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# From social infrastructure to civic center. The school as laboratory of collaborative governance models

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## Introduction

- 1 The post-war boom, known as the *Glorious Thirty Years* in Italy as in many other European countries, was considered a period of important social policies and infrastructural projects to design and build public services accessible to all and to improve the quality of life of the entire population.<sup>1</sup> It was a fertile period, during which public action was synonymous with a regulative and redistributive function of territorial and social rights and opportunities. This happened in the face of an economy based on the free market, and an urbanization mainly led by the speculative initiatives of the private sector<sup>2</sup>. Half a century later, we can say that “the 20<sup>th</sup> century is truly over.”<sup>3</sup> Not only has that period of urban and economic growth and development come to an end, but the interaction between public and private actors has changed significantly, not least due to important socio-economic transformations.<sup>4</sup>
- 2 The first is undoubtedly due to the fact that our social and economic organization has become more complex, turning a homogeneous and predictable mass society into a plural society with multiple, fragmented, urban and social needs. This now reveals that the twentieth-century welfare system, once considered a guarantee for universal access to basic rights, has become completely ineffective.<sup>5</sup> The second involves changes in the demand for urban services, initially drafted during the years of economic boom and population growth, but now confronted with a crisis economy and an increasingly ageing, shrinking, but more mobile and multi-ethnic population. The third has to do with the weakening of public government institutions, both in terms of legitimacy and

spending power, in tandem with the emergence of what has begun to be called a *caring society*<sup>6</sup>: that is, a society of private citizens who, either individually or in associations, come together to act for the common interest, to care for abandoned urban areas, for example, or to create local and community welfare services, ultimately producing public value.<sup>7</sup> To address this paradigm shift in society and consequently in public services, the example of schools seems fitting to us, as an emblematic manifestation of the twentieth-century social service in crisis and in search of transformation.

- 3 Talking about schools in Italy today means dealing with a heritage of almost 40,000 buildings, of which more than 75% were built between 1947 and the beginning of the 1980s.<sup>8</sup> Although this heritage represents the main socio-spatial public infrastructure in the national territory, it is currently in conditions of serious degradation and progressive abandonment, also because of a declining demand. Despite this contradictory picture, calling for a necessary change, it is nevertheless possible to recognize a certain and progressive habit of *educational communities*<sup>9</sup> in taking action to support the school service. It is very common for local social subjects — like families, third sector organizations, cultural institutions, etc. — to take care of a school building and its pertinent spaces<sup>10</sup> or to participate in the construction of educational opportunities to complement a school's curriculum.<sup>11</sup>
- 4 The school itself has changed its local role, becoming a territorial actor for urban regeneration: very often, educational institutions step outside their boundaries in order to take over public space — i.e. gardens, parks, libraries, museums, cycle workshops, etc. — pursuing different kinds of educational projects at different levels, and building alliances with other local community actors<sup>12</sup>. In recent years, also thanks to the needs imposed by the Covid-19 emergency, we have witnessed a progressive increase in these experiences, but also an attempt to systematize them, in order to first define the contours of an *educational community* and the subjects and relationships of which it is composed, but also through the definition of containers like specific competitions and tools designed to enable this change.

## A Change of Perspective: Shared Administration of Public Assets

- 5 Observing the processes just mentioned, we notice how the public service can be enriched, regenerated, and amplified into a more extensive idea of the educational experience, both in terms of space and method. Through the *actions of care* by the communities of reference, we seem to recognize the premises for a new way of administering the school, in which public and civic subjects collaborate by implementing the constitutional principle of *horizontal subsidiarity*, enshrined in the Italian Constitution in Article 118.4. Here, the model we refer to is that of shared administration, initially theorized by Gregorio Arena in 1997 and then tested throughout Italy starting in 2014, when the first “regulation on collaboration between citizens and administration for the care and regeneration of urban commons” was adopted in Bologna.<sup>13</sup> However, we are a long way from the more established interpretation of Article 118.4 of the Italian Constitution,<sup>14</sup> usually cited to support the gradual privatization of public services at the expense of the general interest.<sup>15</sup>

- 6 Bearing in mind this idea of shared administration, the statement “State, Regions, Metropolitan Cities, Provinces and Municipalities shall favor the autonomous initiative of citizens, either individual or associated, to carry out activities that are in the general interest” became tangible in the Collaboration Pacts. These are measures implementing *horizontal subsidiarity*, legal frameworks in which the general interest is the key issue in multi-actor collaborations, where authorization is dropped in favor of a redistribution of responsibilities and power among signatories<sup>16</sup>. This perspective subverts the bipolar paradigm of public-private contraposition, on which all public and administrative law has been based, as well as the universalistic welfare system of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, favoring negotiated and contextualized practices of co-designing general interest activities, where public and civic actors are considered on equal ground. So, what does it mean to rethink school infrastructure from a perspective of shared administration? What does it mean to rethink the relationship between school and territory in socio-relational as well as spatial terms?
- 7 These are the research questions guiding the argumentations presented in this article, which are dealt with by looking at the City of Turin as a field of very practical experimentation with regard to a generative alliance between the public subject and the civic society. The thesis we support is that, in order to look at these very practical spaces of collaboration, it entails a reframing of the relationship between service and users/consumers as *prosumers* or even *caresumers*,<sup>17</sup> and a consideration of the qualitative as well as quantitative aspects of supply. Moreover, this requires going beyond fixed regulations considered as the only way to define a collective service — that considers public interest in numerical terms and given values — and making the general interest a key issue, together with the input of communities interested in its construction (in this case, educational communities). Secondly, the perspective of common goods<sup>18</sup> applied to schools enables the enhancement of the universalist and redistributive welfare model used in its development (also in terms of spatial structures), making it better suited to the demands of the socio-economic context in which it is located.<sup>19</sup> Thirdly, it means considering education itself as a common good;<sup>20</sup> that is, the mission assigned to the school which, by enriching its main role to train and transmit, focuses on the learning and growth experience of all those who participate in the educational community (students, but also teachers, managers, school staff, families, and other actors in the territory) and creates an osmotic and dynamic relationship both inside and outside the school, between the school building and the neighborhood, and between institutions and civic space.<sup>21</sup>
- 8 This renewed relationship between school services and the city is certainly a key issue in numerous projects and studies, but also in other fields. Some cities in Europe have developed projects and enacted policies that regard the school as the epicenter of urban regeneration processes.<sup>22</sup> This first and foremost stems from the school building, considered as an opportunity to rethink territorial welfare, taking into account the plurality of actors and situations involved.<sup>23</sup> This is the case — one of many — of the project entitled “A Square for Every School” in Barcelona, that has reclaimed the public spaces in front of 200 schools throughout the city.<sup>24</sup>
- 9 This strategy aims to move from the model of “a city with play areas” to “a playable city,” through 63 spatial interventions to ensure safe use of space, specifically thought to also foster a concentration of children. The idea is to get out of the *space dedicated to service*, from the conception that the school and the playground are exclusive spaces

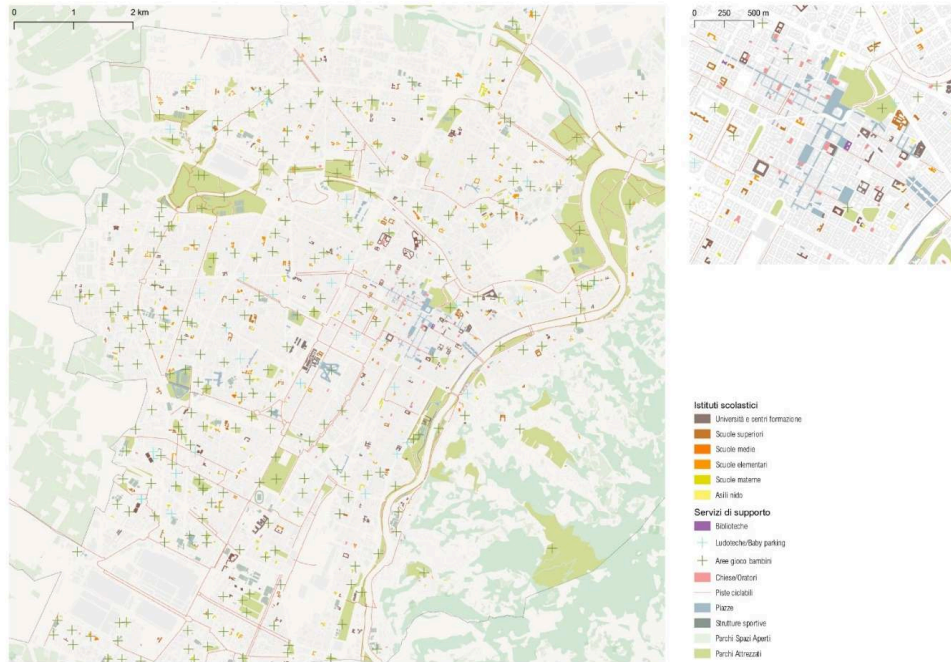
dedicated to the child, and to think of the child as an active subject who expresses needs and has a right to citizenship.

- 10 In Brussels, for example, the *Contrats école* are instruments to implement the Plan urbain de développement durable, to rethink the school as a space for social relations between different cultures and languages, and to reconfigure the school as a neighborhood hub.<sup>25</sup> The statement by the Mayor of Paris goes in the same direction, who in her *Manifesto* for Paris theorizes proximity as a new relational and spatial paradigm. She points specifically to the school as the core focus on which to reorganize urban living based on the model of the “15-minute city”.<sup>26</sup>

## Towards a Different Relationship Between School and Territory: The School as a Social Condenser of Urban Experiments in Turin

- 11 In Italy, many cities are trying to make schools a key issue in urban planning, since they are considered catalysts of urban regeneration processes and rethinking territorial welfare services.<sup>27</sup> In this context, Turin is an interesting place in which to experiment. Indeed, the city was the most important Fordist city in Italy, and from the 1990s onwards experienced a slow and progressive disposal process both with regard to industrial buildings and areas, as well as part of the welfare infrastructure on which the workers’ neighborhoods were built.<sup>28</sup> In this city, the period of European urban regeneration projects was an opportunity to build itself a different image, often starting from the suburbs and the neighborhoods that had lost their identity with the Fiat Factory.<sup>29</sup> In this context, schools have played a fundamental role in processes of urban regeneration and social inclusion. Schools in the city have gradually been acknowledged as territorial nodes that can be used as testing grounds for processes to reconnect public areas, create sustainable mobility, trigger urban regeneration,<sup>30</sup> civic participation and social inclusion.<sup>31</sup> As early as the mid-nineties, the city participated in numerous international cooperation projects to redefine the relationship between sustainable urban development and children : it initially joined the Global Network of Learning Cities, then in the early years of the third millennium was assigned the title of “Sustainable City of Girls and Boys.” All these acknowledgements were the starting points to actualize numerous experimental projects, such as the 1999 inauguration of the Sustainable City Laboratory,<sup>32</sup> that in 2010 was institutionalized and became the Istituzione Torinese per una Educazione Responsabile (ITER, Turin Institution for Responsible Education), and other public initiatives involving projects with children who were asked to redevelop the public space, for example by redesigning 50 schoolyards.<sup>33</sup> This experiment was then extended to include a participatory experience to establish the quality of playgrounds in the city; which in 2009 led to the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Play Areas.
- 12 Schools as a place where complementary policy sectors merge was also one of the topics of the ambitious Urban Innovative Action “Co-City”<sup>34</sup> project launched in 2017. By implementing the Regulation on the Shared Administration of Urban Commons, the project encouraged primary schools to not only foster active citizenship practices, but also establish themselves as territorial social venues promoting actions involving the care of public spaces, the adoption of the school, and openness towards the territory.

**Figure 1. The spatial infrastructure dedicated to the educational experience in Turin (schools, parks, sports fields, and parishes)**

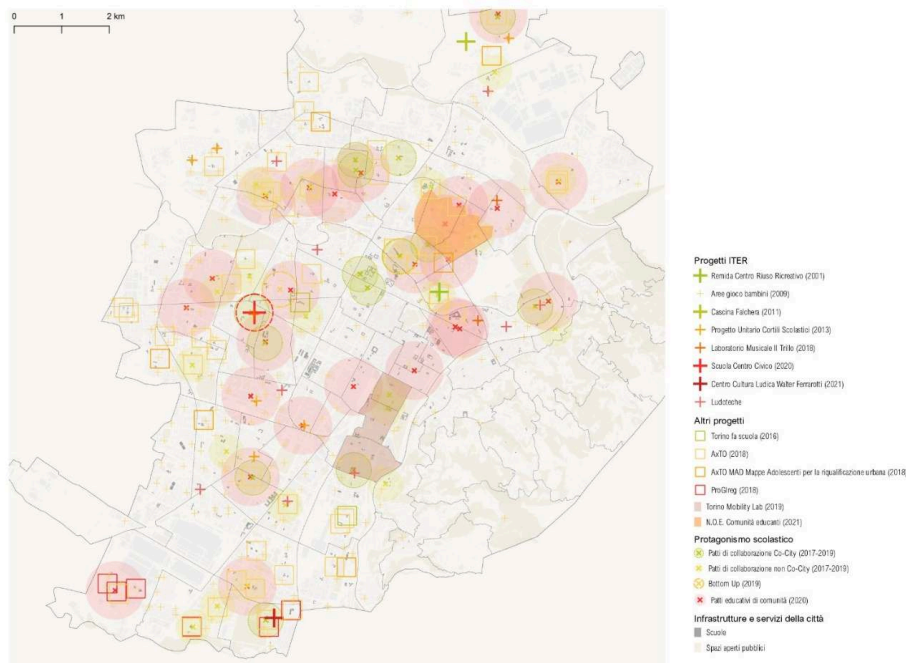


The map sees how denser spots emerge, capable of showing already existing clusters that may favor a school open to the territory and in synergy with it.

Designed by Eloy LLevat Soy

- 13 This model is also present in the recent project “Scuola Centro Civico” (“School Civic Centre”<sup>35</sup>), the result of a collaboration between the Municipal Educational Services, ITER, and the Smart City office, launched four years ago and inaugurated in the middle of the lockdown. Created as a hub for innovative education, but also as a center open to the neighborhood, it was located in a school that for years had suffered from a major drop in enrolment, due to phenomena of degradation and widespread bullying.

Figure 2. The educational community in action



The map underline projects and actions - both institutional and botton up - dedicated to strengthening the role of the educational community in the educational experience in Turin.

Designed by Eloy LLevat Soy

- 14 The municipal administration has also recently launched an urban workshop<sup>36</sup> in the San Salvario neighborhood, in order to test safe home-school pedestrian routes. This was achieved thanks to the implementation of an Urban Plan for Sustainable Mobility, redefining the hierarchy of neighborhood streets, as well as ‘school streets,’ and using school infrastructure as the main framework of the whole operation.<sup>37</sup> Other important local institutions have also joined the public administration in promoting projects that reassess the territorial role of schools — such as the “Torino fa scuola” project,<sup>38</sup> supported by the Agnelli Foundation and the Compagnia di San Paolo Foundation. In this case, a review of the theory and method behind the relationship between architecture and pedagogy made it possible to test a model involving the renovation of two secondary schools, thanks to the direct involvement of school communities in the process of designing the ‘school of the future.’
- 15 The project kicked off a complex survey conducted by the Agnelli Foundation on the state of school buildings in Italy. The goal was to support a lively national debate about the need to update this mostly dilapidated public heritage. A more recent experiment can be seen in “Bottom-up. When the city is made from the bottom,” a Festival of Architecture launched in 2020 and repropesed in 2021, developed by the Foundation of the Order of Architects of Turin. This was a public event designed to celebrate “bottom-up practices of architecture and regeneration.” Interestingly enough, when an open call for bottom-up projects was launched to mobilize local professionals, numerous schools decided to participate in partnership with architects, third sector organizations, and citizens’ groups, illustrating the increasingly widespread and, we could say, conscious protagonism of schools as agents of urban regeneration.

- 16 This brief excursus of the recent existing projects in the city of Turin — around the theme of school infrastructure as the center of wider urban regeneration and social inclusion processes — represents a process that has been underway for some decades in the city, which trace an interesting trajectory of policy-making. The presence of a consolidated set of subjects (among which the most recurring are ITER, the Educational Services, the School Building Office, the Compagnia di San Paolo Foundation, the CRT Foundation, the Agnelli Foundation, the Polytechnic School of Torino and the University of Turin) demonstrates a good degree of (more or less intentional) coordination in experimenting collaborative practices with respect to this goal. At the same time, however, it can be said that while the efforts and projects mentioned have revealed the role and transformative potential of schools at a social and urban level, they have not yet been able to put schools into a systemic and capillary perspective for urban regeneration, in order to start considering this public action as a territorial policy.<sup>39</sup>

### Schools as the Protagonists of the Co-City Project in Turin

- 17 With regard to the projects that have made schools the core issue in broader policy processes in Turin, the Co-City project (UIA Contract Notice) is the most interesting for several reasons. Firstly, because (unlike, for example, the Bottom Up call) it immediately identified schools as one of the preferred subjects of the project; secondly, because it considered schools as natural allies in countering growing urban poverty (as the main goal of the UIA call); and finally, because it is in part defined as the only attempt (at least on paper) to model and territorialize a wide-ranging process. The European contract notice focused on the relationship between poverty (in all its multiple forms, including education), urban regeneration, and the shared administration of new welfare spaces; acknowledging schools as a territorial ally with which, and through which, to rethink the local welfare system.
- 18 Hence, Co-City was developed in order to create a polycentric policy of generative community welfare. It began by identifying public infrastructure and real estate assets in the urban territory that needed to be upgraded, redeveloped and regenerated based on the reuse proposals presented by active citizens.<sup>40</sup> The instrument used to implement this process was the “regulations for collaboration between citizens and the administration for the care and regeneration of urban commons,” adopted in 2016 and systematically employed when the European project started in 2017. Each civic proposal was supposed to go into a co-design process with the municipal offices appointed to their implementation, with the aim of signing a “Collaboration Agreement” (Patto di Collaborazione), a public act that entrusts the care of the common (the asset) and its management to the parties involved.
- 19 The most interesting aspect of this project is the evident desire to establish a link between urban poverty, collaboration between public and private subjects and innovation of the territorial welfare system. In this context, shared administration becomes the way to try to define different relationships between public institutions and civil society for the co-production and co-management of local welfare services. In this regard, city authorities identified three types of spaces upon which they invited citizens to focus (Type A. disused buildings, Type B. under-utilised public platforms, Type C. public spaces); they then dedicated a specific study area to schools. Two “calls

for action” were organized during the project, focusing exclusively on preschools, primary and secondary schools. As stated in the public notice,

collaborative proposals must relate to at least one of the following action areas:

- “open schools”: Indoor or outdoor spaces such as courtyards, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, etc., to be made available to the public after school hours;
- “adoption of a school”: Organising seamless co-management actions to facilitate the implementation of routine maintenance, minor repairs, and the care and preservation of spaces;
- “adoption of public space”! Public space (either outdoors or indoor facilities) to be taken over by schools to facilitate forms of functional recovery, more effective public use, co-management, and social animation.”

- 20 The public notice also provided specific guidance regarding assessment of the proposals. It assigned higher scores to proposals that generated a positive impact on the socio-cultural conditions of the neighborhood, but also to ideas focusing on the economic and financial feasibility and sustainability of the reuse project.
- 21 The contract notice triggered 31 proposals, often with wide-ranging partnerships involving not only associations and cooperatives, but also informal citizen groups (residents in the neighborhood), parent committees, neighborhood businesses, etc.<sup>41</sup> Of these proposals, only 13 passed the selection process to access funding from the European project, most of which involved the maintenance, rehabilitation, adaptation, and design of physical spaces. The contract notice created an interesting mechanism, combining the opportunity to intervene in heritage rehabilitation with the demand to rethink the service.
- 22 Of the 13 proposals submitted, about half focused on school buildings and surrounding spaces (such as courtyards). The proposals frequently included a shared and open-use project of these areas, even after school, based on the model of Open and Shared Schools.<sup>42</sup> The remaining six proposals also included the urban space outside the school enclosure, making schools the protagonists of initiatives to care for nearby gardens or open spaces, or turn the surrounding streets into pedestrian areas or school streets.
- 23 The “open schools” proposals focus on integrating ordinary schooling with extra-curricular learning options (many of which are already present in the PTOF (the three-year plan of the educational offer), as well as with an informal and creative use of the spaces owned by the schools, especially courtyards. It must be said that, regarding this issue, the City of Turin had already launched an “Open Courtyards” project some years earlier.<sup>43</sup>
- 24 One of the most interesting aspects of all these projects is undoubtedly the wide-ranging variety of actors involved in the proposals. In addition to traditional alliances with the third sector (the programs reveal the strength of this relationship), other social subjects such as parents, neighborhood businesses (e.g. bookstores), other territorial institutions (universities, community foundations, etc.), parishes, districts, clubs, and freelancers (actors, directors, artists, etc.) lend their skills in order to create a different educational model. Compared to the proposed activities, the picture that emerges is of a constellation of territorial social facilities, the latter including opening courtyards after school hours, providing premises for activities complementing the education provided by the school, welcoming local cultural animation proposals, and creating events that could be attended by local residents. The objective was to be present in the neighboring urban space by extending the ideal perimeter of the educational space beyond the school fence, spilling over into streets, gardens, and

squares, thus making them available for hybrid uses and mixed relations. The main weak point of these original, forward-looking projects was the length of time it took to draft the agreements. Even now, many of the collaboration agreements submitted in the Co-City contract notice are unfortunately still waiting to be implemented.<sup>44</sup>

## Potential and Critical Aspects of a Promising Experiment<sup>45</sup>

- 25 This brief review of the most important projects implemented, one after the other, in Turin over the past 25 years — projects that have ratified the close relationship between schools and the territory — seem to indicate two main areas upon which we should reflect : the governance of these processes and the role played by educational institutions in the territories, and the tools used to plan public actions and support the leading role of schools. In fact, these are very different projects and processes in terms of the economic resources allocated, their objectives and timeframe. However, when assessed based on the projects planned by the schools, they reveal a potential new schooling model, intended to be a social condenser of urban experimentations in several policy areas such as education, culture, mobility, environment, regeneration, etc.
- 26 They are, however, based on the same idea: that educational institutions can physically, culturally and socially play a decisive role in building a different, integrated and fiercely territorialized welfare. This perspective requires a broader collaborative governance that necessarily includes — in addition to the institutional actors involved in public planning — a hands-on contribution from the *educational community*; that is, children, school principals, teachers, auxiliary staff, and youth, but also potentially the entire local population. The issue is therefore to open schools to the city.
- 27 The enthusiastic response of educational institutions to the contract notices — Co-City in 2018 and Bottom-Up in 2019 — highlight the awareness of most communities which try to reinvent themselves as open, shared schools when networking with third-sector actors, groups of citizens, and businesses. They do so by making courtyards available after school hours; offering premises to host activities complementing the education provided by the school ; welcoming cultural animation proposals from the territory ; etc. They also act in the adjacent urban area to extend the ideal perimeter of the educational space beyond the school's fence, colonizing streets, gardens, squares etc., by performing actions such as taking care of public spaces, providing animation, scheduling cultural programming, etc.
- 28 It is our belief that these experiences could lead to the construction of a territorial, open schools system if framed into an enabling policy vision that puts them in a network and considers each as part of unitary interventions. Undoubtedly, any policy that can support the multifaceted networks and projects in question requires instruments to accompany the processes and allocate resources suited to a collaborative, co-design logic, rather than one that is based on competition.
- 29 The recent “Educational Community Pacts” (*Patti educativi di comunità*),<sup>46</sup> introduced in the 2020-2021 Ministry's School Plan and revived in the 2021-2022 program, seem to pave the way for a co-design of educational facilities “in a logic of maximum adherence to the principle of subsidiarity and educational co-responsibility.” In September 2020, the City of Turin, together with the Regional School Office, set up a multi-actor working group.<sup>47</sup> The group not only worked with local stakeholders, inviting them to discuss

the potential of the Ministry's new measure based on educational co-responsibility, but also drafted a general policy document to govern the assessment of local projects and the distribution of the resources made available to the Piedmont Region.<sup>48</sup>

- 30 The contract notices to support "Community Education Pacts," initially launched in February 2021 and then again at the end of April 2021, registered the enthusiastic participation by schools throughout the province of Turin ; roughly 40 of which were in fact funded. Although the sums allocated to individual proposals remain rather limited<sup>49</sup>, it is important to remember that this was the first time that public funding had been awarded to network projects. Further, despite an initial phase when it seemed that the funds would only be applied to control entering/exiting schools based on distancing regulations, in reality the proposals seemed to revive familiar collaboration agreements between schools, the third sector and the territory regarding supplementary educational projects, taking into consideration the new needs that have emerged as a result of the pandemic (digital education, new technologies, study support, school welfare, etc.).
- 31 We seem to be able to say that an in-depth observation and analysis of practices of pacts (being either the Pact of Collaboration or Educational Community Pact) where the school is a center could provide an interesting point of view to identify virtuous criteria and parameters in order to define an operational model for the governance of multifactorial and collaborative educational services.
- 32 Despite these first timid attempts to translate into practice the ideal "premises of the Educational Community Pacts, we wonder whether these tools could constitute a concrete space for re-defining geometries of actors and co-dynamic planning of the educational service in the future, starting from the different territorial characteristics and the different educational communities."

## Towards Schools as Civic Facilities

- 33 In 2020, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) published *Back to the future of education: Four OECD Scenarios for Schooling*. The scope of the document is to encourage the development of a long-term strategic vision of education. The school as a learning hub is one of the four proposed scenarios, in which schools become important centers of educational and social experimentation. "School walls are broken down and schools are connected to their communities, which foster ever new forms of learning, civic engagement, and social innovation".<sup>50</sup>
- 34 This represents the disintegration of the education system in favor of local protagonists with an incredibly heterogeneous educational program. However, if we try to apply this scenario to the current situation, enhancement of the education service is often limited to best practices, experimental projects, and individual experiences. If we look at the Italian context, despite recent theoretical proclamations included in the Ministry's "School Plan," there is no overall vision and no collective operational translation that can concretize what has been largely announced. This situation has been highlighted by the pandemic, a period during which we witnessed a process of rapid acceleration in the protagonism of educational communities (especially regarding informal actions of mutual aid and the support of fragile subjects), but there was also a slowdown in the

formal processes of physical and relational openness of educational institutions due to the pandemic restrictions (e.g. before the Co-City project).

- 35 The Co-City project and the schools' participation in this process are emblematic of a timid attempt to change the nature of some city schools from being a public service to a civic facility, based on the vision of the schools themselves and also that of the public actor (from the nineties onwards we have witnessed a series of actions in Turin that have tried to interpret and support the creation of a network of schools as 'territorial antennas,' capable of fulfilling many requests and solving the difficulties of local communities in the most inhomogeneous, distressed territories). In other words, an attempt has been made to create a territorial vision in which schools represent community spaces or civic centers.
- 36 In order to try to manage this process, however, schools need to be included not only in a vision capable of combining educational and territorial policies in a more synergic relationship with the municipal administration, but also given the tools required to implement this proposal. The shared administration as a governance model, based on the constitutional principle of horizontal subsidiarity, allows us to see the school in an inter-actor perspective, one that prompts us to rethink it in terms of a hybrid space and service.
- 37 With this in mind, we need to reconsider procedural and inter-actor mechanisms (forms of agreement and collaboration between public and private actors) in order to implement school facilities (in the context of mechanisms related to urban standards) and construct school services (in the context of welfare policies).
- 38 Starting from an existing legal framework and supported by a growing territorial experience, the recent framework of the Community Educational Pacts, although controversial and not operational, could be an opportunity to define the contours of a tool able to refocus governance and objectives of the school service in a collaborative and open way, freeing spatial forms from functions and working towards the idea of an *educational city*.<sup>51</sup>

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## NOTES

1. Arnaldo Bagnasco, *Tre Italie. La problematica territoriale dello sviluppo italiano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1984.
2. The relationship between social policies, welfare spaces and urban sprawl is a topic widely dealt with in the Italian debate which has recently seen renewed interest, even within the urban planning discipline. Among the most significant texts on the subject: Patrizia Gabellini, *Fare urbanistica*, Roma, Carocci ed. 2010; Stefano Munarin *et al.*, *Spazi del welfare. Esperienze Luoghi Pratiche*. Macerata, Quodlibet, 2011; Massimo Bricocoli, Stefania Sabatinelli, "Città, welfare e servizi: temi e questioni per il progetto urbanistico e le politiche sociali" *Territorio*, 83, 2017 p. 106-110; Laboratorio Standard, *Diritti in città. gli standard urbanistici in Italia dal 1968 ad oggi*, Roma, Donzelli, 2021.
3. Cristina Bianchetti, *Il Novecento è davvero finito*, Roma, Donzelli, 2011.
4. Neil Brenner, "What is critical urban theory?", *CITY*, 13, 2009, p. 195-204.
5. Chiara Saraceno, *Social assistance dynamics in Europe*, Bristol, Policy Press, 2002.
6. With regard to the city, this concept can be traced back to Annalisa Marinelli's book, *The city of care* (2015). Lately, the "society of care" has become the claim of an Italian cultural and social movement, supported by various NGOs, associations, civic groups, social activists, etc., asking for a paradigm shift in the economic, social, and political organization.
7. Yuri Kazepov, *La dimensione territoriale delle politiche sociali in Italia*, Roma, Carocci, 2009; Lavinia Bifulco, *Social policy and public action*, London, Routledge, 2017.
8. This data is drawn from the report on school buildings in Italy authored by Fondazione Agnelli (2019), accessible [online] [<https://www.fondazioneagnelli.it/progetti/rapporto-sulledilizia-scolastica-della-fondazione-agnelli/>].
9. "Pursuant to article 3 of the legislative decree of 16 April 1994, n° 297, the school is an educational community of dialogue, research, social experience, informed by democratic values and aimed at the growth of the person in all its dimensions. In it everyone, with equal dignity and in the diversity of roles, works to guarantee training for citizenship, the realization of the right to study, the development of everyone's potential and the recovery of disadvantaged situations, in harmony with the principles enshrined in the Constitution and by the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, approved by the UN on 20 November 1989, and with the general principles of the Italian legal system. The school director, the teaching and educational staff, the DSGA and the administrative, technical and auxiliary staff, as well as the families, pupils and students who participate in the community within the collegial bodies envisaged by Legislative Decree belong to the educating community. N° 297/1994." This is what is stated in the 2018 National Collective Bargaining Agreement (CCNL) for staff in the school sector. However, the term educational community has assumed greater relevance and complexity in recent years. In the 20/21 National School Plan, and then in the following 21/22 Plan, the concept of "educational community" brings out a relational dimension rather than a whole. The educational community, taken up in various recent publications (see in particular Giovanni Del Bene, Angelo Lucio Rossi, Rossella Viaconzi, *La comunità educante. I patti educativi per una scuola aperta al futuro*, Novate milanese, Fabbrica dei segni editore, 2021), therefore becomes a social construct in the broad sense of the term, whose composition and structure changes according to context but in which the set of practices that collaborate to define the localized educational experience of young people and children inside and outside the school is what matters.
10. Think about parents' willingness to paint the walls of the classrooms, clean up the courtyards or to self-build playground games and equipment.
11. Reference is made here to the results of ongoing research examining the effective space of schools in urban contexts, focusing first on the actions of the learning communities. The research is part of the project entitled "La città va a scuola. Piazze scolastiche come luoghi di

socialità e qualità ambientale” sponsored by the Compagnia di San Paolo Foundation, in partnership with Politecnico di Torino, Politecnico di Milano, Associations Labsus, Laqup, Architetti senza frontiere, Comitato Torino Respira, and Or.Me. See AA. VV., *Scuola Sconfinata. Per una rivoluzione educativa*, Milano, Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, 2021.

12. Every year the Labsus-Laboratorio per la sussidiarietà association publishes its report in the shared administration in Italy. According to its 2021 data, 252 municipalities have adopted the regulation for the shared administration of common assets in Italy, including cities like Bologna, Turin, Milan and Genoa.

13. Art. 2 “The Republic recognises and guarantees the inviolable rights of the person, as an individual and in the social groups where human personality is expressed. The Republic expects that the fundamental duties of political, economic, and social solidarity be fulfilled.”

Art. 3 “It is the duty of the Republic to remove all economic and social obstacles which, by limiting the freedom and equality of citizens, prevent the full development of the individual and the participation of all workers in the political, economic, and social organization of the country.”

14. Art. 2 “The Republic recognises and guarantees the inviolable rights of the person, as an individual and in the social groups where human personality is expressed. The Republic expects that the fundamental duties of political, economic, and social solidarity be fulfilled.”

Art. 3 “It is the duty of the Republic to remove all economic and social obstacles which, by limiting the freedom and equality of citizens, prevent the full development of the individual and the participation of all workers in the political, economic, and social organization of the country.”

15. General interest is a complex and sometimes slippery concept that necessarily requires contextualization. Even with reference to Articles 2 and 3 of the Italian Constitution, we could say that general interest coincides with ensuring that every human being achieves their full potential and is therefore related to the concept of "common good." As established by the 2007 Rodotà Commission, the latter is defined as "those goods which, [...] regardless of their public or private ownership, are functionally useful in the exercise of fundamental rights and the free development of individuals.”

16. Gregorio Arena, “Amministrazione e società. Il nuovo cittadino”, *Rivista trimestrale di diritto pubblico*, 2017, p. 43-55.

17. Daniela Ciaffi, Emanuela Saporito, “Il diritto alla cura dei beni comuni come palestra di democrazia”, *Sociologia urbana e rurale*, n° 1/22 “Concetti chiave e innovazioni teoriche della sociologia dell’ambiente e del territorio del dopo Covid-19”, 2022, p. 49-62.

18. Carlo Donolo, “Comment on Elinor Ostrom/2. Commons in Collective Action Problems”, *Sociologica*, Fasc. 3, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2007.

19. Ianira Vassallo, Emanuela Saporito, “La scuola come bene comune: verso una diversa prospettiva progettuale”, *Archivio di Studi Urbani e Regionali*, 132, Suppl., 2021, p. 110-124.

20. Rita Locatelli, “L’educazione come bene comune. Strumenti e pratiche nel sistema italiano, europeo e internazionale”, in *Labsus*, 03/2019, [online] [<https://www.labsus.org/2019/03/leducazione-come-bene-comune-2/>].

21. Daniela Ciaffi, Emanuela Saporito, Ianira Vassallo, “Le comunità educanti fanno scuola”, in Giovanni Litt, Guido Businaro, Denis Maragno (a cura di), *La Città come laboratorio di apprendimento permanente*, Conegliano, Anteferma Edizioni, 2022.

22. Cristiana Mattioli, Cristina Renzoni, Paola Savoldi, “Scuole e territori fragili. Il modello lungimirante del Contrat École a Bruxelles”, *Territorio*, n° 97, 2022.

23. Ianira Vassallo, Federica Doglio, “Dopo il burn-out, verso la progettazione di nuove “infrastrutture di cura”, *Ardeth*, n° 8, 2021, p. 59-75, [online] [<https://journals.openedition.org/ardeth/2249>].

24. Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, “Así serán los nuevos ejes verdes y plazas del Eixample”, *Ayuntamiento de Barcelona*, 7 febbraio 2022, [online] [<https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/superilles/es/content/asi-seran-las-nuevas-plaza-y-ejes-verdes-eixample>].
25. Valeria Cartes Leal, *L'École, l'enfant et la ville, Les conditions de l'urbanisme scolaire, Cas de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale*, Louvain, Presses universitaires de Louvain, 2015, p. 244.
26. Carlos Moreno, Zaheer Allam, Didier Chabaud, Catherine Gall, Florent Pratlong, “Introducing the ‘15-minute city’: Sustainability, resilience and place identity in future post-pandemic cities”, *Smart Cities*, 4, 1, 2021, p. 93-111.
27. As early as the 1980s, for example, Francesco De Bartolomeis, in the text “School and territory - towards an enlarged training system,” underlined how the territory was a vital system of the community at the center of which the school was located. From the pedagogist's point of view, an educational experience involves the "systematic" outing into the urban space to enter into relationships with people with skills other than those of teachers, and the implementation of activities that do not find adequate stimuli and tools in the school environment. The idea that was already present in the 1950s with Michelucci (*Felicità dell'architetto. Lettera aperta ai giovani docenti e agli studenti della facoltà fiorentina di architettura*, Firenze, editrice 11 libro, 1949), and also later with Rogers (“Architettura educatrice”, *Domus*, n° 220, giugno 1947), De Carlo (“Ordine-istituzione educazione-disordine”, *Casabella*, n° 368-369, 1971, and “La scuola e l'urbanistica”, *Domus*, n° 220, giugno 1947) and Ward (*Streetwork. The Exploding School*, London, Routledge & Kegan, 1973) that the city should be conceived as an urban learning plot in a broader sense, is more strongly defined. Although this thought has been recurrent in pedagogical literature and also in architectural reflection, it has always clashed with the process of urban infrastructure that has defined the school framework in our country since the Second World War.
28. Carlo Olmo, *La città industriale*, Torino, Einaudi, 1980.
29. Carlo Olmo, Arnaldo Bagnasco, *Torino 011. Biografia di una città. Gli ultimi 25 anni di Torino, guardando al futuro dell'Italia*, Milano, Electa, 2011.
30. Cristina Renzoni, “Attrezzare territori, costruire spazi di urbanità. Note per uno sguardo di lungo periodo sull'infrastruttura scolastica italiana”, *Archivio di studi urbani e regionali*, 132 Suppl., 2021, p. 18-35.
31. Ianira Vassallo, Emanuela Saporito, “La scuola come bene comune: verso una diversa prospettiva progettuale”, *Archivio di Studi Urbani e Regionali*, 132, Suppl., 2021, p. 110-124.
32. [Online] [[http://www.comune.torino.it/iter/servizi/laboratorio\\_citta\\_sostenibile/pdf/A7\\_Rel\\_Illustrativa.pdf](http://www.comune.torino.it/iter/servizi/laboratorio_citta_sostenibile/pdf/A7_Rel_Illustrativa.pdf)].
33. [Online] [[http://www.comune.torino.it/iter/servizi/laboratorio\\_citta\\_sostenibile/progetto\\_cortili\\_scolastici.shtml](http://www.comune.torino.it/iter/servizi/laboratorio_citta_sostenibile/progetto_cortili_scolastici.shtml)].
34. [Online] [[http://www.comune.torino.it/benicomuni/co-city/proposte\\_30\\_9\\_17/scuole/index.shtml](http://www.comune.torino.it/benicomuni/co-city/proposte_30_9_17/scuole/index.shtml)].
35. [Online] [[http://www.comune.torino.it/iter/servizi/centri\\_di\\_cultura/scuola\\_centro\\_civico/index.shtml](http://www.comune.torino.it/iter/servizi/centri_di_cultura/scuola_centro_civico/index.shtml)].
36. The Torino Mobility Lab project was financed by the “Collegato Ambientale” measure issued by the Ministry for the Environment, Law 211/2015 “Disposizioni in materia ambientale per promuovere misure di green economy e per il contenimento dell'uso eccessivo di risorse naturali.”
37. Cristina Renzoni, Federica Rotondo, Paola Savoldi, Pier Giorgio Turi, “Reclaim the street, reclaim the school. Lo spazio urbano delle scuole tra urbanistica, mobilità e istruzione”, in Carolina Giaimo, Maria Chiara Tosi, Angioletta Voghera (a cura di), *Tecniche urbanistiche per una fase di decrescita. Atti della XXIII Conferenza Nazionale SIU, DOWNSCALING, RIGHTSIZING. Contrazione demografica e riorganizzazione spaziale*, Torino, 17-18 giugno 2021, vol. 1, Roma/Milano, Planum Publisher/Società Italiana degli Urbanisti, 2021, p. 101-107.
38. [Online] [<https://www.torinofascuola.it>].

39. Federica Patti, “La scuola: uno spazio pubblico strategico per ridisegnare la città”, in Nadia Caruso, Gabriele Pasqui, Carla Tedesco, Ianira Vassallo (a cura di), *Rigenerazione dello spazio urbano e trasformazione sociale, Atti della XXIII Conferenza Nazionale*, Vol. 5, Milano, Planum Publisher, 2021, p. 179-197.
40. Ianira Vassallo, Emanuela Saporito, “La scuola come bene comune...”, *op. cit.*
41. [Online] [[http://www.comune.torino.it/benicomuni/co-city/proposte\\_30\\_9\\_17/scuole/index.shtml](http://www.comune.torino.it/benicomuni/co-city/proposte_30_9_17/scuole/index.shtml)]. The Co-City contract notice dedicated two calls exclusively for schools. Of the 31 proposals received so far, only 12 have become collaboration pacts. Nevertheless, an analysis of the proposals reveals that they are all outstanding, in particular regarding the creation of partnerships, design ability and economic plans. Of the 31 proposals, roughly one third (divided between elementary schools, primary and secondary schools, focus on representing themselves as open participated schools, making available some of their spaces (courtyard, annexes, classrooms, etc.) for an open management of the territory.
42. Gianluca Cantisani (ed.), “Scuole aperte. Luoghi della partecipazione.”, *Quaderno MOVI, Riappropriarsi degli spazi comuni*, 2014, p. 1-49, [online] [[http://www.volontariato.lazio.it/documentazione/documenti/77367736ScuolaApertePartecipateCondivise\\_Documento\\_Movi\\_AGDiDonato.pdf](http://www.volontariato.lazio.it/documentazione/documenti/77367736ScuolaApertePartecipateCondivise_Documento_Movi_AGDiDonato.pdf)].
43. Ianira Vassallo, Emanuela Saporito, “La scuola come bene comune...”, *op. cit.*
44. In this sense, reference is made to data updated in September 2022. The Co-City project lasted three years, from 2017 to 2019. The closing event was organized on February 14, 2020. Downstream of the closure of the project, compared to the collaboration agreements being signed, those relating to schools were certainly the most penalized by the pandemic Covid-19, which closed the school buildings for eight months in 2020 and limited the forms of public opening and planning in 2021.
45. The reflections reported in the text, with respect to the project Co-City and more generally to the policies and planning that have affected the school services in Turin in recent decades, are the result of various research that has been carried out by the authors of the text over the past four years. In particular, the data and the historical reconstruction of the processes are the result of a direct observation in the field (especially with regard to the project Scuola Centro civico and Co-City) through on-site inspections, analysis of existing documents and a campaign of interviews with preferential witnesses conducted between October 2020 and April 2021. Among the main interviews regarding the text, that of Piergiorgio Turi (head of the Sustainable City Lab of ITER), Maria Luisa Pizzoli (secretary of the Director of the USR), some teachers and managers of schools in the area, Laura Socci, Department of Urban Regeneration Projects, City of Turin; Luca Scarpitti, Francesca Repetto and Cristina Basciano from Compagnia di San Paolo Foundation, “Participation and Culture” and “People” divisions.
46. [Online] [<http://www.comune.torino.it/servizieducativi/pattieducativi/piano.pdf>]. For a list of the proposals of Learning Community Pacts and a summary of the projects, see the document [online] [<http://www.comune.torino.it/servizieducativi/pattieducativi/raccolta.pdf>].
47. The multi-actor table involved over 70 territorial realities to discuss the guidelines of the document on learning communities’ pacts, later signed by the City of Turin, the Politecnico di Torino, the University of Turin, and Indire.
48. 230,000 euros for all the region’s institutes.
49. With a few exceptions, when some financial institutes have allocated up to 40,000 euros for each project.
50. OECD, *Back to the Future of Education. Four OECD Scenarios for Schooling*, Bruxelles, OECD publisher, 2020.
51. Paolo Mottana, Giuseppe Campagnoli, *La città educante. Manifesto dell’educazione diffusa*, Trieste, Asterios, 2017.

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## ABSTRACTS

In the second half of the last century, after World War II, the Italian government defined an important period of public policies and projects to build a national *welfare system* in order to bridge the social and cultural gaps of a country with many different territorial situations. Half a century later, the complexification of the social and economic organization, which has transformed mass society into a plural society, has brought with it a multiplication and fragmentation of spatial and social needs for which the *universal welfare system* appears ineffective. The role of the public administration and its relationship to communities and the third sector have changed: increasingly often, alliances are defined to build projects that are closer to different social and cultural demands. This paper will focus on processes in which public service is enriched and regenerated by the care of reference communities: we seem to recognize the premises for a new way of administering public services, in which the public and the private collaborate on an equal level. We will adopt this perspective in observing what happens inside schools, which seems particularly interesting for at least two reasons. First of all, as the symbol of a public welfare service in crisis, it is simultaneously possible to recognize a certain habit of school communities taking part in the redevelopment of this service, through actions to care for the school building and its pertinent spaces. Secondly, the school also plays the role of a territorial actor, coming out of its own enclosures to take over urban space (that is, public gardens, parks, libraries, museums, cycle workshops, etc.) with educational projects at various levels. Turin represents an interesting case study, as a city where both public policies and social practices have integrated themselves, from education to urban regeneration, through institutional actors and local communities.

Dans la seconde moitié du siècle dernier, après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, le gouvernement italien a engagé une série de projets pour construire un système national de protection sociale et tenter de combler les écarts sociaux et culturels, dans un pays aux situations territoriales très contrastées. Un demi-siècle plus tard, la complexification de l'organisation sociale et économique, qui a transformé la société de masse en une société plurielle, entraîne une multiplication et une fragmentation des besoins spatiaux et sociaux pour lesquels le système universel de protection sociale apparaît inefficace. Le rôle de l'administration publique et ses relations avec la communauté et le secteur privé changent : de plus en plus souvent, des alliances sont définies pour construire des projets plus proches des différentes demandes sociales et culturelles. Cet article se concentre sur les processus dans lesquels le service public est enrichi et régénéré par le soin des communautés de référence : nous semblons reconnaître les prémisses d'une nouvelle façon d'administrer les services publics, dans laquelle public et privé collaborent sur un pied d'égalité. Nous adopterons cette perspective en observant ce qui se passe à l'intérieur des écoles. Il semble particulièrement intéressant pour au moins deux raisons : d'abord parce qu'ils sont le symbole d'un service public d'aide sociale en crise. En même temps, cependant, il est possible de reconnaître une certaine habitude des communautés scolaires à participer au redéveloppement du service, à travers des actions d'entretien du bâtiment scolaire et des espaces concernés. L'école agit également comme un acteur territorial, sortant de ses propres enceintes pour coloniser l'espace urbain (jardins publics, parcs, bibliothèques, musées, ateliers vélo, etc.) avec des projets pédagogiques à différents niveaux. Turin représente une étude de cas intéressante, en tant que ville où les politiques publiques et les pratiques sociales se sont intégrées, allant de l'éducation à la régénération urbaine, en passant par les acteurs institutionnels et les communautés locales.

## INDEX

**Mots-clés:** École, Gouvernance collaborative, Communauté éducative, Centre civique

**Keywords:** School, Collaborative Governance Model, Education Community, Civic Center

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