SEARCH PROJECT
IN – DEPTH SEMINAR

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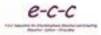
SMART SPORT CITIES

My path has not been very linear, I start from an education with a degree in Modern Literature and then by chance I went to work in a company as a commercial director for 10 years and from there a series of experiences in the marketing field were born. I have always had sport in my heart, in fact I have always been a basketball player and also at a working level I have been involved in marketing and sports sponsorship for many years.

I, then, landed with the same chance at the university. In fact, I went to enroll in a course and instead, given my age, they offered me to teach. The Swiss university system is different from the Italian one because it is a binary system like the German one. So there is an academic path like ours to which you access after high school, but then there are universities that have a strong integration between practice and theory. So also as teachers they have people not only from academic but also professional path and I am one of them. In fact, I entered as a professional teacher and started dealing with the issue of corporate responsibility and then my research activity on the impact that these companies have on our society.

Q 1: In the SEARCH project you have dealt with Smart Cities and you have talked about a paradigm change also at an economic level. What did you mean?

Let's say that the amount of resources we have used up to now to improve our quality of life and our economy has been based on the concept of linearity: take the materials, process them and place them on the market and then once we no longer use them, we discard or throw them away. This linear process has led to a frightening use of raw materials. We are talking about the billions of tons that we consume every year; but our planet is a finite entity and we will not have infinite resources. We need to rethink how to create a more environmentally friendly economy and make it profitable. So not a happy degrowth approach, not unhappy

growth but possibly an happy growth. We have to find ways to produce our wealth differently; in part we are already succeeding, companies are changing their approach. There is a very high rate of innovation linked to sustainability, so much so that we speak of "innovability", that is the integration between innovation and sustainability. And from this point of view, technologies are giving a very significant help.

Q 2: Specifically Smart Cities what does it mean?

Smart Cities means that we will have about 80% of the population in urban agglomerations that were designed and conceived in different eras and with different purposes and therefore We should rethink our cities from different points of view. First of all is the issue of CO_2 emissions. We have the oldest real estate in the world and as a result we need to intervene on it, which is currently responsible for around 80% of harmful emissions. It does not only mean rethinking the buildings but also all the connections, the sociability and the way of living the city. We are now thinking about "Metropolis at 15 minutes" that is to create spaces, where in 15 minutes you can make the transfers between the place where you live and the place where you work. Furthermore, we are thinking about a different mobility, about the possibility of creating different social spaces. All this Smart Cities will be able to do because by integrating these systems of intelligent technologies they will enable these functions in a much more effective way.

Q 3: Surely this new urban planning and physical activity will have to communicate clearly the performance of physical activity?

Absolutely yes, so much so that for example in the United States in the evaluation of buildings a rate is also calculated that is called "walk ability" which detects in the space of 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, half an hour on foot how many services are accessible from the property

and the value obviously varies according to this accessibility. These are revolutionary changes, also because physical movement is a fundamental component of health. So not only will we have strong aggregations within cities, but we should have cities able to keep citizens in good health from 3 to 90 years old, so it will also take an intergenerational key to the creation of spaces and paths.

Q 4: Is there also another factor which is that of sociality, therefore outdoor spaces, physical activity and sociality that all three must necessarily communicate?

Absolutely yes, because even at the level of sociality it is now proven by many studies that single people have a higher rate of mobility, get sick more easily, have less immune defenses, have fewer resources in the face of difficulties, therefore the maintenance and development of social networks will be absolutely fundamental and must be accessible is achieved both at the hardware level and therefore in the urban context with streets, houses and spaces but also at the software level it will be necessary to understand who can be the actors able to create these dimensions of sociability. I am thinking for example of the fundamental role, in our country, of sports associations but more trivially for people of a certain age, of those who organize dance courses ect .. these activities that allow you to meet people and create relationships.

Q 5: Earlier you were talking about sports, planning and the use of technologies. What are the new opportunities? Then, within the module, you brought, in addition to the discourse of technologies, also examples of a whole series of initiatives that have been implemented in different communities. Can you tell us something about it?

But I am reminded of the example of an initiative that has taken hold and is that of the "foot-bus". It is a way of accompanying children to school on foot, there are volunteers who make

the same path on foot that the bus does in the city, gathering the children who go to school walking together in various positions. it is a way of being together, it is a way of getting to know each other and a way of getting used to walking, it is a way of doing it safely, since they do it accompanied by adults, and it is a very simple system. Another example is the creation of "life paths", not only within public spaces where you every few meters have a station where you can perform exercises, but I have seen, for example, "life paths" set up at the internal companies. Open spaces of companies and therefore if you want to do your hour of physical activity in the lunch break, you can do it outside in the green space around the place where you work and it is an equipped place. But technology offers very interesting insights, not only in this dimension but also, for example, in raising awareness. With your mobile you can know your physical movement, what you do as a person during the day, then measure the steps taken, calculate the duration of a walk, calculate the calories you have consumed rather than physical effort. This is a form of knowledge of yourself, of your possibilities that is not indifferent.

Q 6: In your opinion, what relationship do kids have with outdoor spaces that are not the classic school, home and gym?

A tragic relationship. Let's start by saying that my generational gap is not indifferent on this issue, because the perceived is really completely different. For my generation, space was a dimension of reality while for children it is now very complex, because their relational dynamics of exchange and knowledge pass through the virtual dimension that occupies a significant time and space. So, it is absolutely not easy to relate them to this dimension, I think it is a very, very important part of the educational process. How to do it? this is not simple, I think that one of the dimensions that could certainly help is the dimension of the game, therefore of a knowledge acquired through the playful dimension. I give a trivial example but

one that struck me a lot. A few years ago, the Politecnico di Milano to take the entrance selection test had built a virtual path where the candidate entered and suddenly discovered that there had been a murder. He had, therefore, to find out in which room this thing had happened and where the traces were in order to try to discover the murdered. In short, instead of taking a logic test, they built a situation where a young boy immediately found himself, he felt like he was in a movie. The attention was total because he also had little time to go and discover all these signs. I found this idea fantastic. I don't know how all of this can be transferable in reality, but lately I've been very impressed by another fact as well. I took a class of university students to visit a shoe factory and at the end a boy approached me and said: "Do you really need 123 steps to make a shoe?" This question suggests that there is no perception of reality. So, how can we relate a territory, make it known to the kids? You probably need to really think about initiatives like this. Initiatives like this are trying to build situations where entering into a relationship with reality becomes a more familiar dimension with respect to their interests.

Q 7: Many times when we talk about Smart Sport Cities we always think of new models of elevated cities, 3.0 cities. Instead it is precisely with simplicity that this evolution should take place. Would it be enough to know one's territory and re-evaluate spaces that already exist? Absolutely yes. The problem is that this dimension of this theme is a transversal theme that touches on all topics and all activities. As for the discipline I deal with, what I have understood is that the large dimension is very useful first of all to contaminate. Ideas and new stimuli are taken and the idea can then be applied and declined in any context and dimension. For example, in my country, during the lock-down period, a boy who was passionate about basketball had read that an American team had decided to isolate himself in order to avoid

contagions and to continue the activity and therefore put himself in self-isolation in this bubble without having more contacts to, in fact, continue to do workouts.

The boy returned home asked his parents for permission to do the same thing with his friends. The parents accepted this proposal, the priest of the oratory made spaces available and after 6 months, having obtained all the permits, he with 3 other classes closed themselves in this bubble where they remained for three weeks. Then from an unpleasant thing an immense happiness was born. In the morning they had lessons in DAD, in the afternoon physical activity and in the evening they organized video calls with various guests: the mayor, a basketball coach ect ect .. they invited people to chat and discuss on various topics. So we started from an idea of an American professional team, an idea for Business made to tackle a management problem and we came to translate it into a class of kids.

Q 8 :But what is the role of institutions in all this? Not in the specific case but just in general?
Sympathetic in the etymological sense of the term sympathos. So if the public administration does not understand the speed of these changes and, above all, the need for a redefinition of its role, because just as the city offers a basis for inserting this system of technologies, the administration must also be able to provide tools for all this to happen. Therefore he must heavily recover a dimension of dialogue and listen to what happens, what he could do, what could be developed and he must be able to find formulas that from a technical point of view respect the administrative bureaucratic part and therefore have a formality that makes some projects feasible. It really takes a change of pace, because these are very fast changes are also the changes that these generations feel and understand and therefore you cannot keep them blocked if not by putting innovative projects on the plate of new spaces, different ideas and it is necessary that the public administration is present as much as possible.

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Q 9: What role does the school play?

The school has a fundamental role and I would say that in this historical moment it is essential. Essential because it is the primary agent of the formation of a new way of thinking of oneself as citizens. Because if the children do not find the opportunity to get an idea of community, relationships, roles, responsibilities and skills within the school, they will not be able to take advantage of the opportunities that these changes will bring. I am absolutely convinced that we have a wonderful season ahead, a sort of Renaissance; these guys have a chance to realize ideas and projects that I believe no other generation has had until now.

I am thinking precisely of the dimensions of the context in which, personally, I would put the school at the foreground both in terms of the supply of tools and to offer teachers the possibility of confrontation with all these realities that, in my work, I have the great fortune to be able to see. I see so many things that can be done, so many ideas and teachers must also be given the opportunity to experiment outside a series of constraints that are now a bit like saying a bit obsolete.

Q 10: To go back to what I said before, regarding living outdoor spaces and therefore everything that surrounds our city and our community. Can these communicate with a discourse of health and wellness?

Absolutely yes, they can communicate in a transversal and inclusive way. We really waste a lot of time and energy in keeping disciplines, roles and spaces separate and linked. For example, do we need to do health education? There are 4 hours of Medicine lessons and we explain. This is not how it should be done. We can decide to do another type of path.

Q 11: Yes, this topic came up during all the other webinars. We tend to think in watertight compartments, so each subject has its hours, has its own program, its teaching and perhaps
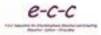
there is not that transversality that could certainly lead to a more general understanding. Even in understanding the outdoor spaces and also initiatives similar to those he told us.

I tell an anecdote. They called me to be part of a project by an Arab-American group for the construction of a new city in India. I found myself in a work group where there was: an anthropologist, a filmmaker, an urban planner and a lawyer, everyone had a say about it. It starts with a sociological analysis, target, average age, professionals and characteristics of the city which lasted two hours. The urban planner had already designed a small Venice because there were canals to be exploited in terms of sustainability ... After hours talking, the anthropologist, who was Nepalese, said: "it's all very beautiful, but we don't look the water we hear the sound of the water. " This look from a different culture and a different experience opened up other projects: we started again with waterfalls, fountains, etc. Whatever job they do, they will have to interface with people with skills different from theirs and who will have to integrate these skills. So if they choose to be an architect, they will also have to be able to deal with a lawyer, an accountant ect. I find this very very important.

Q 11: It is always said that young kids spend 99% of their time in a virtual world. but in your opinion, who live with students every day, do you think they want to discover their cities, their countries and outdoor spaces? Is there this desire?

I am convinced that young people are always right, otherwise we would not have reached where we are. Those who come later are by default better than those who were before because they have to run a different reality and have different skills. This is a generation that needs a purpose, has to share a goal. So if you tell them "let's go for a walk and get to know a territory" the answer will be no. But if I tell them: "We have to organize the junior rowing competitions, can you help me? Are you capable?" you will have 2000 kids from all over Europe who absolutely do not know the place where you live. In this way it becomes a collective

project, which has a purpose, has a deadline and must obtain a result. Of course it can be photographed, filmed and shared and thus also have a social dimension.

Q 12: I am a physical education teacher at the high school in Rieti and I wanted to report our experience. There are these "community educational pacts" that is summer projects that schools take on as much as possible and for those who want, on a voluntary basis, activities are organized that are precisely aimed at this multidisciplinary activity within the territory. We have a cycle path in our city of 20 km that surrounds the whole Piana Reatina; and one of the activities we have proposed is precisely this, taking walks along the cycle path with the geography science teachers. We will first study the map and the municipalities that we will touch with the aim of introducing these young people to our territory. In addition to this we have organized Urban trekking and I have included the playful dimension for my discipline. So they will have guided tours with the art history teachers and then with me we will do treasure hunts, so in a more playful and fun way, where they will have to look for news and icons of the monuments they visit. It would be nice if these things could also be done during the school year, instead of sticking to that program and that so rigid timetable where I cannot go to a lesson with the geography teacher because otherwise the school universe will be upset. . It would be nice to organize the school in this way, I think it is also more attractive for students.

Congratulations on this initiative, I think it is an intelligent way of using spaces in which the school can get out of the bureaucratic and administrative constraints of time that we were saying. It would be very nice to collect all these good practices as they are contagious, it is really a stimulus.

Q 13: Is there anyone else who wants to tell their experience?

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I' am a teacher of physical education in a high school as well, in Trapani, with a specialization in Sports Management and three years ago, so before the pandemic, we organized a day with a "sustainable mobility and health" project. The project involved a day on a bicycle in our small cycle path and the boys, together with the surveyor, had to propose new ideas to finish this cycle path which had been incomplete for years. We drove from our school to the city center via this old and incomplete cycle path. The various projects were then exposed to the Mayor and also evaluated by the urban commission. It was a nice thing that we repeated the following year, changing the theme and linking it to the historical monuments of our town, for which the president of one of the museums in Trapani was our mentor; we stopped at various places and he was telling us the story of that monument or historic site. Unfortunately we had to stop due to the pandemic but we would like to resume soon.

These initiatives are small like seeds but if practiced regularly they grow a lot. I tell you the story of a former British colonel, close to turning 100, who was hospitalized in a retirement home because he had suffered an accident. Despite his fracture the doctors managed to keep him alive and in good health, so he out of gratitude told his grandchildren that he wanted to give money to the English health system. The grandchildren proposed to start a fund campaign, he again proposed to make a bet. He undertakes to do 100 laps with the walker around the retirement home and every day he gave the results to the nation. With this bet he collected an exorbitant sum; the queen also made him a knight. This is to say that he raised all that money because he involved the community through a bet that everyone wanted to participate in.

Q 13: Speaking of co-planning, when is it possible and how important is it to think about a strategy of organizing an event to defining a goal together with the students?

The topic of co-design is fundamental. Obviously to be effective it must be a common problem; the question is precisely being able to find ways in which everyone can express their idea to share and discuss and then everyone must find an active part in the project, therefore being able to choose projects that do not require only certain types of skills but that can include different types of skills. Co-planning gives many stimuli and not only to the youngest ones. Let me give you an example: a banking group in Italy that has 8000 employees made a proposal to all employees. He asked them if they could give up the pennies from their paychecks. All these cents were put into a collective container each month. Then they asked the same collaborators to indicate to which initiative they intended to give the funds raised. The winning project was to purchase a particular diagnostic instrumentation for the Meyer Institute in Florence which is a hospital for children. This is a trivial example but it underlines the importance of a common project and sharing. This is even more true with young people.

Q 14: I am also a teacher of physical education, and several years ago in my school we organized an ecological project, which had the aim of obtaining as many points as possible. It was a question of doing the separate collection of waste in each class and every morning we passed throughout the school and checked who had done the best job give a higher score. At the weekend everything was brought to a center, in Corato, in my country where they gave you money in exchange for these materials and with the proceeds we could buy small tools useful for the various classes of the school. It was a good project even if the collaboration is never enough and above all we must not give up when small difficulties arise.

This project is the synthesis of what we have said so far: it gave a goal, a purpose, it created a game, it involved everyone in doing a simple thing that did not require individual effort. Then unfortunately the bureaucracy doesn't help us too much but we still have to try.