Kids, aroused much curiosity about the scale of action of this project. The representatives of Bergamo, the deputy mayor Ms Loredana Poli and the project team, presented the projects under construction to colleagues. They explained the role of this initiative, which activates [a permanent laboratory for the children and the adolescents](#). It will take care of inclusion, training, creative expression related activities and learning, the Hub is open to all schools in Bergamo and the province. It creates a context of public quality within a former industrial area where various redevelopment paths are underway. Development actions also linked to private investments in alternative housing: not just real estate investment, but the construction of residential areas based more on rent than on ownership and which are developed by placing at the center life models that favour an active, healthy life.



Representative of Italian municipalities visiting the building site of the Hub4Kids in Via Serassi



The Hub4Kids building site, refurbishment work in progress, Bergamo, Via Serassi.

After the project visit, all the excursion participants met in a final workshop to discuss together their impressions about the CAPACITYES PROJECT. All levels of governance were present for the discussion, from representatives of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, responsible for the mainstreaming of national operational programmes, to some regional managers, with responsibility for the mainstreaming of regionally managed structural funds (a key level for territorial governance) and many municipal managers interested in developing similar experiences. The municipal managers were very interested to understanding how to organize themselves to propose and design competitive and innovative proposals for the new EUI calls. The discussion was moderated by the leaders of the CAPACITYES project, together with the representatives of ANCI and the UIA expert (the author of this article). The debate focused on key points:

- The value of building innovative paths at the municipal/local level, and on the importance of getting a program like UIA, now EUI, in order to be able to experiment with paths that come out of the logic of conventional planning, usually not very flexible and too tied to rigid and often obsolete procedures.
- On ways of managing the results produced by these innovative paths of supranational level, EU promoted, in a sustainable way: How to bring them into the mainstreaming funds after the projects closure.



The feedback meeting has been organised in the Monastero di Astino close to the orto botanico. This place was involved in the [URBACT action beepath net reloaded](#)

Presenting the first results of the project in front of such an important audience of managers and politicians from other Italian cities certainly gave the CAPACITYES partnership new incentives to successfully launch the final phase of the project. The feedback obtained from colleagues, both in terms of suggestions and criticisms, has undoubtedly increased the degree of awareness of the regenerative action that is being carried out through CAPACITYES. Many asked to be able to have more information both on the UIA program (now EUI), on how to prepare and implement this type of projects. The meeting itself, therefore, undoubtedly sowed the seeds to be able to replicate, at least in other Italian urban contexts, this type of regenerative process aimed at combating urban poverty.

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