



WHAT DO WE THINK ABOUT THE NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN SENT TO THE EU AND “WHAT CAN WE DO NOW?”

May, 17, 2021

1. Rooms for improvements and a requirement: open monitoring

The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (235.1 billion Euros, of which 204.5 of Next Generation EU) is at the formal attention of the European Commission. Having worked since July 2020 to attempt to orient its choices, the time has come for us at ForumDD and for many others to take stock of the fact that **this is as far as our institutions are able to go**. The Plan got off to an unfortunate start — by simply collating existing projects — and it was hampered by the decision, shared by the previous government, not to engage in any form of social dialogue. A further contributing factor has been the decision of the European ruling class to privilege the objective of "closing" the Plan rather than requiring credible guarantees that declared objectives could actually be achieved.

Since beggars can't be choosers, however, **three things can be done**. First, **appreciate some of the progress made**. Second, **point out some of the serious shortcomings** (many were already there in January), daring to hope that some of these might be overcome during discussions with the European Commission. Third, since the Plan has been “closed”, **identify the room for improvement that we, as activists and researchers, can exploit** to get the most out of it in terms of fair and sustainable development, social and environmental justice, in short, our list of things to do in the coming months.

We will attempt to do these three things here, even though the task of evaluating the Plan is hampered by the fact that the government has not yet made its “Targets and Milestones” public — neither to the nation nor to Parliament — except in informally circulated documents that are not easy to decipher. We imagine, however, that the European Commission has the relevant information, given that “Targets and Milestones” are an integral part of the requested plan.

But first, a general remark. As was evident back in January, **Italy is not using the Plan to build a shared, robust and mobilizing vision for a better future for our country**. Sure, spurred on by Europe, there are almost all the right headlines, many commendable goals, and some convincing reform projects. There are all the unresolved problems of the country, seventy long-overdue reforms, investments in every possible field. But there is neither an assessment of Italy's extraordinary aspirations and potential, nor an evaluation of the reasons why we have been trapped for so long without achieving them, just as there is no effective and creative use of the guidelines and priorities that Europe has indicated. The pieces are still unconnected.

There is no unifying picture:

- that identifies the obstacles to accessing knowledge as one of our fundamental limits (for childhood, adolescence, micro-entrepreneurial and creative energies, public-private-social dialogue in policy design, innovative procurement, the strategy of public enterprise, etc.);

- that calls for a systematic re-balancing of power in favor of work, youth and women (of course, for both youth and women there are several hints, but these are not yet sufficient to guarantee that intentions are translated into facts);
- that focuses on the construction of a universal welfare state nourished by a gender perspective (a path the pandemic "screams" for);
- that favors a democratization of corporate governance and industrial relations models, guaranteeing the strategic participation of workers and other essential stakeholders;
- that adapts action to the measure of territorial differences, of the different configurations and modes of territorial marginalization;
- that addresses the green deal and the fight against climate change as privileged terrain for building a new social justice.

Without this unifying picture, the Plan will always be a Sisyphean task, and the country will miss a unique opportunity for change. Without prior distribution of rights and powers to be exercised in the market and in market organizations, the welfare state's efforts are increasingly arduous. Moreover, they can be misinterpreted as support for the "losers" in a competitive race, when it is often the case that people — towards whom the duty of equal consideration and respect is absent — are not even allowed to enter the competition because the game is "rigged".

Ultimately, the Plan lacks the cultural impetus and perspective that would allow a more determined assault on the root causes of inequality and thus avoid a simple return to the previous norm, which even before the crisis prevented the country from growing and continued to fuel widespread inequality and poverty. This lack of vision also leads to sectoral and ministerial imbalances and confusion (with a few exceptions) and ends up fostering, even in its language, a certain cultural conservatism. Having spoken so much about "seizing the opportunity of the shock", there is absolute continuity with the common sense of the last thirty years that risks taking us back to the "world before the pandemic" and weakening the political and cultural yearning for the change of course that has emerged in recent months. And this is not all. The lack of vision could also lead to a dangerous lack of motivation for the public administrations responsible for implementing the Plan and for citizens, who see the Plan on the horizon.

This will not discourage us as it serves no purpose. On the contrary, moving on from the headlines and declared aims, and exploiting the room for improvement made possible by both promising indications and the lack of planning, **we must all contribute to giving the Plan a soul, to constructing the missing motivations**, to opening up space and giving strength to the goals of social justice.

Most of the interventions will be implemented by local administrations (especially municipalities) and by local branches of national public institutions (universities, ports, schools). The conditions exist, then, for the implementation process to be galvanized, supported, energized and directed by territorial organizations of citizenship, labour and business, in close connection with the implementing bodies. For the aggregate national interventions and the countless reforms, it will be possible to put pressure on future governments before Brussels discovers that commitments are not being met. For this to take place, however, **accessible, high-quality monitoring is needed**; monitoring that is **financial and physical** — "through the collection of appropriate indicators," as the Plan indicates — as well as **procedural** monitoring that can be used by civic organizations. It is necessary to know, in an open format, that is at least as easy to access as [OpenCoesione](#), and in a timely manner, what the goals and time-frames are, who is in charge, and how every reform and every given project in every given place is progressing. In order to pressure, dismantle bureaucratic and anti-competitive collusion, bring widespread knowledge into the choices being made and avoid

financing unnecessary or detrimental projects, it is essential to have public information regarding every stage of the implementation process activated by each measure of the Plan.

Here, then, is **the primary objective to be pursued now**. We have strongly signaled it to Parliament, which has given a clear indication in this sense, and which has been vaguely accepted by the Government, and we are now signaling it to the European Commission. The Plan correctly envisages "a special computer system developed by the Ministry of Economics and Finance (MEF) - Department of the General Accounting of the State as provided for in Article 1, paragraph 1043, of Law 30 December 2020, n. 178.", called ReGiS, which will ensure "the simplification of the processes of management, control, monitoring and reporting of funded projects" and allow "at the same time to adhere to the principles of information, publicity and transparency prescribed by European and national legislation". This system should enable verification of "Targets and Milestones", the expected results of indicators and implementation deadlines, with reimbursements dependent on actually achieving them. But it should also make it possible to know in a timely manner the stages of the implementation process that lead from the indications of the Plan to concrete interventions. This information, the Plan states, "is accessible to the users of the national institutions involved, as well as the European Commission, OLAF and the Court of Auditors". Well, **these same information should be accessible to all citizens**. It does not require one more Euro or one more Act. It is the only way to adequately implement Article 1, paragraph 1044 of the same law. It is decisive for the implementation of the Plan.

Let's come now to the content of the Plan. We will first examine Progress and Shortcomings. We will then proceed to Actions to be Taken.

2. Progress and Shortcomings

For more in-depth analysis, please see the [Document](#) commenting on the Draft approved on January 16, 2021 by the Prime Minister Conte's Government. The new document is not very different from the previous one in its structure, its main weaknesses, and in the vast majority of its projects: there is therefore no point in repeating ourselves. In terms of progress and shortcomings, we will limit ourselves to commenting on a few specific issues, identifying them both for possible, desirable revisions, and for subsequent work.

- **Expected results. There is still a pervasive and persistent opacity in this regard:** very few cases clearly identify the expected results (which specific aspects of the quality of life are to be improved); they are often confused with indicators of achievement (tangible and intangible infrastructure, actions to be taken to achieve those results) or of other things. This lack of transparency has many consequences: the lack of motivation and energization for citizens, businesses, labour and citizenship organizations, and for the very public administrations implementing the Plan; the absence of a filter that evaluates projects according to their effectiveness; the lack of a place-based approach that would strengthen the interventions' impact on territorial gaps and allows local administrations responsible for implementing them to prepare themselves properly and thus accelerate the roll-out. Finally, it ignores the possibility of making the "how" of the implementation processes as responsive as possible to the "what" is to be achieved. We hope that a revisitation of the Targets and Milestones will clarify some of the current opacity.
- **Public Administration and Simplification.** This is where **one of the two most positive changes to the Plan has taken place, breaking with the common sense of the last thirty years** and recognizing the dramatic reduction and aging of the PA and the degradation in training. In indicating guidelines for action, the emphasis given to the need for rapid and high-quality recruitment, based on an assessment of new needs, and taking into account organizational skills and attitudes rather than notional knowledge, is particularly significant.

As in other positive parts of the Plan, however, there are still doubts regarding whether these principles will be applied, and whether the recruitment drive will have an impact on the employment of women.

Pressured by the recruitment requirements to implement the Plan, a clear distinction has been introduced between full-time recruitment for open-ended contracts and "other recruitment paths" that envisage ambiguous "agreements with universities, centers of higher education and professional orders". These alternative paths should not preclude an autonomous evaluation for all candidates, as the Minister of Public Administration has pointed out in Parliament. The wording of Art. 10 of Decree Law 44/21, which is currently being converted by Parliament, needs to be revised. Finally, there is no commitment to innovation in the induction of new recruits in the administration.

While some of the points envisaged in the new further proposal for "simplification" are convincing —such as the definitive limitation of "fiscal damage to cases in which the production of damage is willfully desired by the person who has acted, excluding damage caused by omission or inertia", or the single platform for administrative transparency, or the commitment to reorient administrations towards an outcome-based performance —others appear ambiguous or risky, if the simplification of verification translate into its failure. The commitment to adopt digital technology to make procurement procedures more effective is positive, but the absence of an equal commitment to training administrators to implement the multiple forms of [innovative and participatory procurement](#) —absolutely under-exploited in Italy— as the EC itself recommends in its 2018 [Communication](#), is striking.

- **Competition.** Among the myriad reform commitments, one regards competition. This will require **strong monitoring**. The commitment to introducing pro-competitive modifications to concession regimes "eliminating or reducing the provisions for automatic extension or renewal (by 2022)" is definitely positive because it may allow a break with rent positions that have matured in many areas of public goods concessions. It must, however, be accompanied by measures to ensure modalities of public bidding that do not build new and worse monopoly positions and that do not impede access to grass-roots proposals from the community (see previous point). The commitment to introducing for local public services "norms aimed at imposing on the administration an advanced and reinforced motivation that justifies not resorting to the market", on the other hand, is clearly distorted and to be rejected, since this has produced in recent years degeneration equal to the degradation of public property. It is public interest that must be protected, not a particular form of property. Establishing the nature of "common good" of many local public services requires forms of community-based democratic self-government that would affirm and regulate efficiently and fairly, their non-excludability.

- **Tax Reform.** With a change of course from what the PM announced in his inauguration speech to Parliament —which envisaged a scenario where the in-depth work of a Commission would draft a project that the Government would accept and submit to Parliament for examination and approval —the Plan now commits the Government to presenting an enabling law (*legge delega*) by July 2021, taking into account the concluding document of the "cognitive investigation on the reform of personal income tax (IRPEF) and other aspects of the tax system" launched by parliamentary commissions and still in progress. The guidelines the Plan gives are minimal: an invitation to "codify" (prepare a unified text from existing rules); and a reference to the "possible revision of IRPEF, with the dual objectives of simplifying and rationalizing the structure of the levy and gradually reducing the tax burden, preserving progressivity and the balance of public accounts.", where the expression "preserving progressivity" is striking in its ambiguity. It was clear from the inaugural speech that the heterogeneity of this coalition government means we cannot expect the substantial reform choices that the phase requires (how to reduce horizontal and

vertical inequalities? How to tax financial and real estate income? How to reduce tax expenditures? How to build green taxation?). The method that was originally envisaged would have allowed an analysis which, with the help of Parliament, could have put the substance for a decision on the table for the next legislature. Now, there is a risk that marked acceleration will force either a minimalist solution —which will be everything but a reform, even if it is debated as if it were —or an ambiguous enabling law, which will be either inapplicable or mired by objections.

- **Digital transition.** The focus on the infrastructural component of PA digitization has definitely improved, but strategic focus on the fundamental goal of recovering "technological sovereignty" at national and European level has been lost. Another concern is the ambiguous description of the features of a public cloud. The way it is formulated would make a non-commercial cloud, managed at a national level, even less feasible, beyond the grasp of public demand. The main weakness is the same as it was last January: **digitization is presented as a goal in itself**; digital innovation in public services coincides with the creation of Apps, and actual improvement of services is disregarded (except for increasing speed). This is a misguided approach that not only runs the risk of not achieving the desired results, but also explicitly proposes itself as the fulcrum of a more general strategy of digital "disintermediation" of public services. It fails to indicate how automatized management in segments of services can at the same time reinforce the "human component", and therefore the quality, of public services and labour. On the other hand, the elimination of substitute funds destined to increasing digital payments (they were 4.75 billion) is decidedly positive. Another positive factor is the objective of making the data generated by digital innovation projects not only accessible, but also "knowable" and therefore usable, even though this goal is inexplicably limited to projects promoted by the PA. The cancellation of the research centre on Artificial Intelligence, replaced with a body dedicated to Simulation and Big Data, is worrying, as is the absence of an explicit orientation towards using non-proprietary digital technologies.

- **Green transition.** What emerges is a further technological slide, already seen in the previous version of the Plan, without attention to the social and cultural transformations needed to support change. In the face of very clear European indications on the transverse nature of the green transition, at the moment there is no indication of how to achieve the result of allocating at least 37% of resources to climate action or what the "green rate" is in the various projects (the EU requires three values to be specified: 100% - 40% or 0 contribution to the green transition). These ambitions are modest: even the climate objectives are lower than the European average: 51% of CO2 reduction by 2030 (compared to 55% Europe-wide). Some technological choices are ambiguous, such as the overestimation of hydrogen or the weakening of renewable electricity. The social aspects of the correct transition are almost entirely overlooked, with the exception of a hasty mention of energy poverty among the reasons for energy efficiency in buildings. However, this is not followed up with any proposal to combat it, while there is a drastic cut in funding compared to the previous Plan (from 29.23 to 15.22 billion). The reduction is particularly pronounced in public buildings, without any consideration of the measures proposed (by ForumDD, among others) to prevent the "super-bonus" tax incentive being used only by the wealthiest classes. Finally, the disproportion between investments for local and regional rail transport and those for high-speed trains is worrying. There is no shortage of positive innovations, such as wind farms; the removal of asbestos from buildings, even if only in agriculture; resources for LPT; investments in biomethane, though they seem out of proportion; and the inclusion of safeguarding biodiversity among actions to be financed, though with very limited resources. Finally, many of the reforms are closely linked to the implementation of

the Mission. There will be need for vigilance so that the necessary simplifications do not turn into a generalization of the so-called Genoa Model.

- **From research to business.** Some of the criticisms levelled in January persist. The most important of these is the weakness of the overall structure of the mission, which has been construed as an aggregation of projects under different ministries. There is no unified strategic vision that aims to stimulate the circulation of knowledge between universities, research institutions and other social players, and there is inadequate attention to the role of innovation in combating inequality. This overarching weakness is accentuated by unmotivated choices, such as those regarding which innovation ecosystems and technology transfer centres should be financed or reinforced. In the case of innovation ecosystems, the link with special interventions for territorial cohesion that was in the previous version has also disappeared. On the positive side, there is greater clarity in the definition of some goals and greater detail in the description of some interventions. As far as the so-called "national R&D champions" are concerned, areas of intervention are identified without establishing how many there should be, which remains subject to the outcome of competitive procedures. There are no positive changes with regard to direct funding for companies, but in the new version they will be able to benefit from the prediction of conditionality for company funding, introduced in the general part of the Plan. This should lead to specific clauses being included in calls for tender that indicate the requirements for generational and gender equality.

- **Labour. Attention to the quality of work and the quality of jobs created is almost non-existent:** it is only mentioned once in the introductory part of the Social Cohesion Mission. This is one of the most serious signals that the Plan fails to break with the prevailing culture of the previous thirty years. In a country where only one woman out of two works, the Plan does not tackle the need to remove obstacles to access to, and permanence in, the labor market, without which all the planned measures may prove ineffective. It fails to understand that the game of economic and social development is played to a large extent not only in terms of the number of people employed or hours worked, but also in terms of job quality, stability, remuneration and working conditions. This is even more serious in a country with a very high number of accidents and deaths at work —a topic that has been entirely ignored by the Plan— as well as a high proportion of atypical contracts and working poor. In this context, the absence in 70 reforms of a commitment to introducing a legal minimum wage —perhaps combined, as ForumDD proposes, with an *erga omnes* validity of contracts signed by the most representative organizations— is striking and serious (there was no commitment in January, either, but one did appear in a draft circulated later). And yet, the EU has been asking for a measure of this kind for some time. Moreover, according to the ILO, among countries with no legal minimum wage, Italy would be the one where the measure would guarantee the greatest reduction in income inequality. On this front, there is only one improvement, which is nonetheless significant, especially in light of what will inevitably take place in the coming months: the commitment to social security reform. However, the fact that the need to strengthen social protection is presented as a consequence of encouraging competition raises fears of new and improper measures allowing even greater flexibility in the labour market.

- **Welfare system.** As noted, the Plan lacks an overall awareness, even though it has been prompted by the pandemic, that the country needs to rebuild an adequate system of universal welfare. After being held up for decades, there is a need for a change in perspective, making "social reproduction" a central theme and a public duty in order to ensure the basic sustainability of everyday life. Although the cultural approach is still far removed from the idea of community welfare and capacity-building —revealing extensive fragmentation of targets, partly owing to inadequate recourse to participatory planning—

there are commitments to reform and investment that, if implemented properly, could move in this direction. An important example is the commitment to an innovative plan for health and social assistance to the elderly who are not self-sufficient, as well as funds made available, albeit ambiguously (see below), for day-care centres. The commitment to adopt a National Strategy for Gender Equality, with explicit reference to the theme of empowerment, is also significant, even though there are no precise references to empowerment measures. Similarly, a commitment to recuperate citizenship gaps that envisages a specific "reform action for the definition of essential service levels for some of the main services to the person, starting with kindergartens, so as to increase the supply of education and care services for early childhood". Also important is the push towards returning to local services (home care, local medicine) and social-health integration (local drop-in health centres) because they propose, at least for the future, an idea of care as a public responsibility, within the community and from an inclusive perspective.

- **Non-self-sufficient elderly.** In terms of vision and commitment, this is the other most significant step forward (alongside the commitment to PA). The difference from the previous version of the Plan is clear. Thanks to the pressure applied [by active citizenship organizations](#) and to the willingness of institutions to engage in debate, the Plan in fact commits to adopting an organic reform of care for the elderly who are not self-sufficient, which the country has awaited for decades (since the end of the 1990s). The reform is based on the integration of health and social services and aims to introduce basic standards to be achieved by the end of the legislature (Spring 2023). It is accompanied by a significant increase in dedicated investments, in particular from 1 to 3 billion for home-based services. [In our opinion](#), this figure is not sufficient to achieve the stated goals, which go beyond home care alone. In addition, the reform requires permanent commitments to ordinary resources. Nonetheless, it is a step forward and calls for a renewed engagement of civil society.

- **Day care and education.** As in the January version, the Plan commits to a significant initial investment in some of the essential elements of full-time education (full-time day care, school lunches, safety and quality of learning environments) as well as to reforming the school system. Additional funding to combat educational poverty, with the involvement of the non-profit sector is another positive feature. The decision to use resources that will be freed up over the next few years, owing to the declining birth rate, to combat the shortcomings of the educational system is to be welcomed. It is a clear change of course compared with the two billion Euros in cuts previously planned for 2022 and 2023. Nevertheless, there are still many problems, and some aspects seem to have worsened. The intervention aimed at increasing the supply of day care places is extremely worrying. In the first place, it betrays a strong underestimation of the value of quality day care for young children as a key tool for combating educational poverty and inequalities early in life, and for breaking down gender stereotypes. This underestimation fosters the idea that day care is only useful when parents, especially mothers, work. There are statements of principle in the Plan, but the target of 33% coverage of needs is no longer explicitly declared. Similarly, no indications are given regarding necessary intervention in the more disadvantaged areas of the country. More worryingly, there is no strong indication of public ownership of the service, just as there are risks (cf. the Family Act) of recourse to vouchers. The financial endowment is insufficient to guarantee the target of 33% in all regions (for which 300,000 more places would be needed compared to the 228,000 planned, with an investment of 4.8 billion Euros for infant-toddler centers alone). It is not possible at the moment, however, to quantify exactly how far short of the target it is, due to a lack of clarity on the internal distribution between infant-toddler centers and other services. Finally, the integration of ordinary resources for management is also inadequate.

As for measures aimed at combating **school dropout rates and educational poverty**, the interventions are solely oriented towards the acquisition of basic skills —of course essential— but they underestimate the multidimensionality of these issues. In addition, plans for remedial training are insufficient to guarantee that aims are met. Finally, although substantial, resources earmarked for **school buildings** appear insufficient, especially if the cut of 2.5 billion Euros compared with the previous version of the Plan is confirmed. This shortfall is made worse by the lack of vision, which, in holding together the three indissoluble dimensions of the renovation of school buildings (safety, sustainability and enhancement of all physical spaces that can promote educational innovation), does not help to establish priorities.

- **Urban regeneration and housing.** All the shortcomings of the previous version persist, but significant and potentially productive progress has been made. There are many different initiatives linked to the goal of urban regeneration throughout the Plan (in addition to those expressly devoted to the topic), but they are not linked by any overarching vision. As a result, there is a marked risk of inconsistencies and/or failure to make the most of complementarities. Only a strongly renewed overall governance and appropriate forms of coordination when defining operational mechanisms would avert this risk. In addition, there is no commitment to overcoming the logic of calls for proposals (more precisely, of a collection of calls for proposals) rather than rolling-out a long-term programme that would provide certainty and stability and would learn from the lessons of the past. This makes implementation hard. **The provision of Integrated Urban Plans**, intended for the suburbs of metropolitan areas, created through participation in co-design with the non-profit sector is **an innovative addition**. This qualitative leap, compared to the previous version, should be promoted more systematically.

Actions regarding housing show no signs of improvement. The failure to exploit the Plan as a lever to launch a new season of housing policies is confirmed, although improvements in this area are increasingly necessary given the dramatic exacerbation of inequalities of access to this fundamental right. The intervention on Public Housing, which was already sorely deficient, would seem to have been shifted, for the most part, to the Supplementary Fund. This decision, if confirmed, is highly questionable, as it is due neither to a respect for the rules of eligibility, nor to a time-frame that is physiologically incompatible with the time-scale of the Plan.

- **Territorial Cohesion and the South.** As in the January version, **this section suffers from the enduring ambiguity in Italy of the term "territorial cohesion"**. The term should not refer to specific measures, but to a methodology of public intervention —aimed at people in places— affecting all sectoral policies (school, health, mobility, culture, agro-food, etc.) in marginalized areas of the country (inner areas, peripheries, deindustrialized countryside, coasts in crisis, etc.). This was the method we proposed in July 2020 to the previous government in the document [Liberating the Potential of All Territories](#), which would have helped give the Plan a vision. Unfortunately, the proposal was not adopted. As a result, this topic has been treated as residual, and has seen a decrease in financial allocations, accompanied by old-school interventions seen as "compensation" for delays (e.g. Special Economic Zones). With regard to the Inner Areas Strategy, which is the most structured of the strategies for marginalized areas, at a meeting with the Federation of Inner Areas (which brings together the more than 1000 mayors involved in the strategy), the Minister said that the reduction in funding from the Plan would be compensated not only by the complementary fund but also by a commitment from the Development and Cohesion Fund.

Finally, looking at the South as a whole, the main innovation since January concerns **the commitment to allocate no less than 40% of the Plan's territorial resources** (equal to about 82 billion Euros) **to the eight southern regions**. This goal, however, is not precisely declined

in the description of the territorial impact of the individual Missions of the Plan, except for interventions aimed at ensuring ultra-broadband connectivity, which are expected to be addressed for 45% to the South and ensure coverage of all inner areas and smaller islands.

3. What can we do now?

First of all, let us keep in mind that **there is still room for improvement**. Most importantly, there is an ongoing dialogue with the European Commission that will continue until June. **We are hopeful that the Commission will be open to evaluating these comments and other observations advanced by Italian social and labour organizations, and that this, in turn, will lead to some improvements in the Plan.**

Secondly, **implementation in every Plan or Program is the litmus test**. During roll-out, unforeseen obstacles may come up, but at the same time new, advantageous and unanticipated paths may be found. This is particularly true for a Plan that has not (except in a few cases) sought social dialogue and is wide open—vague, even—in its indications regarding enactment. Italy has often failed in the implementation phase. This is where it will be possible to make a difference.

In order for civil society to be able to play a role in the implementation phase, both at a national level and, above all, at a territorial level, it must be informed. For this reason, we have indicated (cf. par. 1) as a priority objective that **all the information provided by the monitoring system entrusted to the Ministry of Economy and Finance (ex Law 178/20 and ex Plan) be accessible to all citizens.**

On this basis, it is up to us—all of us—to equip ourselves to make a difference, so that we can give the Plan the strength and direction it needs to have real impact on the country. A contribution of this kind can be made by analysing and evaluating information regarding processes and by advancing and fighting for clear proposals. This can be achieved by means of civic monitoring of construction sites and other places where the interventions will eventually be rolled out, which will be possible in multiple thematic areas of the Plan. But we would like to indicate some of them here, where we feel the skills base within ForumDD would be most productive:

- **Public Administration.** Without prejudice to the necessary modification of art. 10 of DL 44/21, it is possible to improve the methods for selecting new recruits, making them fully consistent with the objective of generational renewal, making the most of the lessons learned from existing experiences, as emerges from the [Vademecum](#) prepared together with ForumPA and Movimenta. With a few changes to governance, it will also be possible to integrate digitalization and modernization of the PA. From the positive references to the role of the non-profit sector and participatory practices, one can draw inspiration for a reinforcement and dissemination of shared administration, following the guidelines we have already indicated.
- **Digital transition.** It is during this discussion stage that it will be possible to push for imposing a condition that obliges implementers, both public and private, to make the data generated by innovative processes carried out within the Plan open, accessible and user-friendly. Finally, in continuity with the positive indications regarding accompanying measures on territory and training, entrusted to regions and cities, and regarding the inclusion, as possible implementers, of non-profit organizations, the range of skills and training processes will have to be expanded

(e.g., [POP School on digital data](#)). It is essential to promote users and workers who are fully aware and not simply trained prostheses of digital devices.

- **Green transition:** the vagueness of many of the commitments opens up risks, but at the same time offers the possibility of influencing implementation processes. This is especially important in order to avoid the ever-present risk of weakening reforms. A specific area of absolute relevance concerns fine-tuning, measure by measure, the conditions that must ensure full compliance with the "do no significant harm" principle in all financing decisions and reforms related to the various missions.
- **From research to business.** There is ample room for improvement in the way calls for proposals are made and in setting requirements for access to financing, as well as in defining the evaluation process prior to financing existing technology-transfer centres. In this regard, the evaluation questions should be articulated, involving local systems (with great attention to what leads to success and failure as well as to the relevance of contexts). A timetable should also be established.
- **Day care, school dropout and educational poverty.** The many problems involved in interventions for children, including the serious risk that a bidding logic penalizes those areas where the country is lagging furthest behind, call for strict monitoring starting with the initial procedural phases following approval of the Plan. As for interventions regarding school dropout and educational poverty, more detailed specification is needed for the analysis and strategic guidelines. Combating educational poverty, they should be translated into a strategic plan for the most affected areas, to be co-designed with all the territorial actors. This is crucial to avoid the risk of fragmentation of interventions and to enhance the creative contribution of the non-profit sector.
- **Non-self-sufficient elderly.** In view of the important change of course outlined by the Plan, accompanying action during roll-out may prove decisive, to ensure quality and implementation within the given timeframe. Considering the need to prepare the ground for the reform, this action should also aim to guarantee a package of measures consistent with the overall design, reinforcing and rebalancing the planned investments.
- **Urban regeneration.** This is an area where, taking our cue from existing experiences (the partnership table of PON METRO), by extending and strengthening their application, it is possible to bring together, both in the phase that establishes operational mechanisms and in the implementation phase, the many initiatives that impact, directly or indirectly, on the quality of urban environments. In doing so, the exchange of experience and the dissemination of experiments that have demonstrated their validity and effectiveness should be encouraged.
- **Housing and post-earthquake reconstruction.** Here, too, there is ample room for transforming a choice that could be seen as penalizing (if only because of the urgency of remedying terrible injustices and serious delays) into an opportunity. This would entail using resources from the Supplementary Fund for energy and earthquake-resistant requalification of public residential buildings, and exploiting the greater graduality, as a driving force for building a structural response. This should be based, in both cases, on medium and long-term planning and certainties and it should exploit existing analyses of both [housing](#) and [post-earthquake reconstruction](#).

- **Territorial cohesion:** Much can be done to give visibility and strength to the integration, which is not very visible at present, between the Plan, EU 21-27 programming, and the Development and Cohesion Fund. It is "just" a question of bringing out the links that already exist and those that will become even more visible as the definition of the intervention programs progresses. This is the area where social dialogue, openness to territorial knowledge, making the practices that cohesion policy has promoted systematic, making good use of the lever of the EU Code of Conduct for Partnership, can support the design and implementation of a policy that can actually [*Liberating the Potential of All Territories*](#).
- **Equal opportunities, work and strategic participation of workers in the workplace.** Taking advantage of the very significant indication of which clauses condition access to company financing for these two objectives, a great deal can be done to orient and support the definition of these clauses, including among the desired objectives the quality of work. At the same time, it would be possible to specify the adoption of democratic forms of corporate governance as a condition for access to resources, as well as for using subsidized loans and financing to encourage corporate restructuring. This would mean that workers, employees and local communities with environmental concerns could participate in strategic decisions and see their interests included in the objectives pursued by companies.
- **Gender equality:** it will be essential to constantly and competently monitor the implementation of all the interventions, mission by mission, in order to be sure that the transversal aim of gender equality is achieved. Particular attention should be paid to the five priorities (work, income, skills, time, power) that are essential if we are to rise five points by 2026 in the Gender Equality Index of the European Institute for Gender Equality. A strong push is needed for a radical change of perspective that would put an end to gender inequality. Giving substance to the various vague formulations, and making an impact so that investments in day care and in the welfare system are effective and integrated, will be crucial. Support for women's employment should be immediate. It should start with removing constraints, freeing up time, combating cultural resistance, making sure that the education system allows potential to be developed to the full and does not confirm power imbalances, and guaranteeing protection from male violence in all its forms. Consultation and participatory planning should be required, including a prescribed quota of women so that they can bring their point of view, knowledge and best practices for policies of female empowerment to the table.