

# VENICE 2030

CITY SOLUTIONS

Creating citizenship: the SDGs as an opportunity for all

24 - 25<sup>th</sup> October 2019



Co-organized by:



ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA  
PER IL CONSIGLIO DEI COMUNI  
E DELLE REGIONI D'EUROPA

UN HABITAT  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS  
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UCLG

United Cities  
and Local Governments

In collaboration with:



REGIONE DEL VENETO

## BACKGROUND

The approval of Agenda 2030 in September 2015 constitutes a unique opportunity for the world we live in. For the first time, all the member states of the United Nations committed to eradicating poverty, making the first universal plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. Within the Agenda 2030, cities take a very special place as instruments for growth, equality and opportunity, as for the first time, an objective dedicated exclusively to cities was included in the Agenda. SDG 11 wants to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. Since 2016, local governments around the world are mobilizing resources and political will to implement all the SDGs locally. Yet, we are still to find concrete tools about how can local government face the challenge of making Agenda 2030 a reality, at local level, and for all.

The Venice City Solutions Series is a yearly event bringing different issues that are key to implement the SDGs at local level, with specific focus to the role of local governments as key implementers of Agenda 2030. During the 2018 edition, more than 140 participants from 36 countries met in Venice to discuss the need to finance the SDGs at local level. The recommendations from the event were presented during the HLPF in New York on 16th July 2019. While discussing local finance, participants in year 2018 pointed out how important is to bring the local population on board of the SDGs adventure.

In 2019, Venice City Solutions wants to concentrate in how the SDGs can be an instrument to create citizenship; to promote the values of Agenda 2030 and to bring the SDGs closer to the people. The event tries to respond to the concerns of many Mayors, Governors and local government officers about how citizens feel more and more detached from their public institutions, and how they do not understand the added value of public services and how the public-sector works. This trend can undermine the trust in the role of public sector and can create a population in risk of being misinformed, misled and manipulated.

Local governments have a key position to help creating citizenship and enhancing the sense of belonging to the community. This key social contract between the citizen and their institutions needs to be renewed thanks to innovative ways of communication, open government strategies and political will.

Many local governments have found on Agenda 2030 a useful tool to explain to citizens the course of their actions. The SDGs message is easily understood by the population, who tends to feel immediately connected to the concrete issues the SDGs are calling for.

This year, Venice City Solutions wants to identify how cities and their local governments are using the SDGs as tools to create citizenship and reconnect with their citizens.

The event wants to identify possible responses to the following questions:

- How can Agenda 2030 help creating citizenship?
- How can the SDGs help local governments to understand better the needs of their citizens?
- How can the SDGs help local governments to communicate better with their citizens?
- How can local governments bring their citizens on-board to contribute to SDG decision making and implementation?
- How can local government make sure that their youngest citizens are committed to an Agenda designed for the world they will live in?

Venice City Solutions wants to focus particularly on the role of Youth in the SDGs. Since Agenda 2030 will be a reality for future generations, it is essential that younger citizens understand what the SDGs are, and how they can participate in the design of the cities where they will be living in the future.

The organizers felt it important to promote this aspect of linking Agenda 2030 with the citizen, a theme that has not yet been sufficiently explored, and where local and regional governments can play a fundamental role, as the institutions that are closer to the people they serve.

## OBJECTIVES

The dialogue will gather together representatives of local and regional governments, their associations, Mayors, Governors and other governmental representatives and selected partners to identify existing experiences, challenges and solutions that different countries in the world are implementing to bring Agenda 2030 closer to the people.

The outcome document will be presented at the High-Level Political Forum in 2020. The report will be circulated to UN agencies and to member states to contribute to the report on implementing SDG 17 “Partnerships for the goals”.

Venice City Solutions 2030 will also contribute to create a renewed global narrative on the role of SDGs to build local citizenship, but also about how cities can contribute to increase the sense of belonging for their citizens in an increasingly changing world. This narrative will constitute the first steps towards further debate during the UCLG World Congress (Durban, 11 – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019) and the 10<sup>th</sup> World Urban Forum (Abu Dhabi, 8 – 13<sup>th</sup> February). Venice will be an opportunity to transform the powerful message of Agenda 2030 into local policies and local action.

Specific outputs of the Dialogue will include:

- Identification of successful stories and tools about how local governments are mobilizing citizens in achieving the SDGs (design, financing, implementing, assessing tools).
- Mobilizing local governments' action to bring the citizens along for Agenda 2030 implementation.
- Identification of challenges in public communication between citizens and their local governments.
- Identifying innovative tools to recreate trust between citizens and the local public sector.
- Opening dialogue opportunities with global civil society.
- A final report gathering recommendations and proposals to contribute to the HLPF and other monitoring mechanisms established to follow up the SDG implementation.

The debate will organise around the following themes:

**Thematic trail BLUE: Focus on open government. The SDGs as a tool to link citizens with their local institutions**

**Thematic trail GREEN: Focus on youth. Creating citizenship for the future**

**Thematic trail YELLOW: Tripartite focus. How social and economic stakeholders can contribute to the SDGs at local level.**

**Thematic trail RED: Creating trust at local level, major actors and innovative tools.**

**Recommendations to the High-Level Political Forum 2020 and new narrative towards the UCLG Congress and the World Urban Forum**

## ORGANISERS

The event is co-organized by the [Italian Association for the Council of European Municipalities \(AICCRE\)](#), [UNDP](#), [UN-Habitat](#), the [UN SDG Action Campaign](#) and [United Cities and Local Governments](#). The event counts with the financial support of [Platforma](#) and the technical contribution of [FMDV, the Global fund for the development of cities](#), and the [University of Venice Ca' Foscari](#).

The Venice City Solutions Series comes under the “Localizing the SDGs” initiative, a common effort by UCLG, UN-Habitat and UNDP to support the local implementation of the SDGs thanks to the leading role of local and regional governments. Venice contributes highly to the activities of the initiative, being a yearly global event to share experiences about how different countries are localizing the SDGs.

## METHODOLOGY

The event will be hosted by the Italian Association for the Council of European Municipalities (AICCRE) in a venue to be confirmed within the island of Venice.

The event will start in the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> October, that is celebrated worldwide as the United Nations Day. The morning will be a public event, open to Venice citizens, tourist and general public, where activities will be organized in collaboration with local schools and civil society to promote the SDGs to a broader public. The event will include serious gaming, collective activities under the theme “The world that you want for...”.

In parallel on the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> October, there will be a session co-organised with the Veneto Region and specially addressed to Italian local and provincial governments with the objective to debate how the regional government and the different local and provincial administrations are addressing the local implementation of Agenda 2030. The event will seek to create awareness and compile experiences and initiatives already happening in the territory.

During the 24<sup>th</sup> afternoon, the participants will take part of a collective exercise to identify the main questions linked to the idea of citizenship and the sense of belonging in a changing world. The exercise will be conducted by the Ca' Foscari University of Venice in collaboration with the International Art Exhibition (La Biennale). The day will finish with a cocktail dinner to contribute to the teamwork.

Note that the activities of 24<sup>th</sup> October are optional for participants that only want to attend the formal session of the workshop, but we encourage everyone to join us in the innovative dynamics of 24<sup>th</sup> October.

The whole day of 25<sup>th</sup> October will be dedicated to the formal debates, in plenary.

The activity has no cost for participants. Participation to this event is by invitation only and will have to be approved by the Secretariat of the event.

Our Italian hosts will also offer a preference fare in selected hotels, as well as recommended itineraries and local support to the event. Assistance to obtain visas can be provided through the request of official letter of invitation by the Italian hosts. Participants needing a visa to travel to Italy are encouraged to initiate procedures at least 4 weeks before the event.

The closest airports to the city of Venice are VCE (Marco Polo) as well as Treviso (TSF) where most low-cost airlines operate. The cities of Bologna, Milan and Rome are also very well connected to Venice by train. A detailed logistics note will be circulated once the registration is approved.

Interpretation will be available in English, French, Spanish and Italian.

For more information, please contact Ms. Diana Lopez ([diana.lopez \(at\) un.org](mailto:diana.lopez@un.org))  
For members of the CEMR, please contact Ms. Luana Lupi ([lupi \(at\) aiccre.it](mailto:lupi@aiccre.it))

## TWITTER

**#VeniceCitySolutions2030 #Citizens4SDGs #invisiblebelonging**

**Video** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPMajsv8cls>

