

URBAN EMPATHY – Work Package 3, Phase 2

Structured Dialogue

INTERVIEWS - COUNTRY REPORT

Country: ITALY

Names of the decision-makers and position:

City	Partner interviewer	Name	Position	Level	Technician/political	Party	Gender
Genoa	Municipality of Genoa	Francesco Oddone	Municipal Assessor for Economic Development	Local	political	Majority	M
	Municipality of Genoa	Sara Armella	President of Genoa International Fair	Regional	technician		F
	Municipality of Genoa	Antonio Bettanini	Professor, ex-Foreign Affairs Ministry Councillor	National	high-level public adm.		M
Pisa	Municipality of Pisa	Riccardo Buscemi	Municipality Councillor	Local	political	Opposition	M
	Municipality of Pisa	Gianluca De Felice	Managing body of the Cathedral square	Local	high-level public adm.		M
	Municipality of Pisa	Ylenia Zambito	Municipality Alderman	Local	political	Majority	F
	Municipality of Pisa	Dario Danti	Municipality Alderman	Local	political	Majority	M
Lucca	Province of Lucca	Maura Cavallaro	Provincial Vice-president-Councillor	Local	political	Majority	F
	Province of Lucca	Diego Santi	Provincial Alderman	Local	political	Majority	M
	Province of Lucca	Riccardo Gaddi	General Director of the Province	Local	technician		M
Emilia-Romagna Region	Emilia-Romagna Region	Sergio Fortini	Manager architect-professor	Local	technician		M
Emilia-Romagna Region	Emilia-Romagna Region	Daniela Occhiali	Mayor of Sant'Agata Bolognese	Local	political	Majority	F
Emilia-Romagna Region	Emilia-Romagna Region	Maria Laura Ferraris (and Michele Alinovi)	Alderman of the City of Parma	Local	political	Independent	F
Emilia-Romagna Region	Emilia-Romagna Region	Galeazzo Bignami	Regional Councillor	Regional	political	Opposition	M
Emilia-Romagna Region	Emilia-Romagna Region	Alfredo Peri	Regional Alderman	Regional	political	Majority	M

1. Sustainable urban policies in general

Summary of the main ideas developed: global evaluation of sustainable urban policies

In general, in approaching urban issues, the actors interviewed have stressed the consciousness in considering the cities as **combinations of stratified** (different and connected) **problems** and, as a consequence, more emphasis is given on **integrated policies** and pacts between public and private sector, to solve complex problems. Furthermore, the **strategic position of several cities** (i.e. Genoa, Pisa,...) is changing, due to their economic position in transition, to their position in the sovra-local economy, etc, and it produces the change of priorities in the political agendas.

As a introduction to this report, it is interesting to keep in mind that the main topic to be considered here is **the split**, often witnessed by the actors interviewed, **between the intentions of urban policies and their effective results** and the **actions** carried out.

Problems considered in the agenda

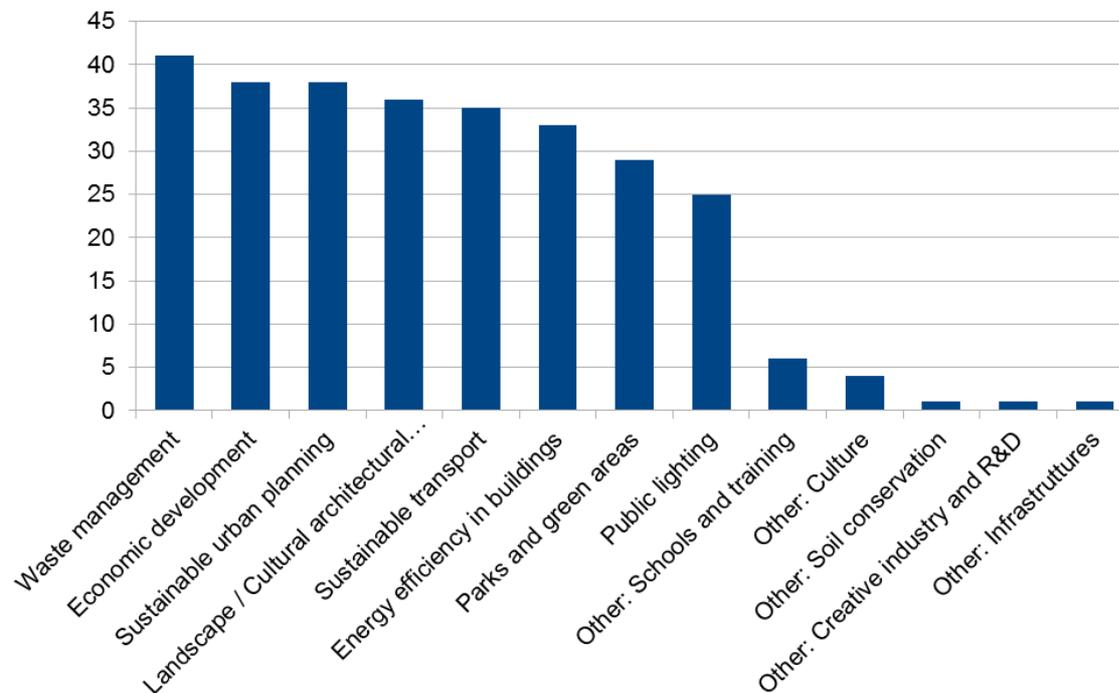
The problems touched in the structured dialogue should be distinguished between the different **level of government** of the actors involved:

- **at a regional and municipality level**, political and technical actors have focused their interviews more on issues regarding **cities regeneration** (urban, energetic and seismic), as well as the field of **land consumption**. They consider the **territorial planning issue** as fundamental (i.e. simplification of the planning normative framework), with the strategic theme, also against the isolation of some territories. At the **municipal level**, attention is put on the control of cities sprawl. But sometimes also the Regions stress the importance of small strategic interventions, and to bind micro-built contexts;
- **at all the government levels**, issues are connected to **material and immaterial infrastructures**, public mobility, traffic, networks. Hard infrastructures is important at a national, regional and municipality level in the territories suffering from risk of isolation at a European level (i.e. Genoa);
- **at a provincial level** (in Italy the Provinces are going to be subjected to an institutional transformation), themes more investigated were **pollution, hydro-geological problems** and **waste**.

Importance of policy areas

In order to evaluate compare the different importance given to different policy fields (such as energy efficiency, territorial planning,...) by the different actors interviewed, we have supplied them a fixed set of policy fields (leaving them the opportunity to supply new fields –mentioned as “Others” in the Table) and asked them to rank their importance (the value were: very important, relevant, quite relevant. After having collected the interviews, the weight attributed by the actors have been measured and pondered, and the results are shown below (table 1).

Table 1: Weight attributed to the different policy areas by the actors



The ranking show that:

- a **good waste management** is considered very important since, in Italy, at a municipal level, it offers an high positive contribution to the public balance;
- **economic development** is considered a priority for most of all, but often a problem taken for granted;
- after these, the other three issues considered relevant (**sustainable urban planning** and **landscape**) have two characteristics: they need both **integrated policies** and they can be considered as **preconditions** for economic, quality of life and cultural development. They are chosen most by the regional and national actors and the municipal ones, less by the Provinces, and landscape is increased as a priority in the last years, after decades of urban sprawl;
- the following ones (**sustainable transport**, **energy efficiency** in buildings, **parks and green areas** and **public lighting**) can be considered policies linked to urban sustainability, but more delimited. Energy efficiency is more felt as a priority by the Provinces;

- the other fields of policies (**schools and training, culture, soil conservation and creative industry and infrastructures**) were not fixed in the grid, but have been defined by the interviewers. The theme of culture and school was included by 4 actors, and cultural policies by 3 actors.

At a **transversal sight**, waste management, sustainable planning and landscape are the three policy fields that have obtained the highest scores by all the actors involved. Energy efficiency, parks and public illumination, on the other side, have received the most diversified scores (high, medium, or less relevant than others).

Priorities of the new programming period

The actors have expressed the following opinions in the elements they think are missing in the new programming period 2014-2020 and that need to be improved:

- some actors ask for more **concentration** in different policy fields (for metropolitan area in Genoa, or for creative industry in Parma);
- at the same time, they ask for less **specialisation** and for more **coordination** between the different policies.

Most of them express a need to focus more on:

- policy oriented to **young** people and future generation, in order to make policies more innovative and less conservative;
- education and **training**;
- **immigration** policies,
- the **valorisation of national excellence centres**.

2. Description of your work

Summary of the main ideas developed: work description, including relevant ideas expressed in the questions of this section:

On-going urban developments developed by the actors interviewed

- **Political actors:** peri-urban areas valorisation in Provincial Plans and in Municipal Plans, security, environment, strategic plans, waste management, energy efficiency, landscape and historical marks, management building of local and global networks in cultural policies, integrated policies (town planning, young people, culture), urban regeneration, regional pact for landscape, legislative reform and simplification of territorial planning laws.
- **Technical actors:** mobility and intermodality, cycling lanes, roads and public works, planning, management of historical public spaces, big projects and fairs.

Information source by the actors

- Professional and economic associations;
- local population,
- environmental associations;
- mayors, regions, central government (not all the actors);
- Universities;
- opening to new small actors.

The **negotiation** between social and economic actors is adopted both in the programming and evaluation policies, especially in this period of economic and social crisis. In the opinion of some actors, the economic and associations sometimes have a conservatory approach to some problems.

The more important actors that support the implementation of policies are economic actors and citizens, that have high consciousness of the importance of sustainability.

3. Application of European legislation

Summary of the main ideas developed: European regulation and transposition/implementation at national and local level

The more known European documents are those about **urban sustainability, energy efficiency, acoustic and air quality and waste control**.

The observations expressed with more emphasis are:

- the difficulty, at a national level, in adopting the European directives, and lack of strategic projects at a national level. In the European regulations connected to the changing climate, Italy has been requested to simplify the national laws, and in some cases the national laws impede to implement European directives;
- sectorial approach of the European directives,
- distance between the European Union and the local levels of government, EU is seen as authoritative and it is perceived a low connection with the territories;
- difficulty to give concreteness to the application of European directives, often having too much technical specialism;
- difficulty in giving legal and administrative impulse to European directives;
- the difficulty in applying the European regulations about air quality and waste management.

In general, the actors ask to decrease the complexity and the number of regulation, to lower the bureaucracy at all the administrative levels.

4. Barriers about sustainable urban policies

Barriers

In terms of **internal barriers to the public administration**, the main problematic topics, considered at all the territorial levels, both by politicians and technical experts, are (as shown in Table 2 below):

- the **administrative costs**, in terms of complex and time consuming procedures and transaction costs. In the opinion of some actors, these complexities, with **regulatory and legislative barriers**, tend to discourage actors in taking new policies and administrative actions. This issue is shared both by majority and opposition political actors. Independent and opposition actors consider public administration structures as self-referential. Furthermore, some actors consider administration should be more strategic in its policies;
- **financial barriers** are also considered important, but people interviewed consider them as taken for granted. They just suggest to improve the capability of public administration to use better the European funds;
- **lack of competences in the public administrations** is not seen as a priority here (but it is important to stress the fact that at the end of the interviews, they express a different opinion, underscoring the need of more diffused public competences). Only the weak inter-sectoral competences are mentioned here as important.

With regard to **political barriers to the implementation** of policies, the issues mentioned by the actors involved were:

- mainly the **opposition and conflicts between actors**. These argument is underscored especially with regard to the policies defined by administrations in which there is no change in the political majority from a long time. In this context, the opposition tent to try to stop often majority programmes and policies. And in these cases, also the increased power of technicians in taking strategic and also political decisions, is stressed. These kind of conflicts is less powerful in the local contexts where different administrative municipalities have been merged and define common political programmes;
- the **change of political agenda** is considered too, as influential, due to the frequent change of political majority (this happens especially at a national level), and between different levels of government;

Other issues mentioned by some actors involved were: (a) the difficulty by some political actors in evaluating the usefulness of a policy in an objective way, **without focussing too much to the person** or the political party that has proposed a policy; (b) the **difficulty in integrating productive and environmental policies**. Finally, an actor has mentioned the overlapping and **fragmentation** between different public agencies that create negatives and perverse effects in the management of territories.

Considering external constraints to the implementation of policies, the issues more stressed by actors interviewed were:

- **acceptability of policies from beneficiaries** and different priorities of citizens. This is due especially to problems of **communication and to the weak tools available to involve citizens**. It is also due to the fact that often citizens are not given responsibility for the policies or public actions developed;
- **lack of external competences and weak entrepreneurial environment**. There in, on one side, low trust of private entrepreneurs in collaborating with the public administration due to the perception of inefficiency of the public sector. On the other side, public actors often involve the private sector just to receive funding, without taking into account the innovative ideas that can emerge by the enterprises involved. This diffidence is typical of the Southern European countries, such as Italy, where the lack of permeability between the private and public sector is stronger than in the North of Europe, where the culture of dialogue is more evolved.

Furthermore, although the **capability to build networks** is increased in the last decade in Italy, an actor mentioned the difficulty in maintaining hold the interest in the networks.

Availability of sources of financing and obstacles

At a local level, sources of financing for public policies are also connected to Bank Foundation contributions.

In some cases, in the use of European Funds, the actors express difficulty in reporting and monitoring costs.

At a local level, a councillor expressed the difficulty in affecting the decision on the public balance, mainly defined by the executive branch.

Unexpected effects in the implementation of policies

Unexpected effects, positive and negative ones, are always present when complex project are implemented.

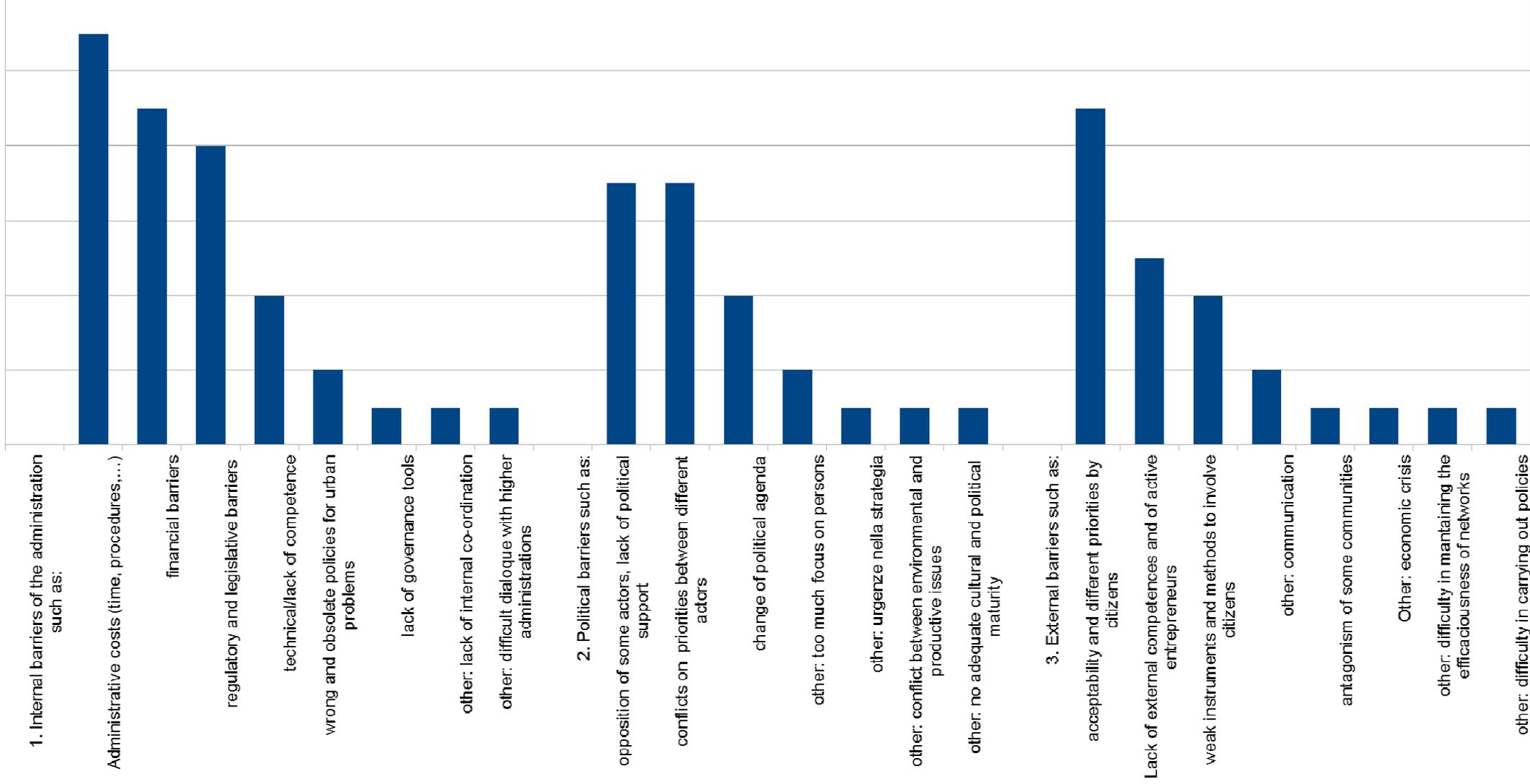
The **positive unexpected effects** mentioned are:

- **innovative ideas** and **dynamism of micro-enterprises** involved in creative local projects;
- the **increase of young agriculturists**, due to the economic crisis, and their efforts in developing sustainable projects in rural areas;
- attraction of people and tourists for **urban cultural projects**, as theatre and other small events, that have effects in the regeneration of the cities;
- a good project creates curiosity and can also encourage people in supporting it, with ideas and funds, but it need to be an open and inclusive project.

The **negative unexpected effects** are:

- **weakness of traditional enterprises** in managing complex projects;
- **inertia** of some actors in undertaking innovative projects.

Table 2: Barriers about sustainable urban policies



5. Needs and expectations about sustainable urban policies

Summary of the main ideas developed: needs and expectations, including relevant ideas expressed in the questions of this section:

Issues to improve or focus better

In the opinion of the persons interviewed, the pre-requisite to improve urban actions is the need to approach the policies giving them a more contemporary dimension.

It means:

- the need to connect the **local** dimension of the policies (more attention to the community and local resources) with more **global** aspects (infrastructures, national, European, but also extra-European);
- also the new attention to the **rural** valorisation, to the short supply-chains, need to be put in dialogue with a bigger dimension, avoiding the isolation of some territories (but not always);
- improve the role of **innovation** and of **analysis of the social phenomenon**;
- the necessity to increase the sense and perception of **public goods** and **actions**.

What needs

- At an administrative level, **less bureaucracy** and more **co-ordination** of the relations between public subjects;
- public management and culture of **evaluation** and **control** on public policies;
- an element of interest is that, in contrast with the point 4, where actors interviewed did not mention the need to improve competences of actors in managing complex projects, here the point is stressed, in a more positive way.

Additional financing

The need of additional finance is sometimes mentioned, but not stressed, since the actors are conscious of the economic crisis and constrains.

Tools

- the tools more quoted are the **guide-lines** and the **negotiation tables** in order to improve the effectiveness and the capability to carry out the projects;
- the tools should support the capacity to achieve project in the short term and over limited period policies (since long term policies are less a priority due to frequent political exchanges);
- the actors stress the importance of administrative and legal simplification tools , and also the opportunity to exchange study-cases.

Organizational and participative instruments

Most of the actors interviewed stress the importance of increasing participative processes in order to support effective networks to avoid fragmentation of decisions.

We can assume that this decade is a more advanced period in the participative approach in public policies, started in the Nineties when the sectorial policies suffered of a more rigid organisational model.

All of the actors have experiences of participative processes and their express the following needs:

- one of the objective of participation is the transformation of **conflicts** in **opportunities**, and connect actors of different administrative territories;
- give more importance to participation process that support the **implementation** policies, not just their planning, and they can also help to give continuity to last projects;
- participation needs to be more **effective** and not just illusory (often real decisions are established elsewhere in the opinion of the actors), and participative processes should start at the beginning of the processes, along the processes, but with tangible objectives and **fixed deadlines**;
- **private** actors could be involved in participation to make them responsible of the decisions, and they should be involved in a more creative way, not just to be financial partners;
- the institutionalised forms of partnership, like Territorial Agreements in Italy, have offered good results, but they need to be more **flexible** and simple.

EU and next programming period

- The European institution need to be considered more as a **cultural** and civic entity, and not just as an actor that permits to finance programmes.
- At the same time, EU need to be more **convincing** in the application of directive about urban sustainability, but less rigid in the bureaucratic processes, more simple and less specialises, (and less obsessed by the economic rigour, in the opinion of some actors).
- With regard to the issue to be supported more, in the next programming period Europe should hold up: **creativity** linked to **productive** processes, **material** and **immaterial infrastructures** to avoid isolation of some territories,

Analysis

a) Are there some issues considered as important/ problematic unanimously by the decision-makers (within each decision-making level and including all the levels)?

- Need of more **competence** in the public administration, in particular for complex projects.
- Need of simple and **updated regulations**, especially for regeneration policies and application of European directives in urban sustainability themes.
- A topic is connected to **time-management** and **levels of government**: there is a need of a good programming of the urban policies, but there is also a problem of frequent changes of public agendas and need of improving the ability to carry out defined

projects; it's important to improve the capability to manage the conflicts of priorities between different levels of government.

- It needs a stronger connection local and global strategies and actors in order to avoid isolation of small communities and auto-reference of local actors and **lobbies**.
- Need of improving the involvement of **entrepreneurial culture** and creativity of private actors, associations, their specialisms, capacity of innovation, and need by the private actors of losing their pre-conception regarding the inefficiency of the public administration, in other words, need of establishing a virtuous circle. This would have repercussions in urban policies of regeneration community-based.

b) Do you see a link which can be made between the needs/barriers and the results capitalized within URBAN EMPATHY? How could URBAN EMPATHY results respond to these needs and barriers?

Considering the rank developed summarising the opinions of the actors interviewed of the need and barriers, it's possible to define the following connections:

- With regard to the need of **monitoring urban policies** and the **wrong and obsolete policies** for urban problems:
 - **CAT-MED**, indicators and Malaga charter to define priorities of government;
 - **ZEROWASTE** with its decision Support Tool (DST) for waste management.
- To offer **governance tools** and support **innovative ideas in landscape**:
 - **PAYS.MED.URBAN** with partnership tools to improve agreements between different actors;
 - **C.U.L.T.U.R.E** with its Action plan for Unesco historical centres.
- In relation with the need to improve the **relationship between public and private actors** and **their trust**:
 - **MARIE**, with its platform for Energy Efficiency that Involves public and private actors;
 - **EFFECT** with international training seminars for policy makers on integration of energy efficient criteria in tender documentation;
 - **CAT-MED**, with its Metropolitan groups & Green Apple
- Regarding to the need of involvement of citizens and of promotion of territory as a public good:
 - **Hybrid Parks** with its workshop methodology to support integrated approaches;
 - **CAT-MED**, with its Metropolitan groups & Green Apple

- In relation with **energy efficiency** and the need of **guide-lines**, simplification and good-practices:
 - **TEENENERGY** with guide-lines for energy efficiency in public buildings;
 - **ELIH-Med** with capitalisation Strategy and policy paper;
 - **ENERSUPPLY** with its guidelines for the Sustainable Energy Action Plan in Fojnica

- In relation with improving the capability to manage and have ideas in specific sustainable actions:
 - **CITIES FOR MOBILITY** network;
 - **PLUS with** Recommendation for public lighting.

c) What are the expressed ideas you consider should be taken into account in priority in the elaboration of the SUMO tool kit?

With regard to the tools developed by the capitalised projects, the most important instruments would be:

- **Guide-lines** in different fields (energy efficiency, protection of the landscape,...) to be offered to the public administration committed to sustainable projects, that can offer a simple and common base for all the actors involved in the project to fulfil an objective in an easy way;
- **Best-practices** in order to show cases of successful implementation (since in Italy one of the most felt barriers is the low capability to implement projects);
- **Participation tools and methods of agreements** to intersect demand and offer, private and public actors, also to avoid “smashed” and fragmented policies.

In general, every tool that is going to be capitalised, put together different questions and issues and tent to offer different solutions or new demands or answers for old and emerging problems. The capitalised tools can offer different methods to oversee complex topics regarding urban sustainability (in different fields) manage different and overlapping problems all together, with “synchronic” tolls, and “just in time” solutions. The actors were very interested on these aspects.