

10TH "BEST PRACTICE IN CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION" Award

AWARD APPLICATION FORM



A. BASIC INFORMATION:

Title of the experience : "Conto, Partecipo, Scelgo" Bilancio partecipativo del Comune di Milano (I count, I'm involved, I choose: participatory budgeting of the City of Milan)		
Name of city/region : Milano		
Promoting entity: Comune di Milano – Municipality of Milano		
Country: Italy		
Starting date: 30/06/2015		Finishing date : 03/12/2015
Population size: 1.334.000 inhabitants		
Surface area: 181,67 km ²		
Population Density: 7.398,63 inhabitants/km ²		
GDP per capita: 241,2€ (2004)		
Sector of the economy: Industry (33%), services (67%)		
Type of experience:	Participatory budget	X
Regional scope	Entire Region	X
	District	
	Neighbourhood	
Thematic area	Governance	
	Education	
	Transportation	
	Urban management	X
	Health	
	Safety	
	Environment and/or urban agriculture	X
	New social movements and associations	
	Culture	X
	Housing	
	Employment	
	Decentralization	
	Local Development	
	Learning/training	X
	Economy and/or finances	X
	Legal regulations	
Social inclusion	X	
All		
Others: participatory budgeting		X

B. PROCESS

DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE EXPERIENCE OCCURRED

The Municipality of Milan has given its citizens the chance to decide how to spend part of the municipal budget (9 million euros) through a participatory process, based on the experiences that other cities, such as Lisbon and Paris.

Milan, capital of hospitality and opportunity, has a strong civic tradition also due to the relevant network of associations and informal groups active at the local level. The Participatory budgeting process has represented an opportunity to strengthen a method of

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wide, democratic and active consultation that characterizes the city of Milan and that continues today also thanks to this initiative.

OBJECTIVES

- Design, together with citizens, interventions of public interest to be realized in the 9 Municipal districts.
- Increase citizens awareness about the municipal budget and other administrative tools through which decisions are made in the area they live, study or work.
- Facilitate the dialogue between citizens and the Administration, who has the chance to listen to the priorities directly expressed by its citizens and to share – at least in part - its territorial government choices with them.
- Bring new voices to the civic life, building stronger communities around the purpose of improving Milan neighbourhood.
- Trigger virtuous collaborative, not competitive, dynamics inside the municipal districts community.
- Create a first model and a laboratory of experimentation for future participatory experiences aimed to deepen democracy in Milan.

DESCRIBE THE EXPERIENCE

The Participatory Budgeting of Milan was divided into four main phases:

Phase 1 - Listening: public meetings for the gathering of needs

Before launching the participatory process an Informative Document has been released as briefing materials to present the opportunity to the citizens and explain the basic data of the municipal budget in order to develop an informed discussion. The document has been translated in 6 languages (English, French, Romanian, Arabian, Chinese, Spanish) and widely spread throughout the different communities.

Between **July** and **September**, citizens were invited to participate in 45 public meetings that took place in different neighbourhoods of each Municipal district. The first meeting of each district was aimed to present the Participatory budgeting to citizens, the following four meetings were dedicated to listening to the necessities and problems of district citizens.

Facilitators and experts in participatory processes ran all the meetings and helped citizens to discuss issues in a constructive way.

The meetings were organized at different times (morning, afternoon, evening) in order to balance the inhabitants work-life needs. In each meeting were provided tools of linguistic mediation (translation, post in foreign languages) and ad hoc meetings for certain categories of people not easily reached.

Another large meeting was organized for youngsters, more than 350 boys and girls (between 14 and 25 years old) participated and expressed their priorities for urban interventions.

In addition to meetings organized by the staff of the Participatory Budgeting, the participants were given the opportunity to organize and manage independently 17 self organized

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meetings.

Phase 2 - Co-design: workshops to design interventions

The second phase of the process took place in October 2015.

Thanks to 600 applications gathered during the listening-phase, a limited – but representative - number of participants in the co-design workshops was selected through drawing of lots. For each Municipal district, one co-design workshop with 30 participants was organized, totally 270 citizens balanced for gender, age, territorial origin were selected in a public session.

An analysis of the ideas arisen during the previous phase, took place during these workshops, with the purpose of developing a limited number of projects for each district.

The activity of these workshops was very important, because members worked together and built shared projects useful for the territory, which took into account the different needs expressed during the listening phase. For this reason, expert facilitators ran the workshops and worked closely with the technicians and officials of the municipality in order to focus on feasible and sustainable projects.

40 projects of intervention were developed by citizens and right after verified by municipal technicians and official.

Phase 3 – Voting: choosing the projects to be carried out

After the projects' presentation and publication on project web site, all the city users who live, work or study in Milan had the opportunity to vote for them online on the project webpage, in the schools partnering with the Participatory Budgeting or in several locations in the neighbourhood. 30.172 votes were expressed by Milan citizens.

For each Municipal district, the projects that received the highest number of votes were selected, up to a maximum of one million euros, available for each of the ninth municipal districts

Phase 4 –Monitoring of selected projects

After the projects' approval, the municipality of Milan is now analyzing their technical feasibility and starting implementing them. The website of the project will monitor the progress of the projects designed and approved.

LEADERSHIP AND SHARED RESPONSABILITES.

- Vice Mayor, deputy for the City budget: guarantor of the funds and of the effective introduction of the project into the city budget.
 - Assisted by the responsible for the process, the chief account of the Municipality
- Deputy Mayor for public works: guarantor of the design and implementation of the projects
 - Assisted by a pool of 10 public officials providing technical competences for the feasibility assessment and the implementation phase (Budgeting, Transport, Green areas and cycling paths, Schools, public works)
- Cabinet of the Mayor
 - assisted by experts of communication, public engagement, social media relation and the press office
- The group Istituto di ricerca sociale-Aventura Urbana, providing process design, management and professional facilitation for the whole duration of the project, included the public communication programme
- Arci Milano e Acli Milanese, the two most important community networks of the

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- territory, involving also the Forum Città mondo (representing more than 60 foreign communities living in Milan)
- Eligo: ICT private company involved for the polling platform

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ENTITIES OR WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS OF THE SAME MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

- The 9 districts (decentralized municipalities)
- More than 300 grassroots and community based organizations and 28 schools

C. METHODOLOGY

DESCRIBE THE METHODOLOGY AND THE PARTICIPATION MECANISMS IMPLEMENTED IN THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE PROCESS.

Phase 1, 2 and 3 were carried out using different methods.

Phase 1 (Listening)

Public meetings were open to all the inhabitants over 14 who lived, studied or worked in the territory of Milano (official residency was not requested). The meetings were facilitated using the method of "open door" public meeting, to encourage a free and non structured expression of ideas and needs by the participants. Professional facilitation was provided in order to allow everyone to have a say, through small workgroup discussion and a final plenary session to share outputs of each group.

Phase 2. (co-design) Citizens' workshops to elaborate the project proposals

The co-design laboratories (one for each of the 9 districts of Milan) was deliberately restricted to a few citizens, to enable an egalitarian and argued discussion, and to favour the elaboration of a shared project proposals.

The discussion was facilitated by the professionals using various methods:

- The first part of the work was addressed to develop a common language and to the analysis of the needs raised by the citizens who had participated to the public meeting and listening phase. The tools used were sheets that summarized the report of the meetings, a "mind mapping" discussion in small groups that helped figure out the most important needs,
- The core of the deliberation was dedicated to a decision making phase to lay out the groundrules for deliberation, also through the choice of criteria that drove the group to choose the main planning areas;
- A final phase was then conducted to help the 9 groups take a common decision on the main projects that should be presented to the finale phase of vote and to the developing of the proposals
- While the deliberation was carried out, dialogue and information exchange has taken place, with the participation of approximately 10 experts from the Municipality, that helped

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the group to take in to account technical issues and possible trade offs of the different scenarios.

- Eventually 38 projects have been finalized with a definition of sites, dimensions, features of each intervention, following the general criteria for planning that had been decided at the beginning of the deliberative process in each group. All the groups got to a common decision with full consensus (unanimity)

Phase 3 – Voting: choosing the projects to be carried out

The whole citizenship of Milan was invited to chose among 40 projects. The main goal of the open referendum was to assure (and to test whether there actually was) a broad legitimacy to the participatory-deliberative process.

D. FUNDING STRATEGY AND BUDGET

BUDGET

Total amount and percentage amount over the total costs of the project/institution/department.

Budget for the process: 125.000 euros + IVA

Budget to realize of the most voted project: 9 million euros (1,3% of the total capital expenditures in 2014)

FUNDING STRATEGY

Origin of funds (own, subsidies, donations, etc.). List of partners to the initiative noting if they are public or private actors.

Municipality of Milan

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E. INFORMATION SPREADING AND FEED-BACK TO THE PARTICIPANTS

DESCRIPTION OF THE INFORMATION DISSEMINATED DURING THE PROCESS.

- Web site of the project (www.bilanciopartecipativomilano.it), with 79.000 unique visitors and 430.000 viewed pages in 5 months
- account Facebook
 - 320 posts published (2079 likes, coverage: 257.395 users)
- account Twitter:
 - 139 tweets with 177 followers

- Promotion of phase 1 (listening):
 - 1 press conference
 - Informative Document (briefing materials) in 2.200 copies and uploaded on the website with the translated version in 6 languages
 - posters in different formats (1250)
 - 5.000 postcards and 15.000 leaflets
 - email invitation (5.000)
 - 2 Newsletters
 - Advertising on local newspapers
 - Digital Banners on municipal websites
 - 10 Hard copy banners to mark public meetings entrance
 - Totems
- Promotion of voting phase:
 - 1 press conference
 - 30.000 postcards
 - 5000 posters
 - 30 customized posters for libraries
 - 1 Newsletter
 - posters teaser-scroller
 - 15.000 postcards for the school circuit
 - promotion kit for citizens
 - Tutorial for online polling

FEED-BACK TO THE PARTICIPANTS

Feedback information were offered during and after each participatory phase, through the website and the dissemination activities organized in the territory.

- A summary of each meeting was accessible on the website of the project (www.bilanciopartecipativomilano.it).
- A synthesis of the needs and ideas expressed throughout the listening phase was available on the website of the project before starting the co-design workshops.
- 1 event for the public presentation of the 40 projects before publishing them on the website for the vote.
- Press conference to announce the winning projects and the following phase.

Now the official implementation process has started so participants will be informed about the implementation steps on the website and through monthly newsletters.

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F. RESULTS

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS. PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS OVER THE TARGET POPULATION GROUP. PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS.

2.200 citizens during the listening phase (42,9% women)
30.172 voters in the polling phase
total
2,73% population

Participants profile is available only for the participants to the **listening phase**. 741 questionnaires have been collected in order to evaluate the listening phase. Responses on the profiles were: 98% of Italian people; 56,8% full or part time employed; 30,2% retired.

To cope with the low level of strangers and students, dedicated meetings have been organized, such as a meeting with 350 youngsters.

HAVE THE RESULTS BEEN DOCUMENTED? WHAT KIND OF DOCUMENTATION IS IT? HAVE OUTCOMES BEEN RETURNED TO THE CITIZENS?

All the process has been documented through the website (reports of each meetings, participants, main issues raised).

At the end of the participatory budgeting process, a final report has been prepared. A specific section, as part of the evaluation of the process, documents the targets of output and outcome indicators, as defined at the beginning of the project. For example, the defined result indicators measure the number of participants at each meeting, the total number of participants, the profile of participants, the satisfaction expressed with regards to the listening phase.

A final publication, which will entail the main project's results, is currently under development and will be shortly released to the public.

IMPACTS ON PUBLIC POLICY. PLEASE DESCRIBE IF, ONCE THE EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED, HAVE THERE BEEN CHANGES IN THE LEGISLATION, ACTIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION (NEW PLANS, NEW PROJECTS), BUDGET AND/OR MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT.

No changes in the legislation regarding the provision of other participatory actions have been planned. However, a strong informal interest among politicians and officers in the transformation of the participatory budgeting as an ordinary practice has emerged. Other than the implementation of the projects selected by citizens, the administration is now in the process of evaluating results and designing the intersectoral structure which will be charged of the next participatory budget process. Another point to be faced will be the coordination of the participatory budget with the other participatory processes promoted by other sectors of the administration.

IMPACTS ON THE ACTORS. CULTURAL EFFECTS AMONG PARTICIPANTS AND CULTURAL EFFECTS AT THE ADMINISTRATION (TECHNICAL STAFF, POLITICAL STAFF) CAN BE DESCRIBED?

Milan is a city where the associative life is very lively. Individual participation to the social and political life is present but less pervasive than the associative representation.

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However, the participatory budgeting process has been successful in stimulating single individual's participation in public debate and decision making, involving a number of not-organized people. A number of citizens independently organized city meetings in their neighbourhoods, to collect needs and stimulating the debate. The participatory budget stimulated the dialogue among different sectors of the organization and also a new way for officers of presenting and clarifying to citizens the opportunities and limits of the administrative action, such as financial or technical constraints, legislative boundaries to face specific problems, time required to realize certain operations.

EXTERNAL IMPACTS. IS THE EXPERIENCE TRANSFERABLE? CAN IT BE REPLICATED IN ANOTHER CITY OR BY ANOTHER ORGANISATION?

The model and methodology of the participatory budgeting of Milan is an example of a transferable experience in itself, since it was applied in another context, the city of Turin, in 2014. The dimension of the city, the number of inhabitants and the social context were different, but the frameworks of the process were the same and, in both cases, they have registered/obtained positive results and achievements.

G. EVALUATION AND MONITORING.

DESCRIBE SHORTLY WHAT KIND OF EVALUATION (INTERNAL/EXTERNAL) HAS BEEN FORESEEN FOR THE PROCESS, WHO WILL CONDUCT IT AND WHICH PARAMETERS WILL BE MEASURED.

A final evaluation of the process has been carried out by the contractors of the City of Milan for the development of the participatory budgeting activities. It was included in the project's final report. In particular, it entails:

- the effective value if result, impact and outcome indicators defined at the beginning the project,
- the main evidence of the evaluation questionnaires filled in by participants at the listening phase. At the end of each meeting, participants were indeed asked to express their opinion/suggestions about the meeting just concluded,
- an evaluation of the strengths and weakness of the participatory process process ,
- a number of suggestions for future participatory budgeting editions.

WILL CITIZENS BE INVOLVED IN THE EVALUATION? WILL THEY BE PROVIDED WITH THE EVALUATION'S RESULTS?

The main evaluation results will be made available through a final publication and diffused trough the website.

ONCE THE EVALUATION PROCESS IS FINALIZED, IS THERE A CITIZENS' MONITORIZATION/ FOLLOW UP PROCESS FORESEEN?

The City of Milan is responsible for the monitoring of the projects implementation. A monitoring methodology has been designed and the City will present, every three months, and publish on the website, the monitoring reports on the projects implementation. A further involvement of citizens is also foreseen for the decision on how to implement some projects details.

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H. ABSTRACT AND CONCLUSIONS.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EXPERIENCE.

The Municipality of Milan has chosen to build:

- a **bottom up process**, well entrenched in the neighbourhoods in which the town is organized,
- with strong relevance to **face to face meetings**, in more than 50 opportunities, where needs, ideas and proposals could be openly discussed in order to get to shared scenarios

Public meetings and citizens' workshops have also conveyed an important **educational message**: participants were requested to take their decision on behalf of the community, and to assess their priorities on the basis of multiple dimensions as financial, technical and procedural constraints, exactly as if they were policy makers.

Participation and right to vote has been extended to **children and youngsters** under 14, in those cases in which their school had developed a proposal for investment. By doing so the project has offered this young population one of their first chance to express an active role in the community, either by designing the proposal or by deciding which project to support with their vote, probably for the first time life.

FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVE.

The **upcoming challenge** is to implement the investments chosen by the citizens, fulfilling the priorities expressed in the citizens' workshops and the time schedule announced for the works.

Another challenge, to which the Municipality commits, is to adopt the same level of transparency and stakeholder engagement during the executive design process. As well as to follow an accountable process of reporting that enlightens strong and weak points in the implementation phase.

The **long term challenge** is to embed citizens' engagement within the budgeting decision making process, introducing methods and tools that allow to reach out for further slices of the population, specifically the weak ones, that hardly take part to public activities.

WHY CAN THE EXPERIENCE BE CONSIDERATED INNOVATIVE?

- Because participation and right to vote has been extended also to **citizens that are not officially resident** in the territory (city users, workers, students and non regular immigrants).
- Because it **strengthened cooperation between citizens rather than competition between ideas**. The projects arising from the creative process were voted, but only after verifying that the requirements were gathered and integrated with each other. In this way the ideas were led from 700 proposals in 40 projects.
- Because it has succeeded to involve **a large number of people** in the voting phase (more than 30.000), even if it was the first edition and no other cities in Italy had ever attempted to reach such a strong quantitative result
- Because it enhanced **participation of children and youngsters under 14**, calling for their contribution to the Participatory Budgeting through a specific activity addressed at kindergardens, primary and secondary 1st grade schools.

All schools in Milan owned by the Municipality were informed of the opportunity to submit

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proposals for the improvement of their building or surrounding area. The schools that presented proposals could extend to their students, although children under 14 years, the right to vote by a ballot paper signed by a parent.

Phase 1

Listening: public meetings for the gathering of needs



Between **July** and **September**, citizens will be invited to participate in public meetings that will take place in different neighbourhoods of each Municipal district. Facilitators and experts in participatory processes will run all the meetings and help citizens to discuss issues in a constructive way. A summary of each meeting will be accessible on the website of the project (www.bilanciopartecipativomilano.it).

The place and date of the meetings will be made available through the website of the municipality of Milan (page of the Municipal districts), on the project website (www.bilanciopartecipativomilano.it) and promoted through publicity material.

During these meetings, participants will provide their availability to take part in the interventions' co-design workshops (see phase 2) by filling a pre-enrolment form, distributed during the meeting. The form will also be available on the project website.

Phase 2

Co-design: workshops to design interventions



The second phase of the process will take place in **October 2015**.

Thanks to the applications gathered during the listening-phase, a limited - but representative - number of participants in the co-design workshops will be selected. For each Municipal district, one co-design workshop will be organized. An analysis of the ideas arisen during the previous phase, will take place during these workshops, with the objective of developing **a limited number of projects for each district**. The projects will be subsequently voted on.

The activity of these workshops is very important, because members will work together and build shared projects useful for the territory, which take into account the different needs expressed during the listening phase. For this reason, expert facilitators will run the workshops and work closely with the technicians and officials of the municipality in order to focus on feasible and sustainable projects. At the end of this phase, the projects will be available on the website of Participatory budgeting and promoted through publicity material.

Phase 3

Voting: choosing the projects to be carried out



After the projects' publication, citizens will have the opportunity to vote for them **in several locations in the neighbourhood**, or on the project **webpage**.

For each Municipal district, **the projects that receive the highest number of votes** will be selected, until all the available financial resources are used up.

Phase 4

Monitoring of selected projects



After the projects' approval, the municipality of Milan will analyze their technical feasibility and start implementing them. The website of the project will monitor the progress of the projects designed and approved.

To learn more:

All necessary information is available on the website www.bilanciopartecipativomilano.it

 www.facebook.com/comunemilano.bilanciopartecipativo

 www.twitter.com/bilanciopartMI