

# Pilot peer-review workshop

## Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Strategies

### The Urban Development Network

#### REGGIO EMILIA URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



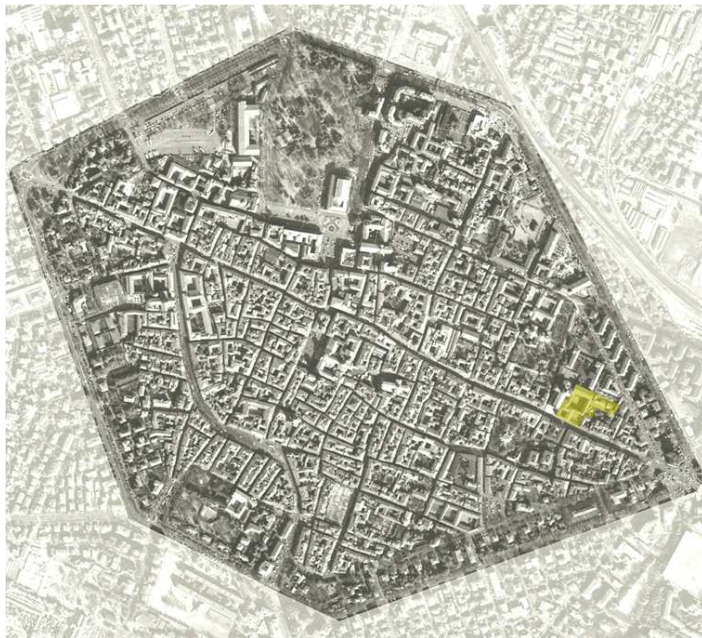
Sevilla  
28\_29 January 2016

# Strategy of Reggio Emilia

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**Reggio Emilia Urban Development Strategy within ERDF Emilia Romagna Region  
Operational Programme 2014-2020 –**

**Axis 6\_« Attractive and participative cities »**



## Your expectations from the Peer-Review Workshop

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### **\*\*How do you think you can benefit from the workshop?**

→ A peer review would allow Reggio Emilia City Council to explore further implementation of its urban development strategy, by enhancing a **more critical approach thanks to the comparison with other European cities.**

### **\*\*How do you think the other peers can learn from your experience?**

Our experience can be useful to point out the necessity of a strategic planning approach to the topics of

→ **1.urban regeneration, 2.social innovation, 3.sustainable economic development.**

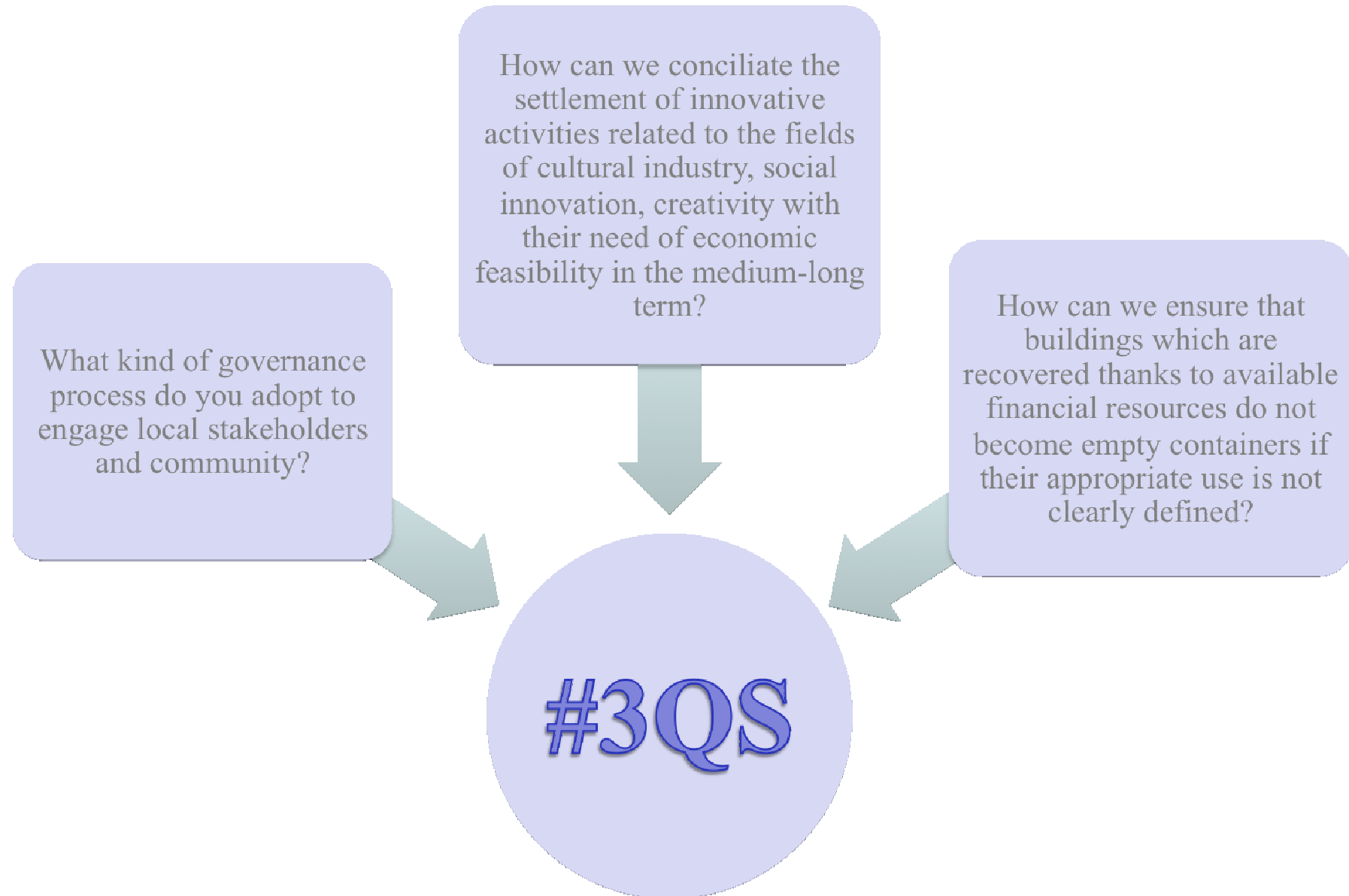
### **\*\*Which specific experiences would you like to share with them?**

The main issues are

- \*\*urban regeneration,**
- \*\*governance processes,**
- \*\*community engagement and participation,**
- \*\*social innovation,**
- \*\*local economic development.**

## Three questions you would like peers to discuss

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# Context



**Demography 171.655 inhabitants.** 20% has more than 65 years and 18% comes from a foreign country. From 2010 to 2014 migration showed a decline in inbound (-789 units) and a significant increase in output (+ 1,757 units). The aging population is a growing phenomenon.



**Social synthesis** Social services are turning from a traditional performance model into a model based on a network of private and public entities capable of developing community welfare. **Widespread civic volunteering and active citizenship** (about 26.000 people working on social cohesion among 172.000 residents).



**Density 744 (inhabitants/kmq)**



**Environmental aspects** The city of Reggio Emilia has been investing for years in: protection, promotion and increase of public green areas (the "Green Belt" project); energy innovation (goal: -20% Co2 emissions by 2020); ecologic mobility (bicycle use increased from 15% in 2007 to 18% in 2012); **urban planning and regeneration** (low land take: 65% of the building activity will regard refurbishment and 0.8% new buildings)



**Economy and productive activity** 56,041 businesses in the province of Reggio Emilia (in 2014). The **tertiary sector is developing; trade, agriculture, constructions and manufacturing** are slowing down.

## Context - Building the evidence base for the strategy

### SWOT ANALYSIS REFERRING TO THE GENERAL URBAN CONTEXT



## Experience in ISUDS

**2009 – 2013\_Northern Area project.** A network of 60 institutions, universities, organizations and research centres, companies and private firms were engaged through an institutional governance process on the topic of **Officine Reggiane environmental, social and economic regeneration**: a huge discarded area was refurbished and turned into a **hub for industrial research and technological transfer**.



From the Northern Area governance process, based exclusively on a **top-down** approach, **we have learned that a networking process both at an institutional level (top – down approach) and at an informal level (bottom – up approach) is necessary and more efficient rather than an institutional approach only.**



## Experience in ISUDS

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**"Quartiere bene comune"** project (ongoing). An experimental **bottom up governance approach** which:

**\*\*Adopts** a "phenomenological" interpretation of territorial dynamism and needs beyond its traditional administrative division;

**\*\*Provides** actions concerning city maintenance and citizens care

**Methodology:** a process of **community engagement** at the neighbourhood level, through neighbourhood - based representation points (participative laboratories) coordinated by the City Council and **co-designed with local associations and citizens** (main issues: social innovation, education, urban security, active citizenship), **through citizens labs.**

**Output:** drafting of agreements between the Municipality and the community in order to define the problems and the correlated strategies

From the "Quartiere bene comune" project, based exclusively on a **bottom – up approach**, we are learning that a networking process both at an institutional level (top – down approach) and at an informal level (bottom – up approach) would be more efficient to guarantee interventions feasibility rather than an informal approach only.

## Vision and objectives

### Reggio Emilia Strategic Vision



### Reggio Emilia "Smart specialisation strategy"

**Development of Reggio Emilia distinctive competencies** (personal services, education, mechatronics, agro-food, energy/environment)

**IN ORDER TO**

**Enhancement of Reggio Emilia "way of life"** (sustainability, creativity, entrepreneurship, participation, solidarity)

- MAKE INNOVATION A PRIORITY
- FOCUS INVESTMENTS AND CREATE SYNERGIES
- IMPROVE GOVERNANCE PROCESSES
- DEVELOP ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION
- RESPOND TO SOCIETAL AND ECONOMIC CHALLENGES
- CATCH INVESTORS INTEREST
- PROMOTE KNOWLEDGE SPILL OVER

# Action Plan

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## \*\*MAIN OBJECTIVES

1. Reggio Emilia as a **centre for research and development**, technology transfer and high specialization

2. Reggio Emilia as a nationally relevant **centre of manufacturing**

3. Reggio Emilia as a **hub for new entrepreneurial activities** in the fields of culture industry, social innovation, social services, ICT

## \*\*ACTIONS



### ***Parco dell'Innovazione project:***

regeneration of a huge discarded industrial area (Area Reggiane) in the Northern area of the town and its turning into a hub for industrial research and technology transfer



### ***Parco Industriale project in***

***Mancasale***, located in the Northern area of the town: the centre of industrial production and manufacturing



### **Historic centre: the integrated intervention in the city centre under the ERDF programme**

restoration of S. Pietro previous benedictine monastery



## Action Plan

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### \*\*Why these actions

Because they regard areas which are **being transformed** (Area Reggiane) or areas with a consolidated vocation but **still to be enhanced** (Mancasale and city centre) and which therefore represent a strategic potential.

### \*\*Which actions are a priority and for what reasons?

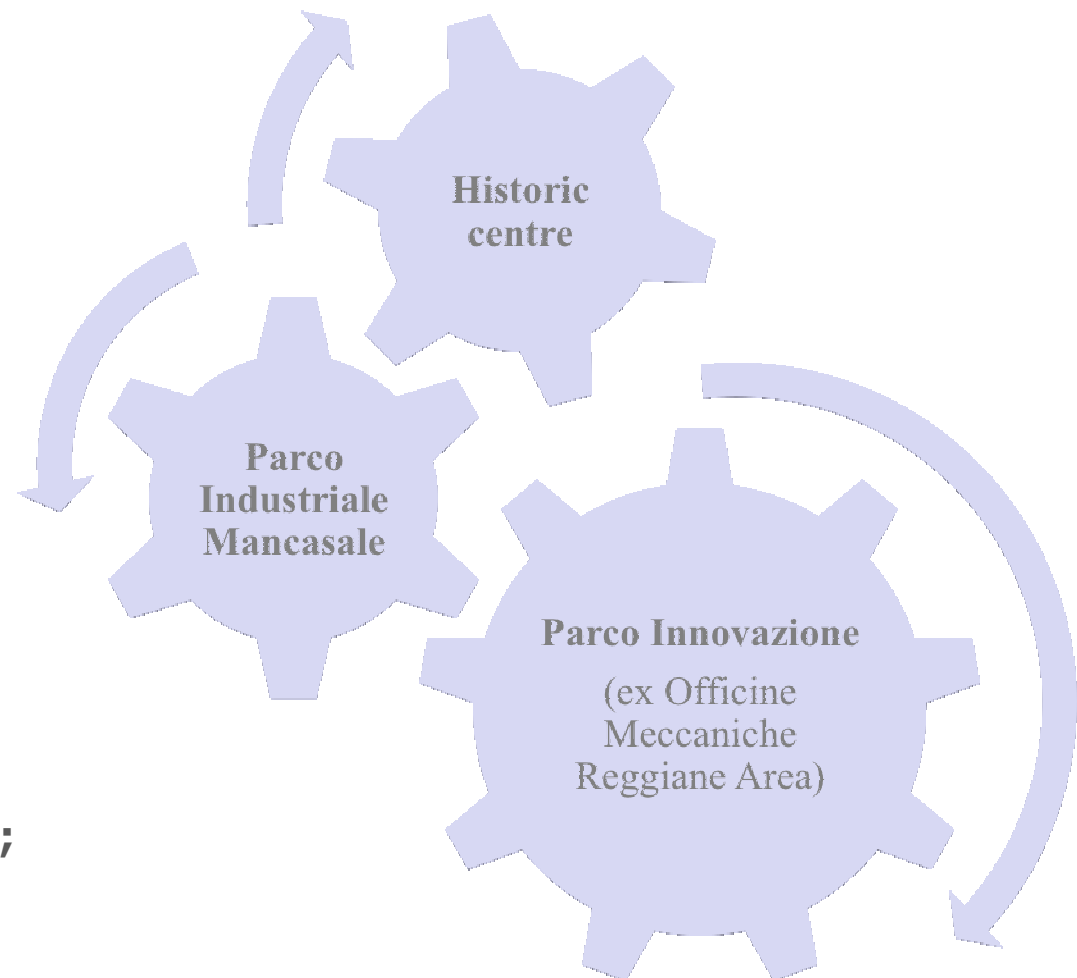
All the actions represent a priority for the City Council. They impact on different fields of innovation and therefore are **complementary**.

### \*\*What sectors will benefit

Objective 1: **R&D;**

Objective 2: **industrial technologies;**

Objective 3: **social innovation, culture industry, creativity, ICT.**



### “Attractive and participative cities”

→ Within the general strategic vision, the initiative regarding Objective 3 is funded by **ERDF Emilia Romagna Regional Operational Programme\_ Axis 6 « Attractive and participative cities»**

→ The **Emilia Romagna Region Managing Authority** determines the scope of tasks to be undertaken by **Urban Authorities** concerning the management of integrated actions for sustainable urban development, defines the steps of work, the deadlines and provides accurate details on the actions and on financing.

→ **Reggio Emilia acts as an Urban Authority.** Each Urban Authority takes note of the Regional addresses and defines its urban development strategy according to them.

## Evaluation of the strategy

**SWOT Analysis  
correlated to the  
urban area in the  
historic centre where  
Reggio Emilia is going  
to intervene under  
ERDF programme  
(objective 3)**

**Strengths:** Presence of excellence nodes regarding the cultural system; high quality of public spaces; high range of functions and services; concentration of the trading system; reference of identity and memory for the community; availability of spaces to attract new residents.

**Weaknesses:** Presence of some degraded architectural heritage (empty, partially used, rundown buildings); petty crime; perception of urban insecurity; stillness of the real estate market; accessibility and parking.

**Opportunities:** Possibility of enhancing projects concerning town cultural identity; high expectations by the young people as regards areas to be dedicated to social interaction, aggregation and cultural contamination; new interest in the development of cultural industry, digital craftsmanship, creative professions and smart technologies.

**Threats:** More dynamism in the town as a whole and therefore more competitiveness among the city centre and other urban areas; rigidity and complexity of the regulatory framework as concerns the development of national and local infrastructural projects.

# Integrated approach

The intervention covered by the ERDF programme is **integrated** because it regards:

- \*\*the restoration of an important architectural complex** (SS. Pietro and Prospero benedictine monastery).
- \*\*the establishment of the “open laboratory”** in the restored building correlated to social innovation, creativity and community participation.
- \*\*the promotional activity** aiming at supporting the initiative development and maximizing the positive impacts on the area.
- \*\*partnership among local stakeholders**
- \*\*the reuse of the architectural complex, destined for the development of new social services, start-up and new businesses is an opportunity to turn an engine of economic and social growth on in the old town, beyond its current predominant commercial fruition.**





## ERDF funded intervention





## ERDF funded intervention

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## ERDF funded intervention





## ERDF funded intervention

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## ERDF funded intervention



## Policy coordination and funding scheme

### *Objective 1\_Parco dell'Innovazione project: funds*

"Piano Nazionale delle Città" national financing programme (12.000.000,00€), regional funds and public-private partnership

### **Objective 3\_The integrated intervention in the city centre under ERDF programme: funds**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>ERDF</b>	<b>City Council</b>	<b>Total amount</b>
<b>Architectural refurbishment</b>	1.750.000,00€	450.000,00 €	2.200.000,00€
<b>Open laboratory</b>	1.000.000,00€	250.000,00 €	1.250.000,00€
<b>Promotional activity</b>	251.371,60 €	48.628,40 €	300.000,00€

## Governance and stakeholder engagement

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### NORTHERN AREA PROJECT

Ex. Top-down governance process



more than **60 public and private institutional stakeholders** involved (industrial innovation, education, environment/energy)

### QUARTIERE, BENE COMUNE PROJECT

Ex. Bottom-up governance process



more than **270 people involved** (80 associations, 200 citizens/volunteers), **30 projects** activated.

### ERDF FUNDED INTEGRATED INTERVENTION

Ex. Bottom-up + top-down governance process



The processes is going to be structured **both through a top-down governance** and a **bottom - up approach**.

All the governance processes are **supported by the City Council** which plays a **leading role** in coordination and networking.



## Timeframe and Monitoring

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### Objective 1

the Parco dell'Innovazione is already partially used thanks to the Tecnopolo (2012). Ongoing, to be concluded by 2018.

### Objective 2

4 labs activated in 2015. 10 more labs to be activated by 2016.

### Objective 3 (ERDF programme)

architectural project phase: to be concluded by **April 2016**; tender for works execution (**April – July 2016**); works execution (**July 2016 – March 2017**); top down + bottom up governance process (**January-September 2016**); tender for managing entity (**September 2016 – January 2017**); opening of the open laboratory (**March 2017**).



## Timeframe and Monitoring

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### → indicators to measure the success of the strategy

**\*\*Objective 1:** Number of start up, number of enterprises and R&D projects, number of prototypes, number of international connections

**\*\*Objective 2:** Number of activated projects. Number of citizens and associations engaged.

**\*\*Objective 3 (ERDF programme):** Number of start up and enterprises, number of socially and technologically innovative projects, number of beneficiary subjects, number of prototypes, number of international connections

## Governance and stakeholder engagement

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\*\*As concerns the intervention under ERDF programme, both institutional and informal stakeholders are going to be fundamental in order to:

- define the most coherent operational fields** of the open laboratory, according to the real territorial needs and economic development assets;
- test and validate the results** achieved through the open laboratory.

\*\*The **City Council** together with the **managing entity of the open laboratory** is responsible for the implementation of the strategy.

## Participation

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\*\*The city council has been stimulating for years **informal networks**, based on **community participation** and **volunteer engagement** on public interest issues.

The city council has also been encouraging civic volunteering and active citizenship, with the project "I Reggiani per Esempio" by financing (1million of euro) spontaneous initiatives of common interest coming from the community (in **Reggio Emilia there are about 26.000 people working on social cohesion among 172.000 residents**).

\*\* The project has been developed into "European for example" as a good practice for other european countries (Turkey, Romany, Spain)

## Question for round table 1

### **Question 1/What kind of governance process do you adopt to engage local stakeholders and community?**

#### **Why?**

This question is particularly relevant because we haven't found a completely successful methodology yet and we are looking forward to exploring possible more effective implementations of our governance approaches.

#### **What has been done?**

we have adopted both a top- down approach through institutional stakeholders engagement (Northern Area Project) and a bottom- up approach through community engagement ("Quartiere, bene comune" project). We are now going to explore a possible combination of the two different approaches (top – down and bottom - up) in the context of the historic centre where we are going to intervene under the ERDF programme.

#### **What worked?**

In the top- down governance approach, a well structured and strongly institutionalized process was activated, that led to a clear identification of reciprocal roles and financial commitments. In the bottom – up approach a continuous interaction between the City Council and the Community leads to a precise identification of local needs and stimulates the citizens to have a more active say in public decisions.

#### **What did not work?**

In the top- down governance approach the choices were made institutionally without listening to the neighbourhood community point of view and effective needs; in the bottom – up governance approach there is generally not a wide engagement of economically relevant investors and most of the topics are petty and quite of low interest for the city as a whole.

## Question for round table 2

**Question 2/how can we conciliate the settlement of innovative activities related to the fields of cultural industry, social innovation, creativity with their need of economic feasibility in the medium-long term?**

### Why?

this question is particularly relevant because we find it a complex challenge to guarantee social feasibility in the medium-long term to those activities which might be strategic for urban social and cultural development but are not always capable of attracting huge capitals.

### What has been done?

in the Northern Area Project, the Tecnopolo was individuated as a strategic hub for research and development. In the intervention under the ERDF programme, the S. Pietro architectural complex is going to be turned into a hub for start up and innovative activities in the fields of creativity, ICT, social innovation.

### What worked?

the Tecnopolo represents an important reference at a regional scale for technological transfer.

### What did not work?

the companies interest in settling in the Tecnopolo was much lower than expectations.

## Question for round table 3

**Question 3/How can we ensure that buildings which are recovered thanks to available financial resources do not become empty containers if their appropriate use is not clearly defined?**

### Why?

This question is relevant because in Italy we quite often happen to have an excess of “containers” if compared to the “contents” and we often intervene on historical heritage which might be successfully refurbished but yet remains an empty “showcase” with no relevant use.

### What has been done?

Many important historical buildings in Reggio Emilia have been refurbished to host cultural activities, expositions, artistic performances and promotional events. The S. Pietro benedictine complex is among them, though it is used during spring/summer season only.

### What worked?

The restored buildings are strategic attractive poles at a large scale.

### What did not work?

The restored buildings are actively frequented during specific periods but in some cases they might remain with no relevant use for most of the year.