



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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## COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE PROJECT

### *Abstract*

**"BI\_ting Spaces"**: looking for punctual strategies applied to collective spaces, as a key to reactivate social cycles of the city.

Demographic Analysis and population needs as tools for regeneration and application of urban acupunctures to micro-urban spaces of the city of Biella.

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This research work focuses on urban regeneration as a physical and social process, in order to deepen the theme of urban acupuncture to evaluate its application on public spaces of the city of Biella, aiming at the definition of some practices useful for the management of an urban small reality but with ample resources.

Urban Acupuncture, metaphorically applied to urban planning, contemplates the city as an organism and its process consists in using small-scale interventions to transform the larger urban context, relieving stress in the environment.

The ideas on which the work is principally based are that for the city of Biella it's more suitable operating on open public spaces as places for social aggregation to create a welcoming city, and that the key for the success of the intervention is given by the ability to make these spaces communicate and integrate with the other existing ones, but above all with the people, who really does have to be able to make the difference.

The context of Biella presents a weak situation from the demographic point of view because the old-ageing index is one of the highest in Italy and the population is largely decreasing.

The wide number of associations operating in the territory could represent an index of social cohesion, to demonstrate how the population is active in responding to concrete needs expressed by the local community; but on the other side it could show too much competition between the various realities and a lack of willingness to cooperate. For this reason, it is necessary to encourage people to focus on relationships, which imply a basic choice and a great responsibility, and to value the landscape as a democratic space, in which every person has equal rights of access, enjoyment, responsibility and of care.

In fact, if urban renewal puts among its main objectives the promotion of activities aimed at reducing social inequalities, situations of marginalization and ensuring better quality of life, spatial planning processes can only start from knowledge and analysis of its addressees: the citizens themselves.

Much relevance has been given to the demographic analysis which, thanks to the contribution of the Qgis software and the Istat databases of the 2011 census, has made possible to make visible the spatial distribution of socio-economic inequalities within the territory of Biella, through the realization of some maps. The results of these analyses have allowed to localize the areas of intervention in which to find the punctual areas in the garments of open spaces or residual areas between the buildings in order to enhance the identity of these places and trigger physical, perceptive and relational changes. among the people who live there.

Some social actors of the city, chosen for their role or for the type of professional and human choices, have been interviewed to identify the main problems of Biella, to propose some solutions and to discuss the issue of citizen participation in the planning activity.

In addition, I had the possibility to live an experience with the secondary school "Nino Costa", encouraging the active involvement of children through the proposal of a questionnaire to investigate what types of equipment or functions the children prefer in public spaces; then they were asked to try to design their own ideal public garden, an initiative that has proved to be very interesting because have emerged some relevant details on the topic of the analysis of open spaces.

As a result of the research, four punctual intervention strategies were advanced and they were chosen on the basis of what emerged from the interviews and the urban planning considerations. Each of these strategies has to operate on a certain aspect of open spaces, including the perception of safety or usability, and their application has the character of replicability, so it can be used whenever a public space shows that it needs it.

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