

RESTARTING FROM CITIES TO RELAUNCH EUROPE: THE CONFCOMMERCIO-ANCI PROTOCOL



*AnCI*¹ and *Confcommercio - Imprese per l'Italia*² have subscribed in Rome last 23rd April 2015 a **Protocol of Understanding** aimed at setting-up new models and practices for urban regeneration with the goal of contrasting the current economic cycle that caused severe impoverishment to Cities, both in terms of decreased services to citizens and in terms of economic losses to enterprises. The main purpose of the Protocol is that of highlighting the key-role of urban areas in promoting social and economic development, in Italy as well as in

Europe, thereby remarking the importance of ensuring to Cities a more effective participation to the EU decisional process, also by enhancing a correct use of Structural Funds and other EU financial instruments for the period 2014-2020.

So far, **79 municipalities and Confcommercio local associations** all around Italy have already subscribed the Protocol, and many others have expressed their interest to join, **thus representing 9% of the overall Italian population (5.472.248 inhabitants) and 11% of the tertiary sector in Italy (347.797 enterprises)**.

Among the Protocol objectives, the specific commitment to launch, at national and European level, some **concrete actions to promote the "urban dimension of EU policies"** has to be notably underlined.

The Protocol represents indeed a deep cultural innovation, creating a common playfield to private and public actors for urban development. In order to facilitate a profitable dialogue among the partners, a **National Experimental Laboratory for Urban regeneration and new Urban practices** has been implemented, coordinated by the Confcommercio's Head of Unit for Urban Planning and Development. The laboratory is composed by **170 members**, including city mayors, council members, Confcommercio local directors and several professionals and representatives of the civil society appointed by the two parties. The latter's activities are structured in **Local and Thematic Working Groups**. Designed to become a real hotbed of ideas and projects, the WGs have been engaged on the following topics:

- 1) Urban Agenda;
- 2) City Centres;
- 3) Urban outskirts;
- 4) Urban Regeneration and re-use of disused real estates;
- 5) Mobility for persons and goods;
- 6) Accessible cities for all;
- 7) Participatory projects and Urban Regeneration;
- 8) Urban traffic management and Retail;
- 9) Renewable energy and Sustainable Growth;
- 10) Relationships between cities, surrounding territories and tourism;
- 11) European Priorities 2014-2020;
- 12) Anthropological transformation and New Languages.

¹ ANCI is the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) with a membership which includes almost every municipality in Italy, representing over 90% of the population.

² CONFCOMMERCIO-*Imprese per l'Italia* is the Italian General Confederation of Enterprises, Professions and Self-Employment and the largest business association in Italy counting more than 700.000 partners.