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Application of Evaluation Tools in Support of Decision Making Participation. The Case Study of Reggio Calabria, a Metropolitan City

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to study and apply Valuation Methods to the constituent phase of Reggio Calabria's development into a metropolitan city. With specific reference to the tools that are functional to the attainment of Participation objectives that are able to improve social agreements. The methodological approach is to start a path of information and training, in order to understand to the citizens the Convenience Ethics. So, to support this study, to dissemination of the Culture of Valuation, integrating the traditional approach with other kinds of social approaches, in order to become a tool to support public decisions.

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1. Introduction

Over the past few years, the city has been back to the top of National and Community policies, so disruptive. Furthermore, the many attempts to reform local governments have made proposals to the Government of

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metropolitan areas. In these years, political-administrative structures were neither made, with the actions from above or from the bottom (Bobbio, Dente, Fareri, & Morisi, 1990).

This is a theme, which can change the way to program. If we understand the objectives the strategic orientations, the context and the tools. In recent years, it is clear, the start of different experimental paths of new means of action and programming, which are modifying both the methods and the contents of public action on the city and the territory, substantially. This is in a development phase, undoubtedly.

To a period of clearly crisis of *effectiveness* and *efficiency* of urban policies, follows, today, a different dynamic in working programs, in the formulation of proposals and political and economic strategies of the cities, which have a nature Participatory, Sustainable and Competitive. These are programming tools to promote local development, as well as, the use of local resources. From this perspective, knowledge of what is happening in our area, can be useful not only, to take a complete view of ongoing reform processes, but above all to propose “ways” of development, not yet tried, to enhance and promote local resources.

The metropolitan city, is recognized both as a strategic field (Scrivo, 2014), structural economic development node, either as a driver of change processes, and their revival and development should pay special attention to ratings. Three paths have been ongoing:

- A Training path (in order to make it clear to territories the Ethics of Convenience);
- An Information path (what is the metropolitan city, the aspects and the functions, some possible organisational forms, the needs and the instances that can be met by the new institutional body);
- A Participation path (listening to local communities) starting from the academic world, the students and the citizens.

That was exactly the path we followed. “[...] to build sustainable cities is necessary, to start from the people, not only understood as a fundamental element of nature, but as the stakeholders of design decisions, above all. Therefore, it must start from the bottom up” (Nijkamp, & Voogd, 1989). Consequently, the methodological approach for the development, of the process of establishing the new institutional body, was Community-led.

The objective is to involve, in the path, the various local institutions, the economic and social forces, so to promote ownership in the process. The citizens, businesses, associations, throughout the metropolitan territory, that, in an effort to acquire awareness, they should define an idea of a Metropolitan City. Is a collective reflection on the themes of the Metropolitan By-laws and Strategic Planning necessary? Yes. The Participation of public and private stakeholders (Calabrò, & Della Spina, 2014), in this phase, is a guarantee of democracy and it is an absolute prerequisite for sustainability. To overcome mistrust, which is rooted in the metropolitan area, it is necessary to demonstrate what might be the *Expediencies* and the *Opportunities* for all municipalities, if the new institutional body worked appropriately. In other words, what specific measures the metropolitan city should plan to increase competitiveness in the whole territory (Fusco Girard, & Nijkamp, 1997), not only in the Reggio Calabria Municipality.

2. Evaluation as a keystone, a summary of processes and governance

If Evaluation is carried out from the beginning, it plays a central role in the whole cycle of the territorial Government. In particular, its ability to steer in a more coherent and decisive way, the completely programming process. To know where, when and what, the near or distant effect will be on the different strategies. Therefore, this will be, the behavior of stakeholders; such as, the strategic decisions to be taken; how to check successes and failures in relation to their causes; how and when to get the processes; how to give the correct meaning to uncertainty, irreversibility, to contingencies, that are in the decisional process. This is all essential information and knowledge.

So, what is the possible input that the evaluation can make in the delicate process of metropolitan cities start-up? What are those tools and techniques that may be functional to achieving the objectives of *Participation*, *Transparency*, *Efficiency* and *Feasibility* (Stanghellini, 1996; Calabrò, Della Spina, 2014) who are capable of dealing successfully the problems for which it is been done?

The Strategic Planning process is made up of three phases:

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