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## **Social innovation for the ecological transition: the EDU project of the Italian Youth Association for UNESCO in Italy and Calabria**

### **Abstract**

This paper illustrates the impact on the student community of the EDU project of the Italian Youth Association for UNESCO, in terms of social innovation and in some cases with participatory actions research, in the context of the policies for the Italian ecological transition. The results obtained from 2019 will be illustrated, the year in which AIGU started an impact monitoring through surveys proposed to more than 2,000 students and teachers involved (in 20 Italian regions). The EDU project, born in 2017, had as main topics the “2030 Agenda” from 2019 and the “Faro convention” from 2022. From the beginning, one of the aim of EDU was to give knowledge and skills related to the ecological transition and the link between: 1) heritage (cultural, audio-visual, architectural, landscaped and natural); 2) well-being. Among the various regional projects, the EDU project of the Calabria Region entitled "Photovoice & Landscape" will be explored in this paper. In the calabrian case, EDU brought the students involved and the local decision makers to dialogue using a PAR methodology called “photovoice”. It is noted that the EDU project held in Calabria involved the student community which identifies itself as powerless with respect to territorial policies. Moreover, the calabrian case is in an inner area in which SNAI had foreseen the activation of civic monitoring on *Monithon* but without success.

The PAR methodology used in Calabria allowed students to develop proposals and questions to suggest policy guidelines to local decision makers. In addition, the skills to be able to monitor the spending of European funds through open data found on “Open Coesione” were transferred to the students, including skills to use the online platform for a simple civic monitoring ("Monithon"). Finally, considerations will be placed on the usefulness of PAR's visual methodologies, such as the declinations of the photovoice, to initiate social innovation processes useful for the creation of energy communities as well as pro-actives communities in the ecological transition.

**Keywords:** Social innovation, landscape, participatory action research, ecological transition

## 0. introduction

This paper illustrates the impact on the student community of the EDU project of the Italian Youth Association for UNESCO (AIGU), in terms of social innovation, in some cases by implementing participatory research actions (PAR), in the context of the Italian policies to ecological transition. The data relating to the surveys proposed to students and teachers from 2019 - more than 2,000 - will be reported and then the paper moves on to the case of "EDU Calabria" where a participatory action research (PAR) and civic monitoring has been launched with the use of the online platform "*Monithon*"<sup>1</sup>.

### 1. Problem statement & proposal: the 2030 Agenda and the EDU program as a positive action for social innovation towards the ecological transition.

The achievement of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda, a guideline dictated by the United Nations (UN) that can lead to the ecological transition, has been slowed down by the harmful effects of the global pandemic of 2020. The objectives, which can only be achieved with a collective effort as well as with social and technological innovation, were not easy to achieve even before the pandemic. However, the SDGs<sup>2</sup> remain the only truly desirable way in the complex panorama of local and global problems to be addressed. The path traced by the 2030 Agenda remains the only one that can be traveled, as reported in the (2020) by the Italian National Alliance for Sustainable Development (ASviS):

"Opening the high level political forum (HLPF), held virtually from 7 to 16 July, Guterres - UN secretary general - highlighted how «the COVID-19 crisis is having devastating impacts due to our past and present failures», because we have not yet taken the SDGs seriously», while UN Deputy Secretary General Amina J. Mohammed closed the meeting by noting that the world was not already on the way to achieving the 2030 Agenda before the pandemic struck, and that in the light of the current crisis the way to go will be even more uphill. The goal for a sustainable and resilient recovery [...] will be to remain in the path traced by the 2030 Agenda."

(Rapporto ASviS 2020, p. 13, translated by the author)

Following this path, the Italian Youth Association for UNESCO took the opportunity to remodel its national educational project (EDU). EDU involved students from the Italian regions, with the aim of doing as much as possible to bring social innovation (Borda, 2006; Moulaert & MacCallum, 2019) as well as pursuing the empowerment of young students - bringing them to the higher rungs of the ladder of participation (Arnstein, 1969) - for policies relating to Heritage and ecological transition.

### 1. The Italian youth association for UNESCO

Since 2014, outlining a vision for (and with) young people under 35, the Italian Youth Association for UNESCO was born as a project for the participatory construction of sustainability policies that consider and encourage the participation of young people in Heritage related policies. The Association is a proof of how many young people in Italy are willing to spend themselves as active citizens in: cultural heritage enhancement programs; social inclusion and environmental protection awareness projects. In fact, AIGU was created with the aim of developing and promoting projects that actively involve the younger generations on UNESCO values, programs and priorities in various fields: education, communication and information, natural sciences, human and social sciences, culture etc.

Over the years, AIGU – which has nowadays about 300 volunteers aged between 18 and 35 throughout the Italian territory – has grown and is increasingly structured. AIGU is the world's largest youth association for UNESCO<sup>3</sup>; brings together students, researchers, artists, professionals, managers and entrepreneurs, all committed to developing national projects. It currently consists of a national Board, a Board of Directors, 20 Regional Representations, members and associates present in every region of Italy. Among the products of the Association is the EDU program (or project). For EDU, monitoring has also recently begun (2020) to detect its impact in terms of social innovation: 1) to achieve the objectives of the UN's 2030 Agenda, 2) to achieve the ecological transition (related to Heritage).

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<sup>1</sup> *Monithon* is an initiative born in 2013 with the aim of combining a "participatory" monitoring with "official" monitoring. The "official" monitoring - on *Open Coesione* data (*OpenCoesione* - Home, s.d.) - and the evaluation of public policies is accompanied<sup>1</sup> by a PAR. *Monithon* uses the energies and expertise of the final beneficiaries of the policies, with the aim of proposing and outlining improvements for projects financed with European funds (2021)

<sup>2</sup> Sustainable Development Goals of 2030 Agenda

<sup>3</sup> Source: <https://aiguofficial.it/> (consulted on 20/12/2021)

## 2. The EDU program by AIGU

Over the years, the AIGU EDU project has become the flagship product among the actions carried out by the association. Born in 2017 under the name of “UNESCOedu” and then converted into EDU from 2020, the EDU program has reached more than 7000 students and teachers in Italy. From the beginning, the EDU program had the main goal of transferring knowledge and skills to students and at the same time: 1) empowering the student community; 2) discuss the heritage and his aspects: cultural, audio-visual, architectural, landscape and natural, etc. Lecturing on cultural heritage has never been a stand-alone thing within the EDU project, according to the values of the United Nations, we discussed and learned together with the students about: sustainable tourism, landscape, inclusiveness in the use of cultural heritage, and finally about ecological transition in line with the UN's 2030 Agenda. In addition, it is noted that with as many as 58 world heritage sites (*Patrimonio Mondiale | Unesco Italia*, 2022) there was no lack of discussion points for AIGU to be able to start educational projects in every Italian region. In 2019 it was decided to decline the EDU program on the basis of the sustainability objectives of the United Nations (Agenda 2030), consequently we aligned with the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development (ASviS). Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) there are several related to the protection and use of tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as to the issues of ecological transition, including some highly treated by EDU: objective 4 for the education of quality; goal 9 for industry, innovation and infrastructure; goal 11 for sustainable cities and communities; goal 12 for responsible consumption and production; goal 13 relating to climate change.

Each regional laboratory involved one or more schools in the activities, lessons and workshops. The workshops were an opportunity to reconnect young people with their territory, bringing social innovation, even in a virtual way during 2020 when the pandemic forced the rethinking of the EDU program. The program in 2020 was a demonstration of resilience and at the same time a moment of reflection, with young students, on the importance: 1) of living heritage and landscape in an active and sustainable way; 2) take care and respect for biodiversity also represented by UNESCO geoparks, to lower the possibility of future pandemics.

## 3. Datas from the EDU program

Below are some numbers that show the success of EDU over the years, despite crises such as the pandemic of 2020: 86 regional laboratories have been launched; more than 200 educational institutions have been reached; more than 7000 students were actively involved; 266 partners – both local and national – who supported the program.



Fig. 1 connection between Goal 4 and the other SDGs. Source: <https://channels.ft.com/en/thevalueofknowledge/> consulted on 15/05/2020

The EDU project has evolved year by year and pursuing objective no. 4 of the 2030 Agenda has managed to adapt, also to be able to reach students despite the global pandemic. Despite the difficulties due to the pandemic, AIGU has developed a national program for schools on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, reaching significant numbers in 2019/2021: 20 regional workshops launched in 20 Italian regions; 35 schools involved; 5 universities involved; more than 2,000 students involved and 50 supporting partners of the project including the "Presidency of the Council of Ministers" and the "Bank of

Italy". Project partners not only made the program viable, which remains a voluntary and non-profit action, but also provided the financial resources to ensure quality education through: 1) inviting guests from universities and institutions; 2) provide the materials and sometimes the necessary equipment for students; 3) being able to adapt the entire program in order to comply with the Italian anti covid-19 regulations.

As with past editions, EDU 2019/2021 also differed for each Italian region based on the local (tangible and intangible) heritage. Below are briefly and in alphabetical order the 20 laboratories activated and concluded in the period 2019/2021:

**1) *Abruzzo – Goal 4 – EREMITAGE: patrimonio accessibile in 3D***

Accessibility of the heritage with the creation of an interactive 3D tactile device for the blind, depicting the Hermitage of San Liberatore a Majella and a "Diffuse Tactile Museum".

**2) *Basilicata – Goals 8, 10, 11 – Zerobarbarie***

Creation of audio guides that represent new stories and routes of slow tourism, sustainable and accessible to all, to discover the territory of the city of Potenza.

**3) *Calabria – Goals 9, 11, 12, 13 – La sfida dell'Agenda 2030 per l'attuazione dello sviluppo sostenibile***

Creation of a volume (Quaderno SID – Sustainable Innovation Design – IV) entitled "Vectors of sustainability & training: a Path for Transversal Skills and Orientation towards the ecological transition"<sup>4</sup>. The volume is a collection of materials produced by participants and speakers, data and statistics, material photo-video documenting the whole experience.

**4) *Campania – Goal 14 – In fondo al mare***

Creation of slogans and illustrative panels to: 1) raise awareness among citizens of the risks of a not responsible management of protected marine areas; 2) illustrate behaviors to be adopted to ensure the protection of the marine ecosystem.

**5) *Emilia Romagna – Goals 4, 10, 11 – Radio Goal 2030! Per un'AGENDA ON-AIR***

Creation of a podcast program, "Radio Goal 2030", dedicated to education for Sustainable Development. The episodes of the podcast, made by the schools participating in the project, are interviews with professionals and experts in the cultural and social sector.

**6) *Friuli Venezia Giulia – Goal 17 – Giovani sguardi 2030. Progetti per un FVG sostenibile a partire dalla scuola***

Artistic direction of short films for a social campaign on the discovery and enhancement of "Palù di Livenza"<sup>5</sup>, part of the World Heritage site "Prehistoric pile dwellings in the Alps".

**7) *Lazio – Goal 10 – #FortificAzione***

Throughout the history of the Walls of Rome, the students participated in an archaeological and artistic workshop together with some refugees and asylum seekers, identifying the "wall" as a symbol of social inequality.

**8) *Liguria – Goals 14, 15 – Liguria tra terre e mare***

Creation of an exhibition consisting of 10 illustrative panels presented at the monumental complex of the "Lantern in Genoa"<sup>6</sup> and information brochures, expression of the interiorization and development of students' ideas.

**9) *Lombardia – Goal 12, 13, 15 – CineEarth***

After viewing the material created by AIGU members with the support of the teacher, the students made a video in which they enclosed their vision of Responsible Consumption and Production.

**10) *Marche – Goal 4, 9, 11 – Adotta la cultura 4.0***

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<sup>4</sup> The name of the IV SID volume is currently provisional.

<sup>5</sup> Pile-dwelling site and environmental heritage, UNESCO heritage in Friuli Venezia Giulia.

<sup>6</sup> Located on the promontory of "Capo di Faro" the Lanterna, 77 meters high, is the highest lighthouse in the Mediterranean and the second in Europe.

Starting from a creative kit, under the guidance of AIGU members and the contribution of experts, the students have deepened the concept of heritage and have built projects containing proposals and activities to enhance a cultural asset, tangible or intangible, through technology and more.

**11) Molise – Goals 2, 12 – Re food**

Definition of a decalogue of conscious agriculture to describe the agricultural strategies to be applied to promote sustainable lifestyles, combined with an analysis of the characteristics and history of the main agricultural and agri-food products of the area.

**12) Piemonte – Goals 8, 9, 11 – Adriano Olivetti: un'utopia reale**

Creation of "placemats" declined in 21 different graphics created by the students and directly inspired by their research and reflections on the image of the Olivetti heritage of Ivrea: recognized in 2018 as a World Heritage site.

**13) Puglia – Goals 4, 13 – Pan: l'Agenda 2030 per lo sviluppo sostenibile**

Use of software to assess the quality of life in Taranto through some ISTAT BES (Fair and Sustainable Wellbeing) indicators and conversion of a city space into an urban laboratory and place of learning.

**14) Sardegna – Goals 9, 12 – Dall'overtourism a nuovi modelli di turismo sostenibile**

Construction of a video about the places and savoir-faire of the Gulf of Olbia to relaunch: 1) a new tourism promotion, the enhancement of businesses and activities in the surrounding area; 2) respect for the environment and sustainable consumption.

**15) Sicilia – Goal 11 – Green Time! Verso città più sostenibili e inclusive**

Realization of project proposals and eco-design prototypes that enhance the spaces and the diversity of the Mediterranean flora, built in honeycomb cardboard, light but capable of supporting heavy weights. The workshop products were exhibited in the Botanical Park of the Radicepura Foundation, in Giarre (CT).

**16) Toscana – Goal 11 – goALL! Pensare sostenibile, essere futuro**

Creation of the "goALL! Thinking sustainable, being future ", guidelines to stimulate young people to grow following the principles of sustainability and education, and the development of proposals for the enhancement and redevelopment of a city public space.

**17) Trentino Alto Adige – Goals 2, 12, 13, 14 – Dalla tradizione una ricetta per la sostenibilità**

Creation of a shared menu (of recipes) through a process of raising awareness and attention to the social and environmental impact of the choice of raw materials, the cost of production and the minimization of waste.

**18) Umbria – Goals 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 15 – Time Capsule for future**

Creation of (audiovisual) advertising to raise awareness among the younger generations of the importance of gender equality, of a more equitable education, of sustainable consumption models.

**19) Valle d'Aosta – Goal 13, 15 – Uno sguardo giovane sull'ambiente di montagna. Riscoprire la natura per imparare a viverla**

Creation of the video "What the mountain is for you" starting from research and identification of keywords, images and phrases useful for the construction of the final product.

**20) Veneto – Goal 5, 14 – Print your future**

Creation of advertising posters, with the movable type printing technique, to creatively raise awareness of the chosen Sustainable Development Goals.

Each of the 20 activated EDU laboratories differed in content and objectives, always keeping in mind the 2030 AGENDA as a starting point. Furthermore, at the beginning and at the end of the activities, evaluation questionnaires were placed both for the students and the teachers involved. The surveys gave the possibility to monitor the actual impacts of the EDU program and to have an estimate of the knowledge and skills acquired by the students.

#### 4. Survey from 2019 to 2021

The "online" teaching method of the course allowed for the structuring of a monitoring and evaluation system, with the aim of describing and measuring the "transformations" in terms of students' knowledge and awareness. This was designed with the aim of carrying out an analysis, research and reflection on both the actions and the effects produced (Federighi, 2012) (Galliani, 2015). The final beneficiaries are the over 2,000 young students participating in regional educational courses, 84% of whom come from upper secondary school; 9% from lower secondary school and 7% from university.

The tools used for the evaluation of EDU have been designed with a view to impact assessment, thus identifying the aspects that determine a visible and measurable change on the reference community (Hehenberger, Harling, Scholten 2013; Venturi, 2019); with a view to evaluating learning, in a logic of control and development of the same (Castoldi, 2019). In detail:

- Questionnaire: qualitative and quantitative data collection tool, administered to students and teachers in the initial and final phase of EDU;
- Learning verification activities: moments carried out during the workshops to strengthen the acquisition of acquired knowledge;
- Overt participant observation: survey technique to understand the impact of the project. (Cook, 2005)

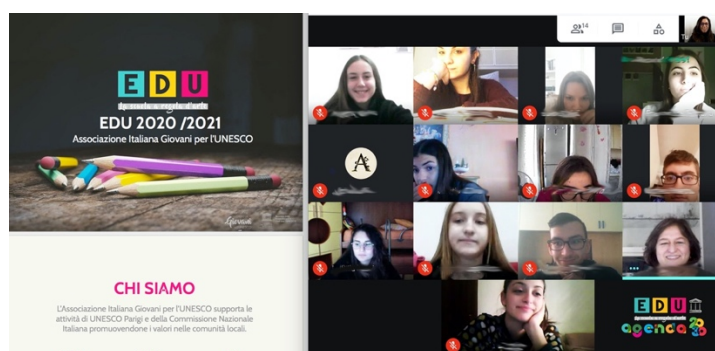
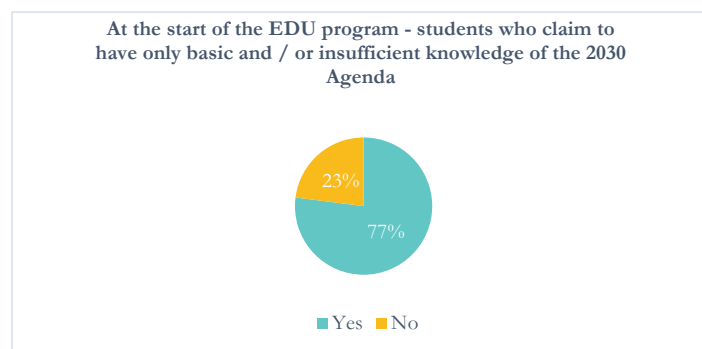
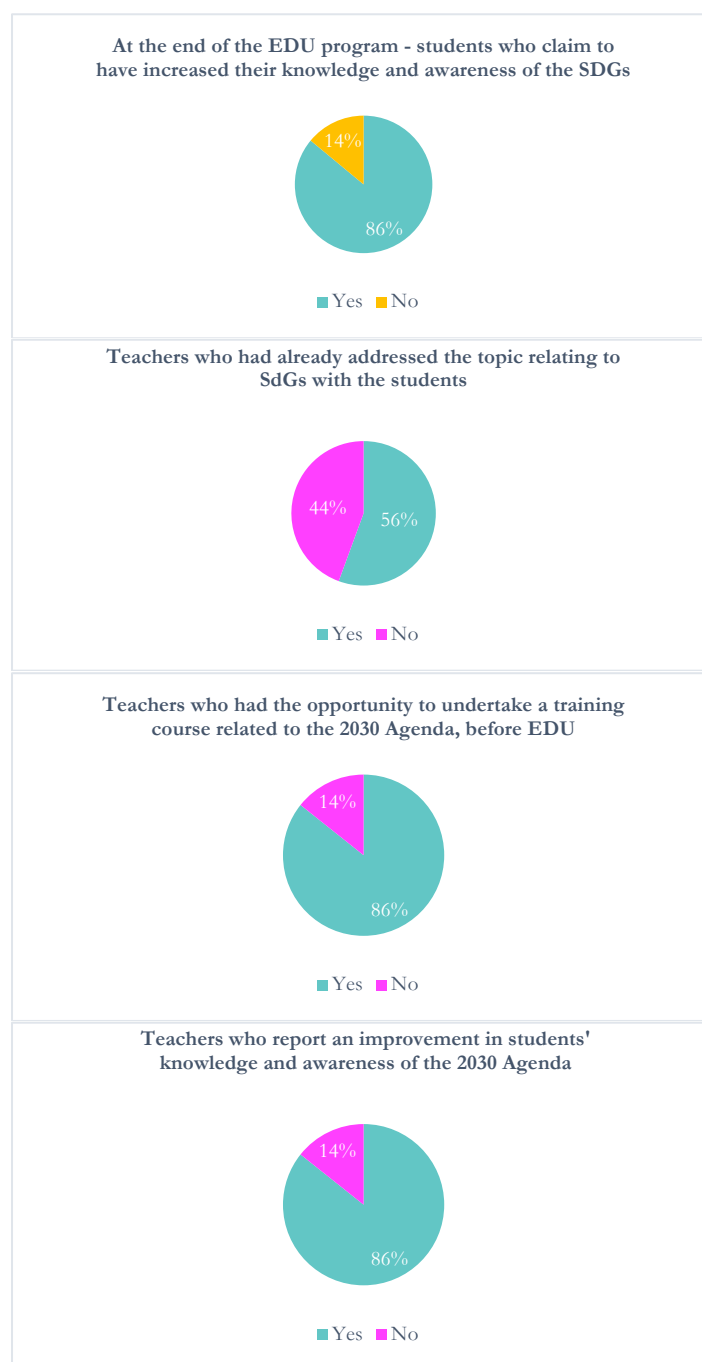


Fig. 2. The boys and girls of the I.T.E.S. "Pitagora" commercial center in Taranto (Puglia) participate in the "remote" EDU laboratory.

Below are some data relating to the surveys proposed to students and teachers, with the intent to monitoring the impact of the program. At the beginning of the program, about the objectives of the 2030 Agenda which were the main topic of EDU 2019/2021: 77% of the students involved claimed to have insufficient knowledge on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); only 56% of teachers taught the SDGs - and the ecological transition - in school hours. A second survey was submitted to students and teachers at the end of the program, obtaining encouraging responses for the program itself: 86% of students declare that they have gained more knowledge and skills related to the SDGs; 86% of teachers confirm the increase in knowledge and skills of students on the topics proposed by EDU.





The monitoring carried out – in addition to having had positive feedback from the teachers involved – showed how young people require to be considered protagonists in designing their future/present. Moreover, students recognize the importance of informing themselves and raising awareness of others, paying attention to their actions. Finally, the survey showed student's interest in topics: environmental protection, the fight against climate change, the fight against injustices and inequalities. EDU 2019/2021 was therefore set to transfer awareness, knowledge and skills in line with the 2030 Agenda, and a positive impact was therefore obtained on the student community: potentially a lasting impact over time.

##### 5. EDU program nowadays (2022): calabrian case study

The program continues nowadays (2022) and in addition to the transfer of knowledge and skills, it aims at empowering the student community involved. Moreover, the Association kept in mind what is the definition of social innovation that it wanted to achieve through the action of EDU. It is reiterated that the social innovation sought by the Association is first of all an innovation of social relations based on values such as solidarity and equity:

*«As scientists we are also keen to showcase the role of research in the making of SI as well as in its analysis and evaluation, and conversely to show how SI, as a solidarity-based approach to building community and society, can help to reinvigorate the relationship between social science and collective action, in particular through ethically committed action research. SI, in our view, is first and foremost*



*innovation in social relations based on values of solidarity, reciprocity and association. Such values involve respect, empathy with diverse viewpoints and convictions, openness to diverse languages and modes of communication, tolerance and care. Socially innovative research, grounded in the same values and behaviours, has a real contribution to make to SI through building and disseminating shared knowledge, understanding, vision, and cross-sector relationships.»*

(Moulaert & MacCallum, 2019, pag. 1)

The case study of Calabria – a Region in the South of Italy – is interesting as a demonstration of the potential of EDU. In October 2021, as EDU regional coordinator - before becoming EDU national coordinator - and in agreement with the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria, I started a PCTO<sup>7</sup> entitled "Photovoice & Landscape". This PCTO is based on a participatory action research methodology called "photovoice" – a methodology born in the 90s (Wang & Burris, 1997) – and then adapted in order to reach young people (Wang, 2006). This PAR methodology collects the mnemonic and visual perception of the community in order to facilitate the dialogue on territorial policies, between communities and local decision makers. Specifically, the photovoice method asks those involved to shoot in photos/videos elements of their daily life that describe critical issues or potentialities related to the territory and its management. In the case of EDU Calabria, with an appropriate declination of the photovoice method, the use of the landscape was proposed as a key to interpreting the territory to facilitate dialogue between students and local decision makers: on local policies, on SDGs, on landscape management and the ecological transition. Moreover, this PCTO was launched in an Italian *inner area* where the student community identifies itself as powerless about the decision process on local policies. In the Calabrian "Greco" (or Greek) Area, the Italian National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI) had provided for the activation of civic monitoring – also using the platform *Monithon* – but without success.

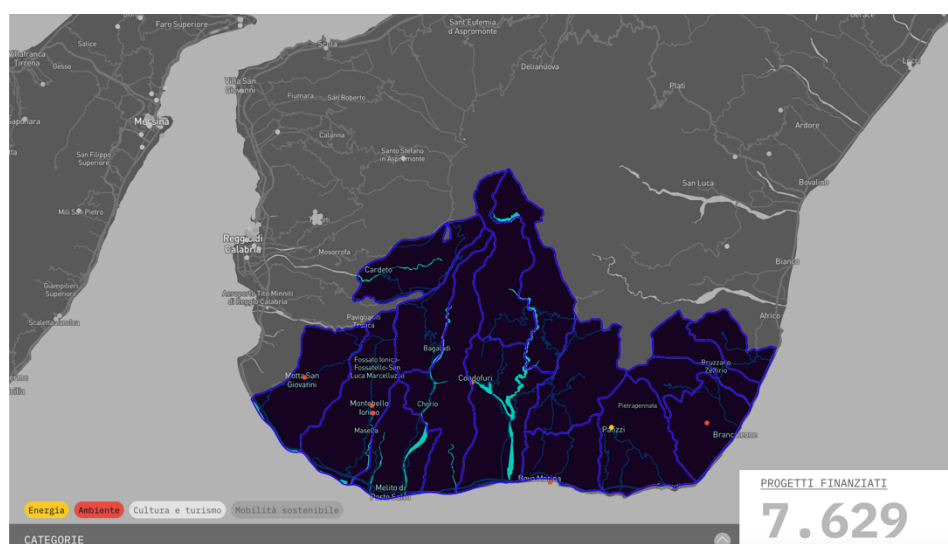


Fig. 3. The Calabrian "Greco" (or Greek) Area on Monithon. Source: <https://projectfinder.monithon.eu/> (consulted on 21/12/21).

The participatory civic monitoring objective, sought and obtained through the civic landscape monitoring laboratory supported by EDU, was already provided more specifically in Annex 2.a of the SNAI. In particular, we find in action 1.2 of intervention A.1 - with a total cost of € 101,762.50 - the description of how it was intended to achieve social innovation:

*"The Action is aimed at actively involving the local community (Institutions, Citizens, Companies, Associations) in the monitoring and evaluation of achievements, results and impacts resulting from the implementation of the Strategy Participatory Local Development of the Greco Area. Civic monitoring and participatory evaluation of policies and public investments are increasingly spreading nationally and European, especially in the context of the European Union's Cohesion Policies (eg. Open Coesione, Monithon Project, etc.).*

*The methodologies and civic monitoring and participatory evaluation tools that will be used will refer to the most advanced experiences of social innovation achieved in recent years. The Action will be implemented starting from a Civic Monitoring and Evaluation Plan."*

<sup>7</sup> In Italy this kind of activity are under the name of "Percorso per le Competenze Trasversali e l'Orientamento" (PCTO): a training path that can be integrated into the school program, with the aim of guide students into the choose of a work or of a university study path.

(Strategia Area Pilota Grecanica - Relazioni Tecniche Sintetiche, 2021, p. 7, translated by the author)<sup>8</sup>

Taking a cue from the objectives not achieved (but foreseen in the SNAI document), the Calabrian EDU laboratory was set up to activate participatory civic monitoring. The laboratory's peculiarity was its key to interpreting the territory: using the landscape as a key to interpreting the territory it was easier to extract the tacit requests of the young students (Bruns & M nderlein, 2016) and then translate them into proposals for the landscape and territory. The students' requests were extracted through the reading of the landscape made with photos taken by the students and videos – the photo / video material was collected during the daily life of the students to allow them to bring back the spaces they actually lived, as foreseen by the photovoice method for the involvement of young people (C. C. Wang, 2006) – and then discussed in focus groups to link photos and videos to: local policies, goals of the 2030 agenda, ecological transition, National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) and the Next Generation EU.

In addition, every week, students were asked to participate in surveys on their perception of their role in local policies. The young people involved – although not a valid sample to report the perception of all young people in the area – described themselves as powerless during the various surveys, as well as in the focus groups in accordance with the photovoice method. The photovoice method also provides for dialogue/debate in the form of a talk/exhibition event of the photo/video material collected by the community. In the calabrian case, in order not to make the dialogue a single event but lasting over time, knowledge and skills were transferred to start civic monitoring. Starting from the landscape elements portrayed by the students, 7 projects that can be monitored – on open data from the open Cohesion platform (*OpenCoesione - Home*) – were found through “Monithon”. The students themselves selected a single project on which to focus their civic monitoring, based on the connections they found between the landscape elements portrayed and the projects that could be monitored.

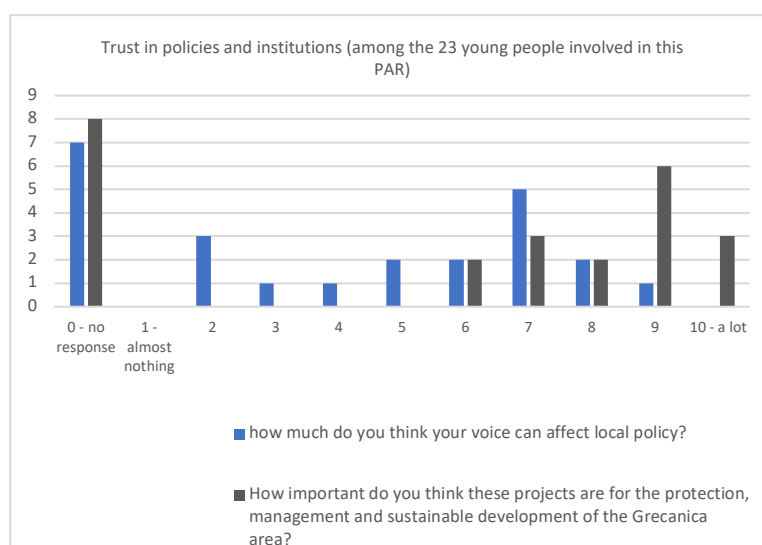


Fig. 4. Trust in policies and institutions among the 23 students involved<sup>9</sup>

## 6. The selected project and monitoring started on Monithon

The project selected by the students is entitled "Conservation and monitoring of the habitat of the oily scrub -juniperetum turbinatae -area sic" Fiumara Amendolea "and area" Capo San Giovanni "- repopulation / restoration of species in conservation interest of the oily scrub - juniperetum . " It was also the project that (again according to the students) had the most connections with the landscape elements they reported through the photovoice method.

<sup>8</sup> Source: [http://www.snaigrecanica.it/download/Allegato\\_2A\\_RelazioniTecnicheSinteticheInterventi.pdf](http://www.snaigrecanica.it/download/Allegato_2A_RelazioniTecnicheSinteticheInterventi.pdf) consulted on 12/02/2022

<sup>9</sup> Source: <https://forms.gle/7jy5vS1okooGPGe6> (on 20/12/2021).



Fig. 5. The arrows that indicate the connections with the project selected by the students are in blue, the image shows the relationship between the most important photo for the students and the projects that can be monitored on Monithon.

This is a project subject to civic monitoring, with the help of the *Monithon* platform (fig. 6), which sees the Calabrian section of the Italian Association of Organic Agriculture (AIAB) as the implementer of the project. The AIAB action, which provides for an expense of € 59,715.06 (fig. 6), was monitored by the students led by me as a facilitator. Furthermore, the students were helped in translating their requests both in the questions (foreseen for civic monitoring) and in proposals for local policies to be addressed to the decision makers (as foreseen by the photovoice method). Below are both the questions and the proposals (in summary) of the students, addressed to: AIAB (Calabria), councilor for culture of Melito di Porto Salvo (Avv. P. Pizzi) and lead Mayor for the Mayors of the Area Grecanica (Dr. S. Monorchio).

**SCHEDA PROGETTO**

**\_ conservazione e monitoraggio dell'habitat della macchia dell'oleo - juniperetum turbinatae - are sic fumara amendolea e area capo san giovanni - ripopolamento/ripristino delle specie a interesse conservazionistico della macchia dell'oleo - juniperetum**

\_ conservazione e monitoraggio dell'habitat della macchia dell'oleo - juniperetum turbinatae - ripopolamento/ripristino delle specie a interesse conservazionistico della macchia dell'oleo - juniperetum turbinatae

→ vedi il progetto su OpenCoesione

**DATA DI INIZIO**  
Gennaio 2019

**CATEGORIA**  
Tutela, ripristino e uso sostenibile dei siti Natura 2000

**TEMA**  
Ambiente

**FINANZIAMENTO:** 59.715,06 €  
Pagamenti erogati  
0,00 €

**STATO AVANZAMENTO**  
☐ Concluso  
☒ In corso  
☐ Non avviato  
☐ Liquidato

**MONITORATI**  
☒ Sì  
☐ No

**INIZIA IL MONITORAGGIO!**

Fig. 6. Civic monitoring on Monithon, for the project selected by the students. Source: <https://projectfinder.monithon.eu/> (consulted on 21/12/21).

Questions and proposals in summary, proposed by the students for the dialogue of 25 March 2022	
Proposals	Questions
	Questions on trends and impacts:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect natural habitats in a better way;</li> <li>• Better promotion of places for informed, responsible and sustainable tourism for landscape elements such as the “Rocca del Drako”<sup>10</sup>;</li> <li>• Structured strategy for the promotion of places, in order to inform different age groups through (social, press, old media, book sharing for tourism)</li> <li>• Encourage the production, sale and consumption of local products within the tourist routes.</li> <li>• Guarantee the accessory services for sustainable slow tourism (shelters, repair stations for bikes and for recharging electric bikes, etc.)</li> <li>• Programming of ad hoc events for tourists</li> <li>• Thinking of infrastructures as plastic elements that are linked to the landscape and that are privileged observation points, as well as being easy to visit the places on foot and by bike.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why have some of the proposed objectives not been achieved? (Question addressed to AIAB)</li> <li>• What were the initial expectations for the realization of the work? (Question addressed to AIAB)</li> <li>• Is it possible to make a comparison between expected results and current results? (Question addressed to AIAB)</li> </ul> <p>Questions about possible improvements for future projects of the same type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the most relevant problem? And which is the best result?</li> <li>• After having seen the results, what elements for improvement do you consider useful to introduce? Would the intervention (and the intervention planning) be redone in the same way or would something change?</li> </ul> <p>Extra question to the Municipality of Melito di Porto Salvo:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About the funds of the Next Generation EU, divided in Italy according to the PNRR (National Recovery and Resilience Plan), the municipality of Melito P.S. did submit any useful projects?</li> </ul>
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March 25, 2022 was the scheduled date for the event/talk that sees the students themselves as protagonists of the dialogue. The young people involved will thus be able to illustrate their proposals and ideas for policies on territory, landscape, sustainability and ecological transition starting from the landscape elements recognized by them and respecting the landscape definition of the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000): "Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors" (Council of Europe, 2000, pag. 2).

Among the answers obtained (to date 25 March 2022) from the subjects interviewed by the students, is reported here the answer of Dr. A. Modaffari who declared the excellent success of the project - unlike what was reported on the open-cohesion platform where the project is unfinished - which ended except for some minor tasks. Dr. Modaffari, on behalf of AIAB Calabria, also reports that among the results there is the creation of a planting protocol for the Phoenician juniper plant - a species at risk of extinction and object of the monitored project - in the Greek Area of Calabria. Finally, some interventions by the Mayor S. Monorchio and by the Councilor for culture P. Pizzi informed the students about how their municipalities have planned the spending of PNRR funds. Among the projects mentioned by the Mayor Monorchio: the creation of a smart school. The smart school will have to be born in the municipality of Bagaladi (in the Grecanica area) with the aim of training professionals for the management (and narration) of the territory.

<sup>10</sup> Place in the Grecanica Area shown in the photos of one of the students, interesting because it is linked to local history and legends.



Fig. 7. Dialogue between students and decision makers

## 7. Final considerations and conclusions

The impact of EDU program, and the impact of participatory action research method as the "photovoice", was the increase in students' knowledge and awareness about heritage, landscape and territorial aspects: as also reported in the answers of the decision makers interviewed in the Calabrian case. On the other hand, among the problems related to EDU and those types of participatory research action (Fantini, 2017), the long-lasting impact has yet to be verified. To ensure that the impact of the photovoice – in the Calabrian case – lasts over time, I opted for the transfer of knowledge and skills aimed at using the *Monithon* platform. Through the *Monithon* platform, students will be able to continue, as individuals or in collaboration with local associations, to have dialogue with the decision makers in the area and have more power in the making of local policies. Finally, given the nature of the policies on which students have decided to try to influence - with issues that dealt with the environment and the landscape linked to a necessary ecological transition - it is noted how these methodologies can be useful in forming today's and future energetic communities. The photovoice, mixed with other methodologies of participatory research action, is certainly useful for territorial planning but first of all it helps the younger generations to become active citizens and aware of the ecological transition.

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