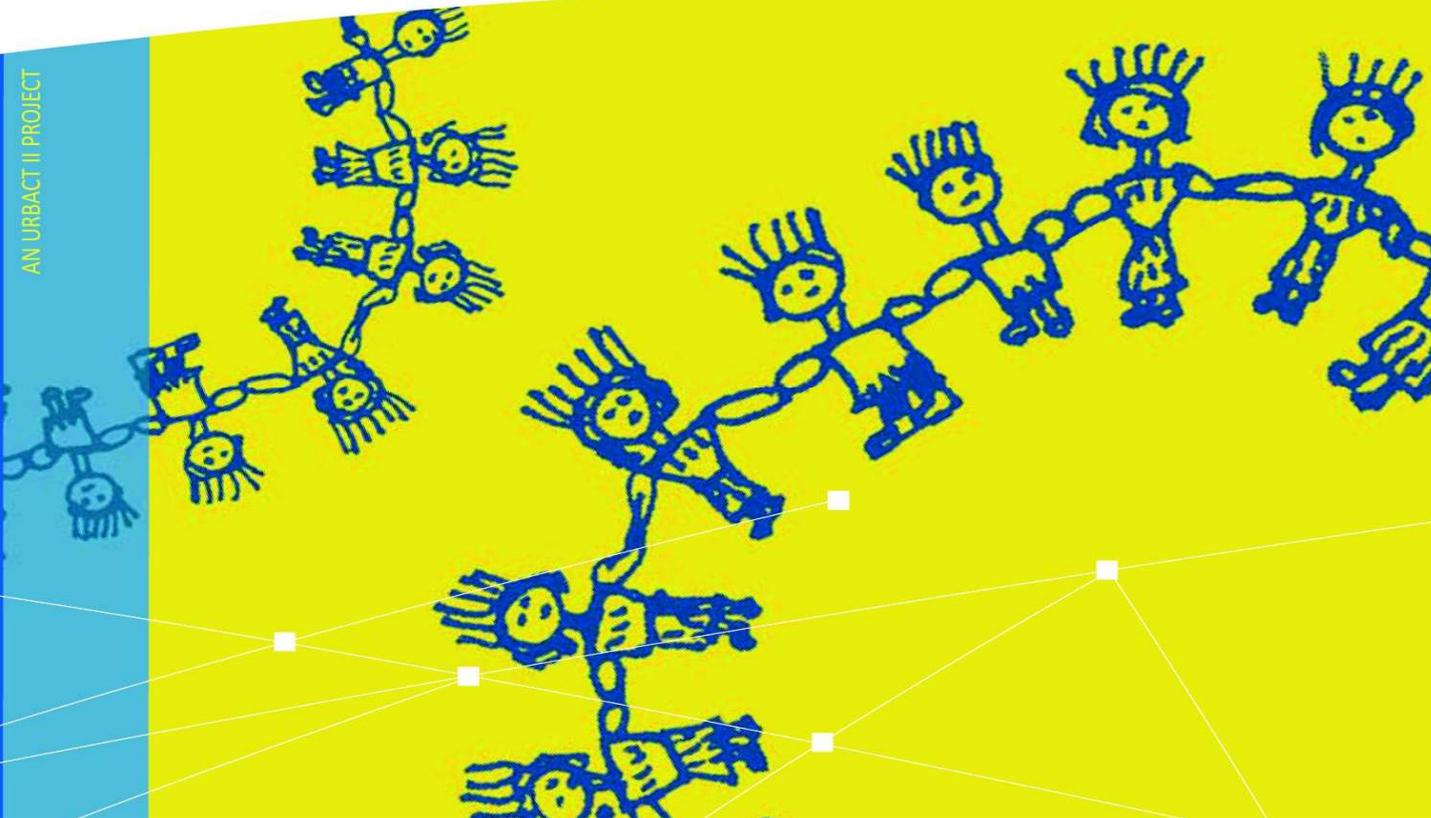


# Local Action Plan of co-responsibility in PERGINE

September 2012

AN URBACT II PROJECT



 	<p>URBACT II</p> <p><b>LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR SOCIAL COHESION AND CO-RESPONSIBILITY</b></p>	<p><b>PERGINE VALSUGANA</b></p>
---	--	-------------------------------------

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Summary	Page 1
1.	Background	Page 2
2.	Democratic practice in the municipality of Pergine Valsugana	Page 4
3.	Local Support Group	Page 6
4.	Focus Groups	Page 8
5.	Pilot Actions on co-responsibility	Page 15
6.	Spreading the co-responsibility approach	Page 16
7.	Co-responsibility and other participative methods	Page 20
8.	Role of the Local Support Group in the future	Page 22
9.	Conclusions	Page 22

## Preamble

After two years of analysis on the needs of the citizens in the municipality of Pergine Valsugana a Social Plan has been published and implemented between 2008 and 2010. The municipality decided to continue the path undertaken with that Plan to foster well-being and participation in the public sector and in the community life in Pergine Valsugana and surrounding villages.

This Local Action Plan for Social Cohesion of Co-responsibility is the result of two years of research, fieldwork and exchange with other European municipalities, all following the guidance offered by a method proposed by the Council of Europe and the European Commission. This plan has the aim to assess and prepare actions of co-responsibility that could improve the well-being of the people.

## Background

### Well-being, ill-being beyond the GDP

In the last years the economic model of western societies has been characterized by a strong correlation between economic growth, wage rises and welfare. Economic and social development were strictly linked, social welfare in terms of free access to education and health care for all was guaranteed by a certain level of growth. The employment wage was the main source of demand for domestic products and a growth in the economic profits involved regular wage rises.

Transnational production and trade and the shift toward knowledge economy broke this model: economic growth is no longer dependent on wage increases. This led to a different structure of resources distribution and to problems of inequality. Are economic and social development now independent? Some patterns say yes, firms de-localization and transnational ownership for instance are classical examples of the loss of the link between wealth production and citizen well-being in a given geographical area.

The issue of environment is also crucial, in particular the danger of its degradation and with it the loss of resources for people. The environment provides a wide range of services starting from food and water supply passing through its aesthetic value to climate regulation.

Local development meant as increasing the wealth of the citizens doesn't necessarily mean an increase in the well-being of the people if the ecosystem is not respected, if the wealth is not well shared in the community and if the relations in the community are scarce or bad.

We consider this concept of well-being as multidimensional and variable. The citizens of Pergine will give their personal definition of it. For the moment we present the one offered by the Council of Europe, in which four dimension of well-being are identified:

- ⤴ *fair and equal access;*
- ⤴ *recognition of individual and collective dignity;*
- ⤴ *the autonomy of the individual;*
- ⤴ *Participation in community life.*

To put it in a sentence I can feel totally well if I have fair and equal access to citizenship, resources, jobs, public opportunities; if my identity and the one of my community is recognized; if I am

autonomous as an individual; and if I participate in the community life, meaning if I have friends, places to go, things to do.

These four dimensions are affected by the fact of having or not having money and basic resources, but the well-being of the individual and of a community or municipality depends on a various set of goods, of which just a part can be bought with money and therefore depend on economic growth.

There are six kinds of goods:

- economic goods (infrastructure, equipment, businesses, markets)
- environmental goods (soil and subsoil, water, the biosphere – living being, biodiversity and ecosystems – and air)
- human capital (population, knowledge, skills)
- social capital (human relations and bonds, trust)
- cultural capital (shared values, knowledge of history, science)
- institutional and political capital (democratic institutions, human rights, rules, regulatory arrangements)

Human, social, cultural, institutional and environment capital are as important as the economic capital. To translate one kind of capital to the other is not always possible. From the economic point view we have to re-activate the virtuous spiral: production - consumption - rises of wages and taxes - welfare.

### Change in the use of the services in the European Union

Public services in the European Union are meant to foster well-being and social cohesion. According to this plan it is possible to reach this goal only if the citizens participate at all levels of decision-making making and also in the implementation process of the policies. Applying the concept of co-responsibility, but also looking at the past, it is clear that the citizens should not only participate in the policies offered them but also organize themselves, project and realize the services they need. This is the final aim of the policies of de-centralization of power: citizens should be put in condition to realize that the future depends on them. At municipal level they form a community and every citizen is responsible to manage in the best way the common good.

Social cohesion is not a nostalgic concept applied to a lost social harmony but a guide for the political strategy of a community that should actively foster well-being in all its dimensions.

Social cohesion in a modern society is the ability to secure the long-term well-being of all its members ensuring equitable access to available resources, respect for human dignity with regard to diversity, autonomy and participation. The Council of Europe defines as the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimising disparities; and accentuate the importance of social actors' joint responsibility for its attainment. To share responsibility among institutions and between institution and citizens is crucial to address the desirable change in the use of services in the European Union.

There follows a scale to evaluate democratic practices and citizens participation at local level.

Minimal engagement: the Municipality consults citizens or voluntary organisations on a few topics or in an occasional survey, but appears to take little notice of the results. This is pejoratively known as tokenism.

Formal partnership: a formal relationship with a number of organisations outside of the municipality is established. These partners sit around the table but the local authority or the government agency chairs the meeting and takes all the key decisions.

An engaged partnership: this has the feel of a much more equal arrangement with the partners/voluntary organisations having some real influence on agenda and decision-making. However, ultimately the Municipality retains the decisive influence.

Co-governance: here there is the strategic planning of a service or a project or a programme. Actors from different organisations and sectors determine shared policy priorities and may translate these into strategic plans.

Co-management: this refers to a situation where different organisations work alongside each other to co-ordinate the delivery of a service or project. Actors from different sectors and organisations use their respective resources to contribute directly in practical ways to the delivery of a specific project or service.

Co-production: this refers to an arrangement where citizens produce, at least in part, the services they use themselves.

Co-responsibility: this is where the elements outlined in points 4-6 are combined across a whole sector, for example within the education system in a city, or its economic regeneration. The ultimate goal would be to achieve this across an entire territory, in other words across all the services within a neighbourhood or district.

Our objective is to work toward the last point: a territory of co-responsibility. But to arrive there we probably have a long way to go. According to this scale we can evaluate the position of our municipality in general or in reference to specific policies and services.

It is time to forget the conception of the citizen as a subordinate or as a consumer. The space assigned to the third sector in the production and provision of services, the de-centralization of power, the structure and the behaviour of the European commission and the European common policies are all signals that go in a new direction.

### Democratic practice in the municipality of Pergine Valsugana

Starting from the values and the conceptual tools presented above we analyse the situation in our municipality.

The attempt of the overall plan is to redefine the concepts of development and well-being to orient the actions of the municipality toward a path of co-responsibility and well-being for the citizens rather than toward a path of authority and nepotism in the management of the common good.

Given the relatively small population of the municipality the practice of direct democracy is very developed. The mayor, the vice-mayor, the deputy-mayors and councillors receive specific demands from individuals, associations, societies or firms and evaluate the support they can or cannot give to each proposal. This practice has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that the public authority is personal and accessible. The disadvantage is that the needs of the groups who are closer, more demanding or better welcomed by the representatives have an advantage in the use of resources in comparison with other groups who are not close to the people and parties leading the municipality or whose demand is not structured in an association or in other forms.

The typical person excluded by this process is the new comer, living in Pergine (usually not in villages, who have some demand structure through the local representative) in the recently- built outskirts or in the city centre.

To address this recognized problem, four committees (consulte) have been established with the Social Plan 2008-2010: young people, immigrants, elderly, and women. Until now the committee that has worked more and produced more proposals is the one involving immigrants.

The process carried out to prepare this plan is a new practice of direct democracy as it tried to construct consensus among people with different backgrounds. In the focus groups people shared their views and their needs. The interaction between them was aimed to understand what is well-being at individual but mainly at collective level. Well-being doesn't exist if it is not collective and shared. Defining well-being is a political process as it involves subjective decisions based on personal perceptions and values.

An innovative tool of participation has been proposed during the process of consultation for the construction of this plan. Considering the magnetic card used in Italy as a personal tax and health care identity. We could use that (tessera sanitaria) to permit the citizens to vote continuously on specific issues raised by the municipal council and to advance problems or proposals regarding services, environment and so on. It could be done in a machine similar to the automatic provider of cigarettes.

### Role of the third sector in the public life

The services that belong to the municipality are the management of the territory, maintenance of streets and parks, the regulation on new buildings, local police (in cooperation with other municipalities), sport and culture and the promotion and development of the municipality. The social/assistance sector is not the competence of the municipality, but of a middle level of government between the Municipality and the Province called "Comunità di Valle". A Social plan with 24 actions has been adopted for 2013. The actions will be implemented if financed by the province.

The sectors of sports and culture are co-managed by the municipality with the over 200 associations present on the territory.

Analysing specific services we can tell that the youth policies are run in a participative pattern, with young people proposing and implementing projects and activities.

The policy is characterized by elements of co-management and co-production. Different organizations sit around the table "Tavolo di confronto e proposta". The participants are: Local bank, Comunità di Valle, schools, church (oratorio), youth centres, municipalities of Pergine and

surroundings, Europe Direct, province of Trento. Each organization shares their own resources (human and financial) in order to develop projects for the well being of the youth, creating an annual Youth Plan. The table (a kind of Local Support Group) proposes and implements projects according to their organizational interest but overall receives, evaluates and eventually finances project proposals coming from the community: youth associations, other associations, informal groups, individuals. This model has been created in 2006 and diffused by the Province in all the municipalities. In Pergine the field of the youth policies together with the infants policies have been externalized by the municipality to a public firm called ASIF Chimelli (Special Agency for Infant and Youth policies).

The special agency can fulfil the administrative functions for the pre-primary and primary education in the municipality more flexibly and less expensively than the centralized municipality, safeguarding transparency, fairness and equal access to the services. The governance of the public firm is still assigned to the municipality. Other services have been externalized such as the collection and disposal of waste to a firm called A.M.N.U. (Municipal Firm for the Urban Waste) and the provision of gas, electricity and water connection to a firm called S.T.E.T. Asif Chimelli is a public firm financed by the municipality and by the Province of Trento for the 90%; S.T.E.T and A.M.N.U. are corporations both participated in by the Municipality and the Province.

It is under debate if specialization and decentralization are the antecedent of a closer relationship with the citizens. Is co-responsibility a matter of institutional architecture or is it the result of substantial relationship regardless of the qualities of the institution?

We believe that there's no cause and effect relation but to have professionalized and specialized staff can be the basis for the path toward a personal and close relationship with citizens that can result in consultation, collaboration and co-responsibility.

### Local support group

For the URBACT Together project it was necessary to establish a **Local Support Group**. In Pergine this has been formed by the Commission for the Implementation of the Social Plan (2008-2010) and by the Commission responsible for the Youth Policies. The idea is the one of continuity with the work done in the previous years with the Social Plan and the Youth Policies.

Below the report lists the members of the LSG.

1	Anesin	Graziella	Commissione comunale attuazione piano sociale	local administration	member	it's a commission in charge of evaluate and monitor the social plan of the municipality of Pergine
2	Barni	Francesco	Commissione comunale attuazione piano sociale	local administration	member	it's a commission in charge of evaluate and monitor the social plan of the municipality of Pergine
3	Berni	Silvia	Istituto Comprensivo Pergine 1	local administration	teacher	school for children from 6 to 13
4	Bonetti	Sabrina	Centro giovani	association / NGO	educator	youth center, they work with young people
5	Briani Casapiccola	Clara Emanuele	ASIF CHIMELLI	local administration	local coordinators	it's a special public body who manages public school and develop youth policies

6	Broseghini	Enzo	Commissione comunale attuazione piano sociale	private company	member	it's a commission in charge of evaluate and monitor the social plan of the municipality of Pergine
7	Carlin	Eliana	Commissione comunale attuazione piano sociale	local administration	member	it's a commission in charge of evaluate and monitor the social plan of the municipality of Pergine
8	Cavagna	Alessandro	Europe Direct Trentino	European administration	employed	it is an informative European point
9	Cavagna	Don Giorgio	Parrocchia di Pergine Valsugana	Church	priest	church activity
10	De Luca	Marilisa	Provincia Autonoma di Trento	Province administration	functionaire	social policies department
11	Gottardi	Simone	Commissione comunale attuazione piano sociale	local administration	member	it's a commission in charge of evaluate and monitor the social plan of the municipality of Pergine
12	Silvestri	Flora	Commissione comunale attuazione piano sociale	local administration	member	it's a commission in charge of evaluate and monitor the social plan of the municipality of Pergine
13	Tessadri	Renato	Comune di Pergine Valsugana	local administration	municipality council	develop social and youth policies
14	Valzolgher	Miro	APPM	association / NGO	coordinator	youth Center for problematic children. They work in cooperation with parents
15	Vivaldelli	Chiara	Provincia Autonoma di Trento	Managing authority	employed	public province office for European services
16	Zampedri	Daria	Commissione comunale attuazione piano sociale	local administration	member	local administration
17	Zanella	Carla	Cassa rurale pergine	local administration	employed	it's a cooperative local bank

It was natural to involve these people in the project to be in the Local Support Group as they were already engaged in networking and planning activities.

The strength of the Local Support Group is the presence of important actors in the community such as the primary school and the middle school, the two youth centres', the local bank, the church, representatives of the Province of Trento and of the Municipality of Pergine. In the group just one entrepreneur is present so a weakness of the group is the lack of the private sectors representation; furthermore no immigrant is present even though they represent 10% of our population. The group is balanced by gender and age as we have a small majority of women and the members range between 25 and 60 years old.

This Local Support Group is not a powerful group in the community, it doesn't take big decisions but it tries to take some action through networking among its members and keeping the dialogue with the local administration.

According to the scale of citizens' involvement we can say that the LSG is normally at a level of engaged partnership, it is the municipality that decides where exactly to invest public resources. For some specific actions, for instance the pilot actions of co-responsibility presented later on in this report, the group is at a level of co-management with a few organizations and individuals participating with their own resources, human and financial, to the projects.

## Focus groups

A central feature of the TOGETHER project has been the consultation of citizens through focus groups. The Council of Europe approach brings in the grass-roots dimension. It is a philosophy that is based on the observations and ideas of citizens themselves. The initial information is gathered together from sets of focus groups which ask citizens open-ended questions on what they see as well-being and ill-being. The three open-ended questions are “What do you understand by well-being?”, “What do you understand by ill-being?” and “What do you do and can you do as a citizen to ensure your own well-being and the well-being of all?” These questions are posed in turn. The group is given time to reflect. Each citizen writes their answers on post-it notes. They are asked to put just one response on each post-it note but there are no limits on the number of notes they can write. The facilitator groups these together and at the end of the meeting collects them. Each post-it note is then coded within the indicator data base. It is this method which the TOGETHER project has tested in eight cities.

In Pergine the members of the Local Support group managed to do 13 focus groups:

- old people (from sixty up to 88)
- young from 16-18 (Church guys)
- young from 15-18 ( Municipality youth centre)
- young from 11-15 (youth centre APPM)
- working men
- working women
- pensioner women and housewives
- ecological people (most of them are member of an ecological territorial association) of different ages
- a group of people that shared an experience of exchange with Bulgaria (one of the organisers of the exchange is a member of our LSG)
- school janitors
- women from Morocco
- men from Macedonia
- municipality board

Each group had 8-12 people and the total number of people involved has been around 100. We think it is quite representative of the community. With each group we organised two meetings. In the first meeting we did the first three questions, collecting more or less 1000 criteria/observations.

In the second one we have printed the synthesis and validated it with the participants. In some group we did a lot of corrections.

In the same meeting we did also the fourth question and placed the post it notes with the answer directly to the synthesis. Between the first and the second meeting, with the help of some others from the LSG, we inserted the criteria in the software giving the indicators name (A00....G01...).

During the second meeting the attendance was less (on average 10% less especially in the youth group) but it also happened that some people wanted to participate in the second meeting even if they did not attend the first one because they were very interested in the theme. The people who

attended both meetings found the second more interesting because there was more time for discussing and to hear others' opinions.

In the third meeting, heterogeneous group, we had a drop out of the 50%, with the presence of 43 people. We had 5 groups, each of them was asked to discuss about possible pilot actions of co-responsibility starting from the criteria collected in the previous two meetings.

## Findings

The analysis of the answers given by the participants of every group is mainly based on the reports of the groups' coordinators.

In the group APPM, young people between the age of 11 and 15, the more mentioned categories have been **family**, **personal autonomy** and **freedom**. The educators who ran the focus group explained that these are typical values of teenagers. There is a gender difference regarding personal relations: while for girls the relation with their parents was very important, boys gave the primacy to their friends. Moreover guys underscored the importance of money while this topic was absent among girls. In the fourth question, regarding the well-being of the future generations, the answers were clearly divided in two groups: **environment** and **employment**. Thinking at the development model for the future, it is worth to stress how young people between the age of 11 and 15 afford to express the dichotomy between the need for the preservation of the environment and the need to exploit it with the work of the human kind. The educators noticed a particular involvement in the topics of environment and **peace** after the news of the nuclear disaster in Japan and of the war in Libya. The interest of the participants exceeded the expectations, some of them called the educators in advance to know the date of the second meeting. The explanation of this interest lies in the novelty of the activity and in the responsibility given to the group that made them feel involved.

In the group of the elderly the more important families have been **health**, **family** and **job**, while in the fourth question the answers have been **environment**, **relations** and **employment**.

The group of the environmentalists included people from 13 to 76 years old. The key words in this case have been: **integration**, **welcoming**, **environment**, **health**, **work**, **participation**. The coordinator of the focus group refers to long answers, very precise and in the context of a deep and hard discussion.

The group of the working men was very pragmatic, in the words of the coordinator, answering **health**, (physical and mental) **job** (well-paid) and **family**. They never talked about the society, in the fourth question they focused on public services, understood as something due and not as a co-responsibility matter. Another point was on the **environment**, an example was the well-being criteria "*go for a walk in the mountains*". The logic of life that seems to come out is: have a good and well-paid job in order to have some hobbies and feel good. (Personal note: can't I have a hobby if I am unemployed?)

In the group exchange with Bulgaria the answers were **health**, **employment**, **environment** and **relations with the institutions**. In the group emerged that more well-being could arise from a better relation between citizens and institutions with and easier and closer bureaucracy rather than from a horizontal dynamic citizen-citizen. The coordinator had a methodological question

regarding problems in asking the question “what is well-being for you?” Is it well-being for us, for me, for the others, or in general? The answer given by Clara is to keep the question “what is for you?” and leave to the participants the choice between a personal or a general interpretation.

In the group “oratorio – church” - boys and girls between the age of 16 and 18 - the answers have been **relations, freedom and personal autonomy, health** and in the fourth question **environment**. The economic and the spiritual dimensions were not cited. The coordinator underlines that the boys and girls composing the group are good people, willing to participate and to do nice things.

For the housewives the personal introspection was very important. They claimed for more **free time** and **personal equilibrium**, in particular a striking criterion has been “*sleeping at night*”.

In the youth center group, boys and girls between the ages of 15-19, the answers are condensed on **relations and freedom autonomy** and in the fourth question the topics have been **environment and social justice**.

It’s important to note that the guys and girls who accepted to participate in the focus group were the more informed ones. Evidence of that is the fact that from a group of 9 people, in the second focus there were only 5 people. The educator refers that the answers of the 4 who didn’t participate in the second were more material while the answers given by the others were more political in the civic sense. The last point is that politics was involved in the discussion when a boy expressed himself in favour for short trials involving in this way a law introduced by Silvio Berlusconi’s government.

For the school keepers we have no information from the coordinator but from the data is possible to say that **health** was considered more important than money; the most relevant areas have been attitudes/initiatives followed by relations, social equilibrium and **personal development** considering the model of the good person more than of the successful one.

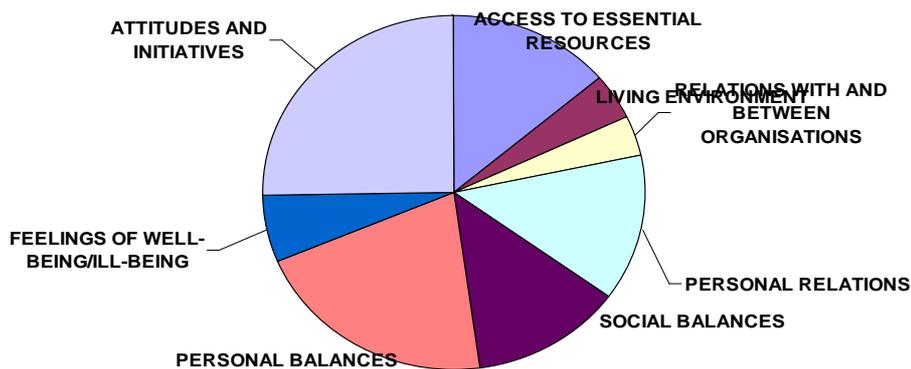
The working women focused on the **employment** not only expressing the importance of having it but also regarding the difficulties faced looking for a balance between their role of mothers and their role breadwinners. In this point they underlined the importance of laws and **institution** in supporting the **families**. Another field explored was the emotional, personal **equilibrium**. In the fourth question the answers involved **relations** and **environment** treated in a more spiritual/philosophical way.

In the group women from Morocco only few were employed and some could not write and speak in Italian (they helped each other to translate and write the sentences). The focus group was a bit difficult also for the presence of their children in the room. For them the fundamental well-being criteria are **economic stabilization, family and kids**. Another big area was social equilibrium regarding especially **inclusion/exclusion** and **racism**. In the topic of personal equilibrium a big part was given to **be patient**.

The group men from Macedonia focused on **employment, health and integration**. They feel very integrated and welcomed in Pergine, all of them are employed and most of them in the mining industry (porphyry). They seemed to be very involved in social issues in particular regarding **sharing/solidarity** and **respect**. Another strong value is the **family**, (one said a clichéd is not a man without money but a man without family) for the personal equilibrium the stress was on **reacting, being brave** and **face the problems** rather than escape them as the women from Morocco said.

In the group municipality board the most cited criteria have been **personal equilibrium**, with special reference to **health** and **autonomy**. The second criteria have been **employment**, considered fundamental for the **access to primary resources**.

### Répartition des critères selon les familles



Follows the general picture, results are listed by category. Single criteria that received above 2.5 of the total share are included (the first percentage refers to the single category while then percentage in brackets is meant on the total share of answers given in the 13 focus groups).

#### **1) ATTITUDES AND INITIATIVES 25, 35 %:**

H03 - Politeness/Sociability 21, 31 % (5, 4 %)

H00 - Attitudes and initiatives 19, 93 % (5, 05 %)

H01 - Self-improvement/self-respect 18, 9 % (4, 79 %)

H04 - Meeting/Listening, being supportive 15, 81 % (4, 01 %)

H02 - Personal activities and initiatives 9, 97 % (2, 53 %)

#### **2) PERSONAL BALANCES 20, 64 %**

F01 - Physical balance and health 43, 04 % (8, 89 %)

F02 - Autonomy, freedom, independence 12, 24 % (2, 53 %)

F06 - Balance in relations with society 13, 5 % (2, 79 %)

#### **3) ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL RESOURCES 13, 85 %**

A06 - Employment/work 33, 33 % (4, 62 %)

A08 - Purchasing power/access to finance 27, 67 % (3, 83 %)

A07 -Leisure, culture, sport 18, 24 % (2, 53 %)

#### **4) PERSONAL RELATIONS 13, 33 %**

D02 - Family life/family relationships 57, 52 % (7, 67 %)

#### **5) SOCIAL BALANCES 12, 89 %**

E09 - Violence and peace 20, 95 % (2, 7 %)

#### **6) FEELINGS OF WELL-BEING/ILL-BEING 6, 1 %**

#### **7) LIVING ENVIRONMENT 4, 27 %**

#### **8) RELATIONS WITH AND BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS 3, 48 %**

### **Assessment**

From these figures it is possible to find out two main action areas:

- attitude and initiatives/access to essential resources
- relations/personal balance

Attitude and initiatives/access to essential resources: the principal issues raised are politeness, sociability, self-improvement, self-respect, attitudes and initiatives and employment and purchasing power. The behaviour of a person is considered of fundamental importance for their well-being. The attitude is considered more important than the fact of having or not having a regular job. The attitudes and initiatives that every person can take to improve their well-being are: being sociable, responsible, involved, and supportive. The answers underscore the importance of these. Other interesting criteria have been to be patient and be reactive. It is important to notice that criteria as respect and solidarity, as they were presented in the focus groups, were not meant applicable only for the free time but also for the everyday life, including the personal competition for the employment where the traditional well-being criteria are egoism and opportunism rather than solidarity and respect.

Personal relations/personal balance: the main criteria in this category are family relationship and health. Trying to integrate the different categories it is possible to affirm that in a relational system based on family and friends networks, the interviewees face different problems of emotional nature, of physical/mental well-being and of personal freedom in the every day challenge between the feelings of fear and calmness. All the citizens involved, including the elderly, feel that they should open their groups, have more exchanges with other people. From the other side they are aware of the risk of feeling insecure and unsafe.

The living environment and relations with institution are considered far less important.

The criteria given in the focus groups are for the biggest part coherent with the already existing policies as they are outlined in the "Territorial Social Plan for the Community of Pergine".

The analysis in the existing Social Plan starts from the significant demographic growth that the community has experienced in the last few years. The newcomers are the 53% of the population (20% of them coming from other countries). Pergine starts to be a community of destination instead of a community of origin, it is in the shift from the dimension of village to the one of town and so for immigrants (in the broader sense) it is very difficult to integrate into the society. The relations between the old residents follow consolidated and closed schemes.

What the Social Plan suggests the administration to do in order to foster integration and social cohesion is:

- to improve the urban quality (services, environment, timetables);
- to promote the relation between the citizens.

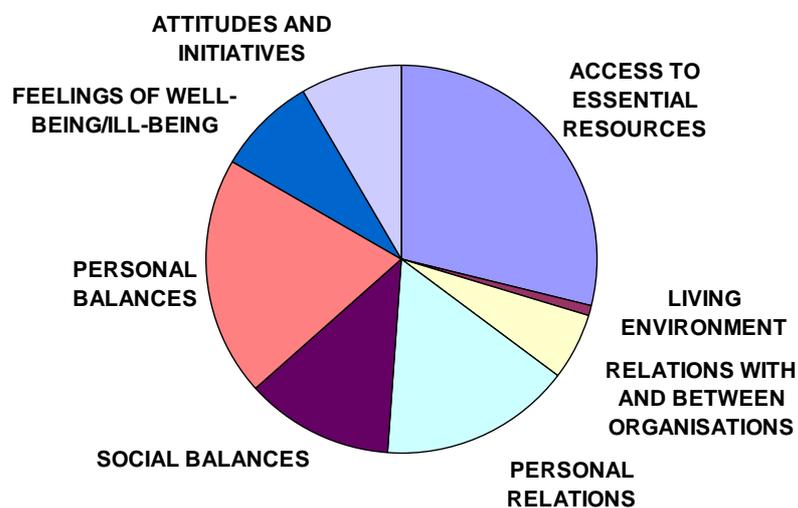
From the homogeneous focus groups it's also clear that social balance is crucial for the well-being of the citizens, in particular considering the values of respect and solidarity. This means that the participants have a feeling about the need for a good integration into the society in order to have good relations, to keep their own balance and finally to feel good. The groups of reference are also clear: family and friends.

## Youth for Democracy

Participating in a Youth and Democracy project of the Youth in Action Program, we had three focus groups with youth:

- cultural association “il Sogno”
- young asylum seekers
- informal group

### Répartition des critères selon les familles



Result by criteria (criteria above 4% are included)

1. Employment/work: 10,34 %
2. Physical balance and health: 9,66 %
3. Leisure, culture, sport: 6,21 %
4. Personal relations in general: 6,21 %
5. Relations with friends: 4,83 %
6. Partners/loving and sexual relationships: 4,14 %
7. Social mix: 4,14 %

The results of the focus groups with young people differ from the general picture given by the community. Access to essential resources as employment and cultural, sport and leisure activities is the first category cited by the participants, followed by health and relations. Apparently for the well-being of youth, relations with friends and partners are more important than relations with family. Social mix was also very much considered in particular the criteria: “open to different cultures” was very popular.

The issue of employment seems to be a big question, difficult not only to solve but even to address in a plan. Nevertheless a big part of the criteria gathered refers to having a job, having good relations during the working activities, have a good salary. So it is worth underscoring that there is not enough about this question in the Social Plan. Co-responsibility should invade this field.

### Pilot actions on co-responsibility

#### CO-RESPONSIBLE GARDEN AND JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Short reports on the progress of the two pilot actions.

Name of action: *little jobs for young people*

#### How is it being developed? What is the partnership?

Thirty young people between the age of 16 and 20 participate in the project.

The budget is 8000 euro and the payment is 5 euro per hour for a total of 1.600 hours meaning about 50 hours per person (250 euro). The mean of payment chosen is innovative as it ensures injury and national insurance contributions without the need to stipulate a legal contract. The payment is done by vouchers sold by the national insurance institute. They are bought by the organization of interest and can be used just in summertime and during Christmas for minors.

1. Park tree casting: Asif Chimelli (our organization) buys the vouchers which are used to employ people to open the bathroom of the park during week-ends which is otherwise closed. They will open and close it, clean it and also clean a room open to associations for events and the park.  
They will start the 22 of June.
2. Sailing association - ECON: an association buy the vouchers (they will be refunded by Asif Chimelli trough the youth plan – sponsored buy the municipality of Pergine and the Province of Trento). They are on the lake side and their activity is veiling. They provide a public service, including for people with disabilities. The voucher will be used to employ people to clean the beach, the park on the lake side and the sail boats.  
The activity will be in July and August.
3. Christmas Market: it is organized by the local association of traders, they will buy the vouchers. They will be used to employ people to think and implement strategies of communication and advertisement and to do support and entertainment activities during

the market as baby care, provide information to tourists and write the newspaper of the market. They will also advertise the bathroom.

4. Pergine Bike Station: starting from a project of the secondary school, a service of bike rental has been set at the train station of Pergine. The project "little jobs" pays two youth to keep the "shop" open at lunch time.

The pilot action "little jobs" is at the level of engaged partnership, the organizations involved implement the actions taking care of the young people, welcome them and giving them the needed instructions. The direction of the project is in the hand of Asif Chimelli and of the municipality of Pergine. The action is co-responsible because it makes it possible for young people to work, all the organizations have this aim, while they are offering a service to the community.

Name of action: *co-responsible vegetable garden*

#### How is it being developed? What is the partnership?

The budget is 1.100 we got the money from the local bank. Tools have been bought and the place has been offered by the municipality. The work started in April, about ten people participate daily or weekly with regularity.

A lot of things have been planted: lettuce, tomato, peppers, chilli peppers, beans, corn, corn for pop corn, cabbage, turnip, artichokes, cucumbers, melon, courgette, pumpkin, leak, onions...

Starting from May the youngsters of a youth center in Pergine, who participate in the focus groups, go regularly every Monday to give water and other little duties. They enjoy the supervision of an elderly woman. An asylum seeker is participating in the project, a man from Chile and some other people also pass by and give their contribution to the garden.

The harvest has been distributed among the participants and to a charity association. It's nice to see that some people start to feel the place as their place and they are taking care of the land thinking also as to what will happen next year.

On the scale of engagement this action is on the level of co-production as the service of municipality is the provision of the land, the local bank financed the tools and some seeds and then the people themselves work the land with the tools, seed and take care of the garden.

It's very interesting to see the dynamics of the co-responsible garden as implicit, tacit rules set up automatically among the people. For the moment every one is participating for the time he or she can or want offer and everybody is accepting it.

#### Spreading the co-responsibility approach

The municipality of Pergine Valsugana has good possibilities to continue on the path of co-responsibility undertaken in the last year. As reported in this plan the municipality has a good starting point: a local administration that supports the process and an impressive number of

cultural associations and informal local initiatives. Given this basis there is also a lot of room for improvement, here follows a review of the field of action for 2013:

- Pilot actions
  - Indicators of well-being
  - Social plan
  - Local Support Group
  - Youth for democracy
  - Maso Martini
  - The association “il Sogno”
  - Actions in other areas
  - Diffusion of the approach to other municipalities
- 
- Pilot actions: the two pilot actions needs to be evaluated by the participants and by the facilitators involved using the method of co-evaluation. Given the results of the co-evaluation the local administration, the partners and the citizens involved will decide whether to stop or continue with activities, if some changes or improvements are needed and in the best scenario how to enlarge the two activities, employ more people in the project of the little jobs for young people and cultivate more land in the co-responsible vegetable garden. Concrete action is the best way to spread the co-responsibility approach, it means to make the step from philosophy to reality.
  - Indicators of well-being: a questionnaire has been distributed to 105 people in the month of August 2012, it aims at gathering qualitative information and proposals from the citizens. The questionnaire has been built following the method proposed by the Council of Europe, the answers collected in the homogeneous focus groups on the four questions about well-being and ill-being has been used to fill the questionnaire that interrogate people on about twenty dimensions of well-being from the access to essential resources, passing through personal balance and relations to identity and attitudes. The questionnaire seems to be a very good method to spread the co-responsibility approach and to give visibility to together project as it has been distributed in large scale to associations, citizens both in paper and by mail. The goal is to collect at least 400 questionnaires, the elaboration of the data will be in September and October. According to results pilot actions will be proposed by the Local Administration and by the Local Support Group.
  - Social Plan 2008-2010: the Social Plan implemented from 2008 to 2010 provided a very accurate analysis of the demographic, economic and social situation of the municipality and it offered a number of proposals as briefly explained above. The Social Plan needs to be evaluated by the Local Administration and by the Local Support Group which partly coincide with the Commission for the implementation of the Social Plan. After the evaluation, some actions.
  - Local Support Group: each partner involved in the Local Support Group should propose and implement an action of co-responsibility for its own association or organization. In this respect the Local Support Group is open to new actors with ideas and resources to plan and implement actions of co-responsibility

- Youth for democracy: about ten boys and girls of the municipality have been involved in the European Project promoted by the network Together and in particular by the Belgian partner. They conducted three focus groups (reported above) and they had at disposal 400 euro to realize a project. The project involves the people who participate in the focus groups: the cultural association “Il Sogno” and the group of young asylum seekers. The idea follows the answers given by the participants and in particular a criteria cited by all the groups: meeting new culture. The project is a Programme of integration of the asylum seekers in the community and a support for the association “il Sogno” and generally for the young people in the municipality as the asylum seekers will share their resources in terms of musical, cultural, personal knowledge. Regarding employment, the biggest criteria for three groups, the Programme of integration will provide job opportunities for the asylum seekers, a possible result of the project is the establishment of a Youth Cooperative that will be the employment umbrella for young people in Pergine.
- Maso Martini: this project is in the frame of the Social Policies performed by the “Comunità di Valle” that involves a partnership between the Municipality of Pergine, the other surrounding Municipalities and the Autonomous Province of Trento. The idea is to open center aiming to foster social inclusion of people with temporary difficulties. The house should be capable to host permanently 8-10 people and 20 people for day-care service. They house should be run in a co-responsible way with the hosts having their duties in cleaning, cooking, maybe gardening. The stay should be short and focused on processes of autonomy building or recovering. Targeted hosts of Maso Martini are separate man without home, women victims of domestic violence, migrants or asylum seekers.
- The youth association “il Sogno” is based in Pergine and runs artistic activities, from expositions and concerts to handcraft workshops and music courses. They hosted the African Party on 15 September, which is an activity included in the Youth for Democracy project and the course of Djembe. The association has more than 400 members and has the support of a huge number of young people in the municipality. In the last there was a big action of co-responsibility with all the youngsters participating in the works of renovation of a building, propriety of a man who lent it for free to the association.
- The interest for the philosophy and practice of co-responsibility has spread already in the municipality. The Centre for Alcoholics of the Public Health System is interested in planning a pilot action of co-responsibility. Following the meeting in Pergine the Vice-Mayor working on participation, environment, renewable energy, education, local transport and urban parks showed her interested in planning some pilot actions of co-responsibility.
- The experience gained by Municipality of Pergine Valsugana through the participation to the project Together has to be shared within the Province to the interested municipalities, starting with the municipalities engaged in the “Special Policies for the Family”.

## Actions for each point

1) *Pilot actions*: evaluation and planning within the end of the year

- September/October 2012: co-evaluation of the co-responsible vegetable garden;
- January 2013: end of co-evaluation of the little jobs (some of the young people are employed in activities in support of the Christmas Market)

2) *Indicators of well-being*: elaboration, discussion of the results and planning within the end of the year

- October/November 2012: elaboration of the questionnaire data;
- November/December 2012, January 2013: discussion among the local administration, local association, the private sector and the citizens about the pilot action to propose and implement

3) *Social Plan 2008-2010*: a series of meeting of the Local Support are needed to discuss the issue and to plan the further steps.

- October/November/December 2012: at least three meetings of the Local Support Group

4) *Local Support Group*: a number partners programmed their action already other partners still need to discuss and plan.

- January/February 2013 - Local Bank: the local Bank will implement a project on diversity management. The action of co-responsibility will be the one of translating in six languages – Arabic, Chinese, Albanian, Romanian, - some documents, general information and posters with direction inside the local cooperative bank. This action as at the level of co-production as the Local Support Group is in charge to find mother-tongue the citizens who will be in charge of the translations.
- January/May 2013 – Local Schools: the methodology of the Council of Europe, from the focus groups to the pilot actions, will be proposed during the first week of September to teachers in schools of all levels: elementary, middle and secondary school. From
- 2013 - Youth Center (A.P.P.M.): the center is involved in the co-responsible vegetable garden. The youngster and facilitators will take part to the co-evaluation, the planning and the programming process as reported above. During the summer 2012 the youth spent two hours every Monday in the garden working together with an elderly woman.
- October/November/December: the partners of the Local Support Group and possible new partners meet and programme pilot actions of co-responsibility

5) *Youth for democracy*: the activity is already planned, its success is at risk for the uncertainty on the refugee status and stay permit provision to the asylum seekers, in particular after an episode of violence occurred in Trento in the month of July.

- October 2012 – May 2013: Percussions (Djambe) course in the space of the association “Il Sogno” offered by the asylum seekers.
  - October 2012 – May 2013: planning of other activities, reflection on the idea of the Youth Cooperative.
  - November 2012: participation of the youth to the 2<sup>nd</sup> international meeting of territories of co-responsibility.
- 6) *Maso Martini*: the project has been approved and financed by the Autonomous Province of Trento.
- 2013-2014: works of renovation of the building
- 7) “*il Sogno*”: the Municipality through the Youth Plan financed the materials for the renovation of the building.
- 2013: continue the cooperation between the association, the municipality and the community.
- 8) *Actions in other fields*: several meetings to be attended
- 6/12/2012: presentation of the local action plan and the indicators of well-being of the Municipality of Pergine in a conference organized by the Agency for the Family.
  - 2013: support to other municipalities in starting the project and developing processes and actions of co-responsibility

### Co-responsibility and other participative methods

The principle of responsibility always refers to an established relation, it involves a degree of reciprocity, and its etymology is built on the term “answer”.

Participation is a concept that involves essentially two elements: to be there, in an active way and to matter, has an influence on the decisions.

When we talk about responsibility and participation we are therefore leaving the culture of the delegation, just waiting for answers, to enter the field of active citizenship and active involvement.

Nowadays, in order to ensure and improve the governance of local communities, it is increasingly important to create occasions of civic engagement and of direct responsibility of citizens. Some new needs emerging from society can be satisfied only with a different relational quality, with a modality that we can define communitarian. Engagement and participation becomes the engine to create social capital, a sense of community, the possibility for the citizens to feel that they belong and that they are in relation with others.

This is a long and complex process, it requires a change in the cultural paradigm.

To activate participation and responsibility is extremely complex and it needs a lot of work, but it is with no doubt the best way to build well-being in a community.

Co-responsibility is a wide concept, it acquires various meaning when people try to put it in practice. In the municipality of Pergine Valsugana it firstly meant confusion and trouble. Secondly it meant focus groups, reflection, questions on what well-being is, what are the goals for a person living in Pergine or in one of the surrounding villages and for the community as a whole. At this stage we can not talk of participation but just of presence. Officials of the municipality, with the help of people already involved in the public and political life (the Local Support Group) called some people, friends, colleagues to participate. Then the people involved in the focus group met again, this time to speak about proposals, what we can do to improve our well-being and the one of the community. The focus groups have a double function, they are useful for the research part, to build the questionnaire, but at the same time they are a tool for involvement. The municipality call, ask, pray the citizens to come and say what they think it could be done by the citizens themselves to improve their own well-being. Citizens expressed their ideas to other citizens and to the administration in a direct way on some specific issues. This was just one meeting, that day the participants (as reported before about 50 people) came up with 10 proposals of action of co-responsibility. At this point co-responsibility is already a tool of direct democracy. The ten proposals has been considered by the institution who started this process of consultation, reflecting about pre-existing projects, material, political, legal obstacles and finally two of the proposals were valued and pushed forward. Of the two actions, the project of the little jobs involves youngster who are paid for the services they provide. In this case it is the community that recognizes a specific need and act co-responsibly to meet it. The participation of the youngster depends on the fact that they receive a little wage for their activities. The case of the co-responsible vegetable garden is different, we consider it as more participative. It is a tool of participation and a continuous practice of direct democracy because when a citizen decides to go there in the evening to work a bit it's like he or she is deciding, voting for the respect of the environment, for the healthy food, for good relations inside the community, for a constructive time management. In that moment they are voting themselves to be the representative of their ideas.

In the project youth for democracy about five people participated, doing focus groups, planning and starting to realize the pilot action of co-responsibility without participating in the trip to Belgium. We consider this also a practice of participation and direct democracy as it is a selfless contribution to the personal and collective well-being.

To sum up co-responsibility as a participative method in the municipality of Pergine has been defined as a philosophy that requires and sponsors the participation of the citizens in all phases of the policy making. The approach really works when the actions put in practices are genuinely coming from the people. If the municipality wants the citizen to participate then it also has to permit them to decide in what to participate. This is the most important principle for any participative method. Most likely the citizens won't simply participate in a process that they feel it belongs to the interest of other people rather than to their own.

### Role of the LSG in the future

The people involved in the Local Support Group have a role in the municipality which goes beyond Together Project. They represent professions or organizations and they are involved either in the commission for the social plan or in the youth policies. It is expected that they will continue participating in the public life of the municipality. The future role of the LSG as a body will be the one of proposing, supervising and evaluating the pilot actions and all the other actions of co-responsibility that will take place in the municipality.

The Local Support Group expressed the will to continue the path undertaken with the Together Project and previously with the adoption of the Social Plan. The LSG will continue autonomously the activity of networking and programming at local level, however the group expressed the need for a follow up of the Together project in order to have access to human and financial support in the implementation of the Plan of Co-responsibility.

## Conclusions

### What did we learn from the project and from the other municipalities?

Within the Municipality, the Department for Social Policy is the one who carried out the project in the two years. Further discussion with the other Departments and with the Municipality Board is needed in order to answer the question whether the municipality will use the co-responsibility approach in the future or not. Nevertheless the Social and Youth Policy Departments are already employing this approach and will use it in the future also. More attention will be given to projects involving the participation of the citizens. The role of the Public Administration could change from the mere concession of financial resources to the promotion and organization of projects of co-responsibility which will need a substantial participation of the citizens in terms of human resources and responsibility. This change will be probably favoured by the fact that the flow of financial resources coming from the Province of Trento and going to the Municipality is decreasing.

There are administrative difficulties implementing this project that should be limited. The civil servant in charge of social policy spent a lot of time with the First level Controller wasting time useful for his job. A person has been employed part-time by the Asif Chimelli (the Special Agency for Infants, Families and Youth Policies) to stimulate, coordinate and follow the activities from the focus groups and pilot action to the redaction of this plan. Furthermore the civil servant in charge of the youth policy coordinated the project in the first part and followed it for all its length, coordinating the pilot action on little jobs. The project has been supervised also by an employee of the Province of Trento.

The human resources of the municipality and therefore of the community should commit themselves on the local, practical level rather than on long administrative issues or on trips.

Nevertheless there are a number of results of the Network Together that is worth to underline in this conclusion. The meetings of the network, in each participant cities, permitted to every local coordinator to exchange opinion and questions on the work that he or she was doing. The participants and experts were extremely important in providing explanations, direction, energy and legitimacy to implement the project at local level.

Furthermore each meeting consisted also in visits to local projects and local services of municipalities and associations, a sort of qualitative study on how different communities face similar or different problems.

The implementation of this plan and the diffusion of the approach in other municipalities of the Province will be fostered in the year 2013 by the Municipality of Pergine and the Province of Trento. A person will be employed on the project for this purpose.

Follows a brief review on best practices that have been important for the planning and the implementation of the project in Pergine. Some of them are an input for this Action Plan and for further action in the next years.

Mulhouse was important to give an idea on the size of a pilot action. They provided examples, support and also a lot of discussion and reflection on the process of spreading co-responsibility in all phases. From Salaspils we copied the idea that each member of the Local Support should propose and follow a project. The concept is quite simple but not so self-evident: why should somebody stay in the Local Support Group if he or she is not involved in any activity?

From Braine l'Alleud we copied the methodology of the co-evaluation which is useful for the evaluation of the pilot actions; and the idea of using the methodology in the schools to address the next generations. The idea behind this is that it is very difficult to change the mind of an adult, while young people can be more opened to new philosophies.

It seems clear from the discussion within the Local Support Group that approach of co-responsibility works where there is a real need for it.

Greece has been very important in this sense. At the beginning of the project the Municipality of Kavala could not follow directly the project and so they had some difficulties, (during the first year of the crises any trip by a civil servant was prohibited) but exactly for the economic crises, Kavala was the most successful in implementing co-responsibility opening a social pharmacy with doctors and pharmacists who offer their skills and medicine to anyone in need without asking money. In Greece people understood that individualism is no longer a successful paradigm. People help each other because in a situation where more than 25% of the working force is unemployed and where the wages of all workers have been drastically reduced, everyone knows that tomorrow can be his or her turn to face difficulties. Surprisingly enough in a situation like this people help each other more rather than becoming greedier and attached to their own property and value.

A territory of co-responsibility is a place of cultural vitality and social inclusion.