

## The City of Commons

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The adventure of the "City of Commons" begun with the meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011, when we suggested to the citizens of Portici a path of reflection and 4 active citizenship workshops on participatory democracy and on the economy of the common good, based on exchange and gift: "Territory", "Democracy", "Degrowth" and "Work".

In this context, in the "Territory" and "Democracy" active laboratories we assumed a thematic study departing from the citizens' needs and proposed it as an ideal itinerary of participatory democracy, involving local institutions through the tools that the lawmaker has already planned, so as to allow everyone to use them properly and effectively.

For this reason, the "Democracy" Group has identified the creation of a group that works on instruments and participating institution, as a possible project to be pursued in the course of the permanent laboratory. First of all as "<STUDY CENTRE" that will make citizens more aware of their rights and then as a nucleus of active citizens that will dialogue with the institutions to ask workspaces on the territory (e.g. To require the local government implementing rules for the executive regulation of the City Statute, never realized for years).

In order to do this, the modus operandi selected is the continuous and regular comparison after work segments. The group should look for comparisons and concrete answers from institutions, with concrete achievements or signs of listening.

The group wants to improve the democratic participation of citizen in public life, also using the civil compliance campaign for the referendum vote results about water as a no marketable good to develop democracy and participation among people. The Italian

experience of referendum vote results shows the difficulties to drive an effective change in economic challenges. After the vote, Italian politics haven't receipt yet the referendum results, and try to put other laws in Italian ordainment to give life to a strong privatization in the management of common goods. The strong democratic battle has two directions: the first one is the popular resistance, with a wide civil compliance campaign about the respect of referendum vote results; the second one the growth of an European popular movement to obtain justice and to declare water as a no marketable good. We claim new management forms, without profit remuneration, and new participation forms to the water management.

In this sense, a big work was done on the water by activating a " help point" that weekly explained to the interested citizens what to do to see recognized their rights.

In the laboratory "Territorio", at the same time, the workgroup has started the research of citizens' needs through the proposal for a municipal heritage mapping. We begun with those assets in the availability of local government, proposing moments of listening and comparison among citizens in relation to territorial strategic choices, such as the Municipal development plan, asking the institutions to not decide alone or to give solutions not actually reflected in the consciousness and the awareness of the citizens.

With the help of Mrs. Rosa Desiderio (Campanian Commettee "G. Franciosa" against camorra for the legality and Nonviolence) the two paths started:

### **1. P.U.C.**

For the municipal development plan, in fact, has been forwarded a request to the Commune, signed by various territorial Associations, for an active participation in the formulation of the plan itself, according to the normative dictates on the subject, as well as

collaborating to prioritize, in order to contribute with concrete and shared proposals to the computational path.

To achieve this purpose, it was fundamental to obtain the following documents, which have been necessary to evaluate the plan in preparation:

1. strategic orientation document (DOS)
2. Act of entrustment of the PUC's computational project
3. copy of the municipal budget to "read" the economic resources and the guidelines of administrative action

We highlighted the need to act networking to involve as many groups as possible to construct hypotheses and possible proposals and reading guidance of PUC, and therefore it has drawn up a list of identified stakeholders : associations on the territory (by list), Parishes, schools, the local Faculty of Agriculture.

In this way, together with several association, we have been able to propose to the Municipality a joint request for the publication of any deed, document, idea for the PUC on institutional website and the possibility to be heard even in a City Council to explain our proposals.

Some "Good practices" already implemented have been chosen like examples to inspire others; they would have been useful to the same municipal administration as well: such as the creation of a "competition of ideas" for young college students, to take advantage of innovative projects almost at no cost.

It is suggested the experience of Milan, where the PUC, elaborated by Renzo Piano, has been designed starting from preserving existing green (green design).

As Mr. Oliviero brought to the laboratory his accusations against the failure to protect the centuries old trees, of which he denounced the falling, we decided to ask the local Department of Environmental Affairs if there exists a mapping of urban green (public and

private green) and a census of the centuries old trees. These informations could be useful also to check whether there are conditions for starting projects of orti sociali, giving the chance to cultivate available green areas, in order to save them from the neglect and decay and win them back to social activities and production, according to experiences that have proved successful in other regions (this topic forms a caesura to the other laboratories “degrowth” and “work”).

We have reported the experience of Sant'Anastasia, where the beginning of the new municipal development plan has been based on the ideas and suggestions arising from the meetings (focus groups) made with all interested citizens and actively continued for months.

## **2. MAPPING**

For the mapping of goods we proceeded according to two lines:

- 1) Request to access Municipality instruments to create a mapping of buildings in municipal availability for their use in the exercise of active citizenship.
- 2) elaboration and distribution of questionnaires to all citizens for the useful tips to verify priorities with regard to identity and collective needs.

After one month from the request to the municipality we held a workshop for reading and analyzing municipal answer. On that occasion we begun to draw up the questionnaires for the collection of information from citizens.

The questionnaires were disseminated widely with the require to everyone to compile them and to place them in special collection boxes located at Parishes, schools, social centers, associations.

The results of these data will be analyzed and publicized, and on the goods identified as "common goods" from the citizens it will be affixed a banner that will confirm membership

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in the local community (such as "THIS IS A COMMON GOOD of the CITIZENS of PORTICI").

Ultimate goal of this survey will be the monitoring of certain buildings to analyzing their conditions and use. The group will try to identify a municipal seat in which to carry on the work, reporting improvements to the administration of certain goods which are not perfectly used.