

Policy Innovation in Job and Development

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Organisation: Comune di Milano

Country: Italy

Level of government: Local government

Sector: General public services

Type: Human Resources

Launched in: 2011

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Description

With regard to jobs and development, the local administration approved a policy document entitled “Policy Guidelines for Employment, Economic Development, Universities and Research in Milan”, which set out a system of measures on several fronts, based on support for micro-enterprises and self-employment, attracting and training human capital and support for innovation. As an outcome of this innovation phase, Milan is currently home to the largest number of innovative startups in the country (470 out of a total of 3,200 surveyed in Italy in 2014). Milan, together with Lombardy, also heads the rankings in terms of areas with the largest number of startups with a social purpose.

Why the innovation was developed

- The political turning point of 2011 came during a phase that was profoundly affected by the global economic and financial crisis, demanding the implementation of innovative policies that are capable of tackling the already visible effects of the crisis.
 - Even taking the measure's limited room for maneuver at the municipal level, the new approach has shifted the focus of action and redefined its purpose.
 - By reversing the logic that had essentially entrusted the task of job creation to the capacity of private enterprise to make efficient investments, the new government has made skills support and self-employment – especially among young people – a central focus of its action.
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Objectives

Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Support economic growth

- The initiatives that have been led include a series of experimental “active labour policy” measures. The first regards micro-credit, with the granting of loans of up to 20,000 euros under favourable conditions to individuals working in Milan or starting a business on a self-employed basis.
 - A second line of action has been the establishment of a number of specialised business incubators in different zones of the city, with the aim of recreating links between residential and productive functions.
 - Another area in which the local government has invested resources to support mechanisms of economic innovation that are capable of producing inclusion and employment is digital manufacturing workshops (so-called “fab labs”) which are home to experiments with new forms of connections between digital innovation and manufacturing and artisan traditions in Milan and Italy.
 - A new connection between economic and social innovation on the one hand and public policy on the other has been one of the fundamental policy planning focuses of the new administration, which starting from this vision has implemented new instruments of governance designed to bring about greater openness in decision-making procedures and to reunite the plural, fragmentary interests expressed by the city, including new ones among them, and recognising this pluralism as a positive asset to be governed.
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Main beneficiaries

Businesses, Civil Society, General population, Students, Young people

Results

Results not available yet

Development

Design

Milan has developed an approach to innovation that respects a plurality of initiatives emerging from different perspectives, with an “open coordination” within the City. The coordination is between the public, private, voluntary and community organizations and implies the participation of the target groups. Some main examples/tools of of this “open coordination strategy” are: 1) Public hearings and online consultations,; 2) Participatory budget.

Testing

- Innovation have been tested through experimental initiatives and policies. Just to give an example, the municipal authorities have devised a bottom-up crowdfunding programme focused on projects of the city and for the city, related to social innovation.
 - The authorities have allocated EUR 400,000 as co-funding. An urban platform will host up to 18 innovative projects, each of which is likely to receive up to a maximum of EUR 50,000 granted by the Municipality, over a trial period of 20 months.
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Implementation

Tools used:

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Resources used:

Partnerships

Digital Agenda for Europe

Academics and Research Bodies, Civil Society, Other Public Sector, Private sector

The City of Milan builds on its distinctive strategy by connecting the different parts of a whole innovation ecosystem in novel, pervasive, widespread and affordable manners, which is perhaps the biggest breakthrough enabled by digital technologies. This task links to Europe 2020 strategy, in particular to the Digital Agenda for Europe, which aims to “Open Innovation 2.0” as a new paradigm based on a Quadruple Helix Model where government, industry, academia and civil participants work together to co-create the future and drive structural changes far beyond the scope of what any one organization or person could do alone. This model encompasses also user-oriented innovation models to take full advantage of ideas’ cross-fertilisation leading to experimentation and prototyping in real world setting.

Lessons Learned
