Smart governance answers to metropolitan peripheries: Regenerating the deprived area of the Morandi block in the Tor Sapienza neighbourhood (Rome).

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1 ABSTRACT

A very alive and promising participatory planning process is on the run in the neighbourhood of Tor Sapienza in Rome. In the blocks settlement called Morandi, approximately 500 hundred families live in this modernistic settlement designed and realized in early 70's. As common in these peripheral dense settlements around Europe, the complete absence of *mixité social* caused by diverse reasons has led to strong phenomenon of socio-cultural exclusions and urban poverty. Current economic crisis has increased the tough and difficult conditions of Morandi inhabitants: high level of unemployment and early school leaving, scarce opportunities of professional growth in the neighbourhood, many expressions of marginalisation characterize the project area. Moreover, recent immigration movements determine in this part of the city a new multicultural dimension that not always breed in a collective amelioration, but on contrary, very often lead to conflicts, specifically when Rromi population are involved (it is worth remembering the proximity to the Morandi of the Rromi settlement of Via Salviati).

Improving decision making processes and transforming the ways that public services and answers are delivered in peripheries of European cities is a question of providing "smart governance schemes" for urban policies.

The University (Tor Vergata, Roma 2) has initiated this regeneration process considering three pillars of smart governance:

1. Looking for mechanism of transparent governance.

2. Promoting effective participation in decision-making and stakeholder based design of urban strategies.

3. Re-thinking delivery of public and social services.

The University is the catalyser of a participatory planning process that currently is involving more than 20 local stakeholders. Local stakeholders have been organised in a local action group that regularly hold meetings finalised to the realization of a strategic local action plan, which is identifying priority projects to finance in short time through local/national and EU funds (focus 2014-2020). Projects deriving from this process aim at reducing condition of marginality afflicting this area and its population. Geographical marginality of this settlement of course still plays a strong role in determine peripheral conditions, but other form of marginalities determine the "isolation" of nowadays periphery, and specifically of the Morandi:

- High level of Unemployment (at the margin of knowledge/education and professional training)
- Rundown public and private spaces/buildings (marginal financial availability and sense of collectivity/community)
- Presence of illegal, sometimes criminal, activities (at the margin of rules and legality)

Innovative tools are currently under experimentation in Morandi-Tor Sapienza looking for providing three basic outputs:

1. One effective strategic plan for this kind of settlements (having high grade of transferability at metropolitan area scale).

2. One urban regeneration policy scheme to be replaced in the city of Rome and contextualized to the new EU 2014-2020 territorial cohesion tools (e.g. CLLD, ITI)

3. A set of feasible projects to launch on the very short time providing viable, flexible, proper, effective and resilient answers to existing urban emergencies in the neighbourhood.