Confronting housing poverty: the role of Social Agencies for Housing

Theory Based Evaluation

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The **MULTI-FUND NATIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME METROPOLITAN CITIES 2014-2020 (NOP METRO)** enacts a key portion of the Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) in the Italian PA 14/20, in the framework of European Urban Agenda for cohesion policies. The OP is aimed at **strengthening the role of metro territories**.

**URBAN AGENDA DRIVERS**

The NOP METRO operates on the 14 metropolitan cities to strengthen and improve the services offered to residents and city users and is focuses on **two strategic drivers**:  

**SMART CITY** for the redesign and modernization of public services through the digital agenda and a more efficient/sustainable energy and mobility management.  

**SOCIAL INNOVATION** for the inclusion of the fragile population segments and disadvantaged neighborhoods through services (ESF) and infrastructures (EDRF).
The NOP METRO supports specific priority actions within A NATIONAL OVERALL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK for the metropolitan cities, addressing some of the main challenges such territorial contexts are facing

**ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

• The **Agency for Territorial Cohesion** in Central Govt. acts as Managing Authority

• The **14 provincial capitals of metropolitan area** have been identified as **Urban Authorities (UA) and Intermediate bodies** according to art. 7 ERDF Reg.

• **beneficiaries are:** council administrations; public authorities; third sector, citizens’ associations

http://www.ponmetro.it/
PRIORITY AXES of NOP METRO

- **AXIS 1 (OT2)**
  Digital metropolitan Agenda (EDRF)

- **AXIS 2 (OT 4)**
  Sustainable energy and urban mobility (ERDF)

- **AXIS 3 (OT9)**
  Social inclusion services (ESF)

- **AXIS 4 (OT9)**
  Infrastructures for social inclusion (ERDF)

- **AXIS 5**
  Technical assistance (ERDF)

NATIONAL OP METROPOLITAN CITIES
BUDGET

The total budget of the program amounts to **892.9 MILLION €** of which **€ 588.1 MLN** contribution from EU funds (ERDF € 445,7 MLN, the ESF € 142,3 MLN).

Cities supported by NOP METRO are in different categories of regions. The 6 cities located in less developed regions receive the largest share of the budget.
• Since the crisis, urban centres are experiencing widespread and severe forms of housing deprivation, mainly linked with the emergence of new forms of urban poverty.

• In order to reduce housing deprivation, a number of measures were implemented, at the national, regional and, especially, city levels.

• In 2014 the Italian Govt. launched the Housing Plan.

• Still, most innovative solutions were established at the local level.
THE HOUSING PLAN

• The **Housing Plan** is an attempt to coordinate conventional and innovative interventions in order to diminish housing deprivation.

• New measures include:
  - The National Fund to support the housing rent
  - The Fund aimed at supporting tenants in arrears
  - Incentives to bring on the market vacant houses at an agreed rent (for private owners: tax discounts, other fiscal advantages on rent revenues, guarantee funds, etc.)
  - Actions to fight the unauthorised occupation of SPH and their own redemption
  - Actions to support the purchase of social housing by tenants

• Special attention has also been granted to support organisational set up development to ensure effective coordination of these measures in different urban and metropolitan contexts, through ‘Social Agencies for Housing’ (SAH), a new model...
NOP METRO funds the implementation of housing measures (introduced by the Housing Plan) in the 14 cities providing methodological and operational support to local authorities and encouraging experimentation and exchange of practices within a common national framework.

**PROGRAM THEORY**

1. NOP METRO
2. IMPLEMENTATION OF HOUSING MEASURES
3. SOCIAL AGENCIES FOR HOUSING
4. REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AND HOUSEHOLDS IN HOUSING POVERTY OR SOCIAL EXCLUSION
5. SOCIAL INCLUSION
PROGRAM THEORY

- The persistence of the economic and occupational crisis strongly affected the social service system, highlighting its inadequacy in facing citizens' emerging needs, leading to rethink, rationalize and target service design and provision.

- Streamline administrative procedures and integrate service sectors/departments
- New professional and specific skills and expertise
- Refine assessment of diversified needs of citizens/households
- Experiment innovative approaches, tools, services according to different needs
- Set up multidimensional and integrated services (one stop shop)
- Brokering in private rental market
- Anti-eviction actions and access to assistance and subsidies
- Specific solutions (housing led e housing first)
- Employment and other social service package (e.g. elderly, disabilities)
- Experiment of innovative approaches, tools, services according to different needs

MEASURES TO DEAL WITH HOUSING POVERTY: experimenting more integration among different actions
These “integrated” housing measures will be implemented according to each city’s organizational structure, but all aim at creating a 'One Stop Shop' for service provision. Examples:

**TORINO, GENOVA, BOLOGNA** have already implemented SAH, and will experiment innovative actions to reinforce existing services, encouraging community welfare and social innovation and will expand the SAH to the municipalities of the metropolitan area.

**MILANO** will reinforce existing services for specific target (e.g. disabilities, ...) and social innovation.

**BARI** is going to set up an overall integrated strategy coordinated by Porta Futuro (centre for job services).

**REGGIO CALABRIA, CATANIA, CAGLIARI, starting from scratch**, aim at reinforce administrative processes and integration of sector offices, transforming Department-Centric Approach to Customer-Centric Approach.
Service innovation, diversification and customization (ESF) integrated with infrastructure investment for expansion/renovation of public housing stock (ERDF)

EXPANSION AND RENOVATION OF PUBLIC ESTATE ASSETS (housing and services)

SOCIAL AGENCIES FOR HOUSING

REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AND HOUSEHOLDS IN HOUSING POVERTY OR SOCIAL EXCLUSION

multidimensional and integrated services (one stop shop)

increase availability of multi-purpose housing units

new spaces for public/non profit services in marginal neighbourhoods (social innovation)
PROGRAM THEORY

REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AND HOUSEHOLDS IN HOUSING POVERTY OR SOCIAL EXCLUSION

RISK

- Ineffective assessment of household needs
- Failing in integration of city depts.
- Lack of integration between Axis 3 and 4
- Weakness of local welfare systems (southern cities)
- Lack of innovation ecosystem

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ‘ONE STOP SHOP’ ENSURING THE ACCESS TO A NUMBER OF SERVICE

SOCIAL AGENCIES FOR HOUSING

EXPANSION AND RENOVATION OF PUBLIC ESTATE ASSETS

new housing, public spaces and social economic infrastructures in SPH neighbourhoods

OPPORTUNITIES

- Uniform national strategy
- Fruitful and operational exchange between cities
- Thematic working groups

CONTEXT

Lack of uniformity in the cities' starting conditions (strong and weak)
EXPECTED OUTPUTS

• **integrated path** for job, social, educational, health care placement and housing supplement for 3,904 low-income individuals and for 5,855 individuals with severe forms of distress

• creation and/or requalification of 2,270 **apartments for families** with special social and economic fragility

• restoration of 35,600 square meters of **unused buildings** to host social services

• support to 644 **projects** implemented by active actors in welfare or NGOs involved in target areas

• integrated programs for 485 individuals belonging to the **Rom, Sinti and Camminanti communities**

• low-threshold services and emergency social intervention for 1,811 **homeless**
OBJECT OF THE EVALUATION

• The **Social agencies for housing** is the main object of evaluation in the area of integrated policies to confront housing poverty.

• The **organizational and operational solutions** adopted to confront housing poverty and the ways in which **infrastructure interventions will be integrated with services** for social inclusion, will be investigated.

• **Given the experimental nature of financing housing policies with ESI funds,** the evaluation may produce a significant increase in knowledge and may help to orient future decisions.
MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

• a) What are the structure and functions of Social Agencies for Housing in the different municipalities? How have services been expanded to the municipalities of the metropolitan area and what are the results of this operation? What value added for Social Agencies for Housing compared to other possible solutions to provide municipal services?

• b) Based on a set of horizontal indicators, what are the outcomes achieved in different cities to prevent housing poverty (e.g. have synergies been activated following the integrated approach of the ESF and ERDF axis)? What is the contribution of the OP to the recovery and reuse of buildings compared to similar experiences carried out in Italy and Europe?

• c) Have the actions been integrated in order to optimize the use of available resources?
MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

• d) What factors define the effectiveness of the OP (in the short- and long-term) in reducing housing problems of different target groups (e.g. age, working and economic conditions, psychological problems, homelessness, etc.)?

• e) What is the contribution of the OP to the recovery and reuse of unused property in compliance with the integrated and sustainable urban planning, and in comparison to similar experiences carried out in Italy and Europe?

• f) Innovative actions for institutional empowerment, integrated service provision, cost efficiency, and public-private cooperation: do they show potential for transferability and replicability?
EVALUATION DESIGN

The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the integrated actions in bringing change in facing housing deprivation. The evaluation will also assess which mechanisms, adopted in different contexts, seems best to achieve the specific objectives and the OP progress towards target achievement.

Investigation of:

• organizational framework and services provision in implemented measures

• key success elements of Social Agencies for Housing and services provision, also in comparison with previous experiences in various cities

• the management of different services (i.e. social, health, employment, ...) and the way they operate to build an integrated reference point for beneficiaries (v. "one stop shop" multi-dimensional).

• Sinergies between Axis III-ESF and Axis IV-EDRF resulted by integrated multi-fund approach
EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

Case study applying mixed methods such as:
• interviews to intermediate bodies and public and private implementing bodies
• focus-group with public and private stakeholders and implementing bodies
• analysis of technical and administrative documents on all Metropolitan cities with comparative analysis on specific issues

The focus will be on the following topics:
• Role of Social Agencies for Housing, including implemented activities analysis and results obtained
• Role of private sector, third/non profit sector including the analysis of the social innovation elements regarding the fight against housing deprivation

DATA SOURCES
Primary and secondary data
Primary data based on case studies (using mixed methods) and ad hoc surveys monitoring data