

NEWS

PROJECT

WISH MI - Wellbeing
Integrated System of
Milan

📍 Milan, Italy

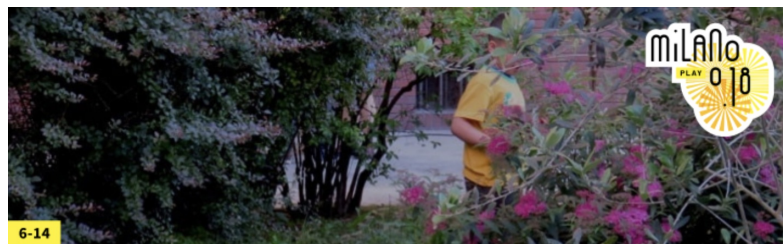
TOPIC

Urban poverty

EDIT 12 JUNE 2023
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Giornata del Gioco: World Play Day as a launchpad for the WISH-MI missions

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The City of Milan is opening new avenues in its drive to improve youth well-being in the city. To coincide with World Play Day, WISH-MI has launched a new set of activities designed to stimulate youth participation and volunteering.

Milan's mobilization around World Play Day

Did you know that 28th May 2023 was [World Play Day](#)? The objective of this established international happening is to celebrate and mark the importance of play. This is not only crucial to the development of young people, but also an important facet of adult life - not acknowledged often enough.

The date, and the days leading up to it, contained important milestones for the WISH-MI partners. The day itself saw the hosting of the "[festival of boys and girls](#)" coordinated by the City of Milan's Culture Department. The week leading up to this also marked a number of important steps for the city's wellbeing strategy for children and young people. These included a high profile international Round Table event focused on youth participation and a significant meeting between a group of youth representatives and the political team of Giuseppe Sala, the Mayor of Milan. These young people were recruited under the banner of Teen Milano, led by the Catholic University of Milan, which is leading on the WISH-MI participation activities.



Harnessing play to support youth wellbeing

Alongside these events, WISH-MI has launched the final strand of its UIA-funded activities to coincide with World Play Day. Play Milano 0-18 is described as a ‘phy-gital’ eco system that combines gaming technology with measures to support physical activity. The digital framework for this has been embedded within the city authority’s existing website that encourages active citizenship through volunteering. A dedicated [Play Milano 0.18](#) space has been designed to enable this. [Centro Servizi per il Volontariato](#) have brought their design and delivery experience to the development of this space.

The result is a city- wide game through which young people can engage in a variety of missions. These will be led by providers registered in the Milano 0.18 catalogue, in response to a call for proposals by the city authority. Missions take different formats, including treasure hunts, parades and drama events etc. Players gain merits as a reward for their contribution to the city, acknowledging their input to neighbourhoods, environmental impacts and other positive actions. Play Milano 0.18 includes a scoreboard enabling players to see their ranking, with participants being rewarded with digital vouchers accepted by affiliated stores and services.



Why has Milan gone down this route - and what can we expect to see?

Play Milano 0.18 represents a major step for WISH-MI. It is an ambitious and complex operation that has required

considerable thought and investment. It has also encouraged the city authority to collaborate closely with other actors, experienced in the fields of gaming and volunteering. In doing so, City Hall acknowledges its own limitations - and strengths - as well as recognising the need to embrace new kinds of interventions in its mission to build stronger links with young people. Through this initiative, the city hopes to engage young people across the age spectrum, but particularly amongst the adolescent group who are notoriously difficult to engage in civic activity.

Here, we see high levels of innovation and risk. Few other cities have tried to strengthen their relationship with young people this way, although the initiative does tap into the spirit of successful initiatives like the [URBACT Playful Paradigm](#) network, which underlined the links between play and urban placemaking. It also reflects the advent of games like [Pokemon Go](#), which combine digital gaming with outdoor activities, although this is a space rarely inhabited by the public sector.

Why has Milan taken this leap into the unknown? The city is committed to reshaping the way it engages with its youth and accepts that 'more of the same' will not achieve the required breakthroughs. Moving into new, unknown, territories are more likely to provide pathways into this, which helps explain this new venture. The status quo is no longer an option, and Milan should be applauded for embracing the challenge.

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