

International Conference: “Citizens’ Participation as a Development Resource: Russian and International Experience with Participatory Budgeting” - Moscow - RUSSIA, September 7, 2018.

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Panel: “The Role of Government in Supporting and Regulating Citizens’ Participation in Public Infrastructure Development”



Everybody possibly saw the tragedy of Morandi's bridge that colapsed in Genoa, Italy, last month....



Actually, that bridge would have had to be dismissed, as it was the object of a participatory process (2008-2009) that provided a new consensual roadway... whose project was only approved in 2017, and was due to start being implemented in 2019...

The so-called PUBLIC DEBATE was very effective in conflict-solving, but institutions took too much to approve the project...



- TRATTI COMUNI
- alternative
- 1 ALTERNATIVA ALTA
- 2 ALTERNATIVA MEDIO ALTA
- 3 ALTERNATIVA INTERMEDIA
- 4 ALTERNATIVA BASSA
- 5 ALTERNATIVA BASSA

Starting from this tragedy can be useful

In fact, it allows us to explain a participatory system which started bottom-up in Italy (from the autonomous commitment of municipalities) and gradually became a “*transcalar system*” where the Central State recently acquired an important role.

The Genoa tragedy also shows some limits of the regulatory role of the State, that needs to intervene more effectively in reorganizing administrative procedures.....

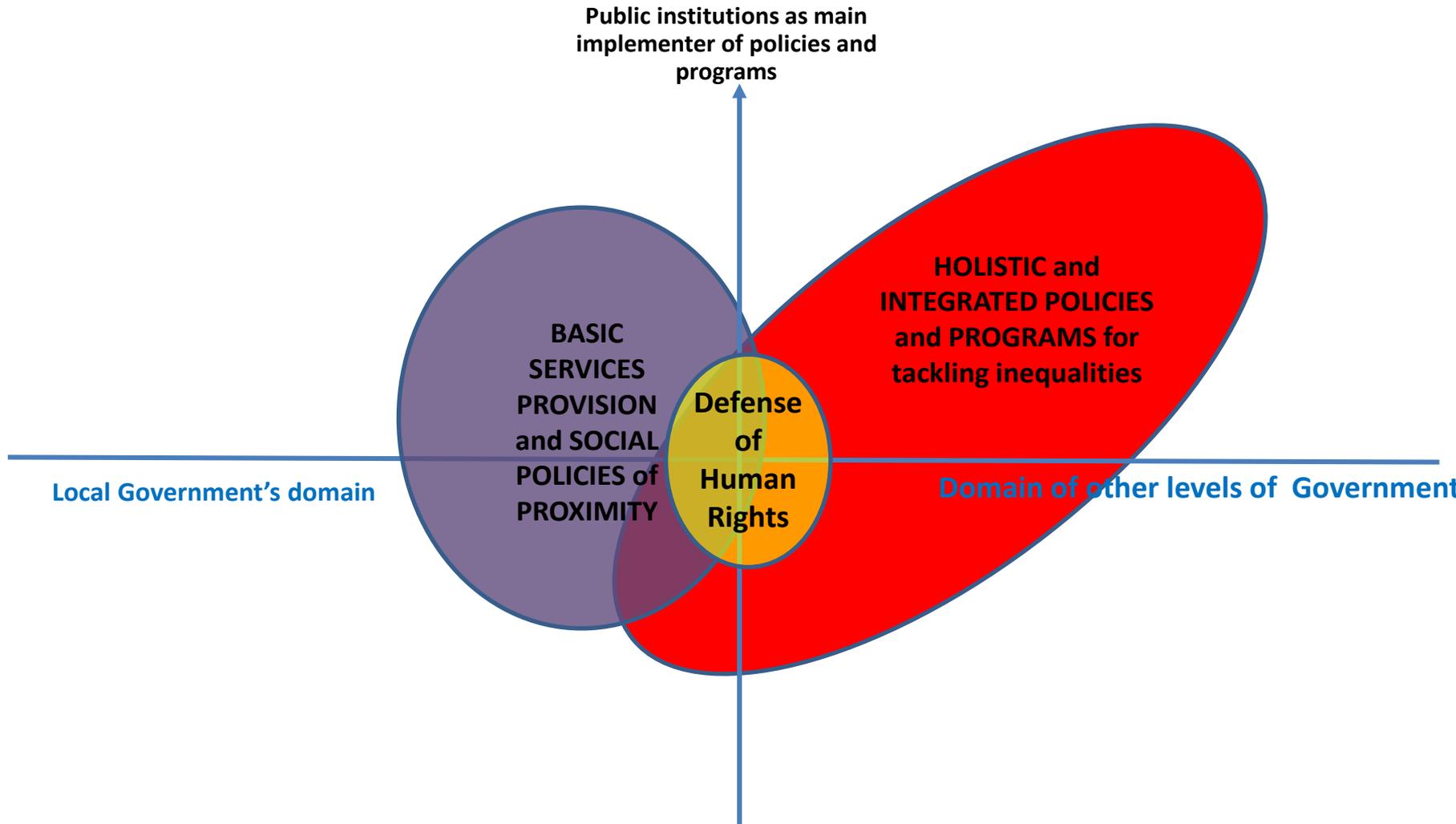
In 1994 in Grottammare started the first autochthonous Participatory Budgeting, and since 2002 (once the experience from Brazil was taken by some politicians and social movements) , PB mushroomed with different names, arriving to around 200 cases in 2008. **A largely felt need to fight corruption and reconstruct trust after important national scandals was the ENGINE of this “learning from the South”**



THE INTERSCALAR DIALOGUE BETWEEN REGIONAL/PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL INSTITUTIONS FAVORED THE CREATION OF "SYSTEMS" of participation, stimulating INTER-MUNICIPAL EXPERIENCES (giving them more rewards), so that PARTICIPATION today WORKS AT THE JUNCTION OF 3 DOMAINS

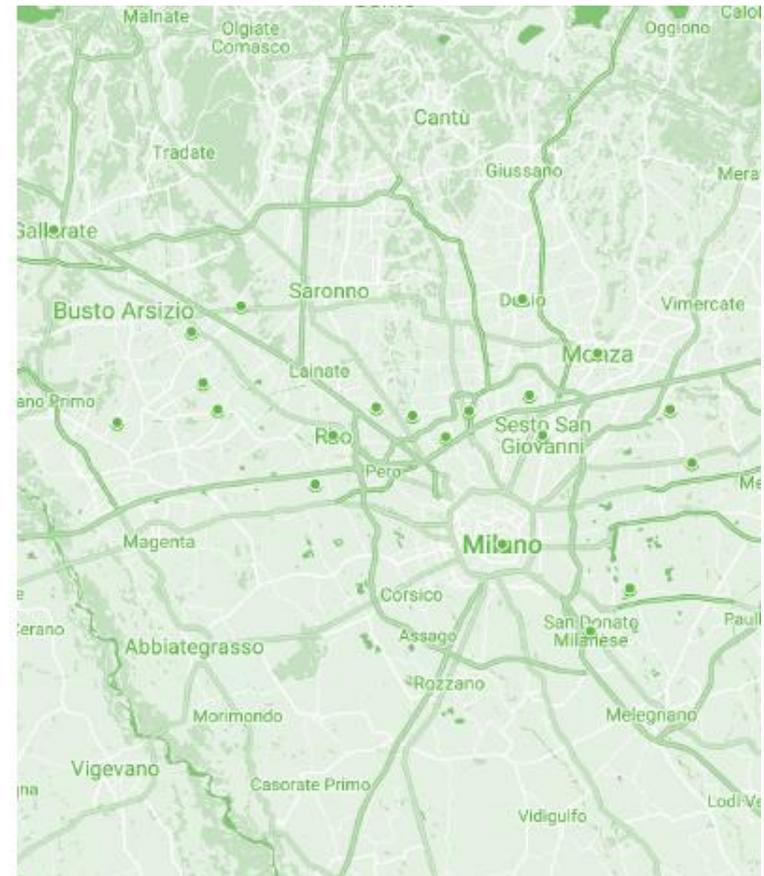
TERRITORIAL SCALE OF INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS

ROLE OF INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS



Today, the map of Italian PBs is very different

and involves Sicily (where a Regional Law in 2016 reserved a % of transfer to municipalities for participatory process – but without creating a monitoring structure...) and many big towns as Milan, Bologna, Turin or Rome...but always dealing with small neighbourhood infrastructures. Metropolitan contagion is also “invading” other spaces (as prisons and schools which are experimenting their own PB)



The major difficulties of PBs in Italy

- to guarantee every year the same level of investments (due to an “accordion” structure of the budget which grows and/or shrinks annually)
- **to implement co-decided priorities in meaningful deadlines**
- to make different councilors and parties of the same coalition dialogue, instead of maintaining “feuds”...
- to imagine the participatory process in the integrated/holistic perspective of citizens, instead of mirroring the bureaucratic structure of institutions
- to provide outreach and attract people in small municipalities (where people think that participation is just meeting the mayor in the street and talk of his/her problems)
- to imagine direct contact between citizens and institutions that are considered far from people (provinces, water-consortia, inter-municipal associations...)

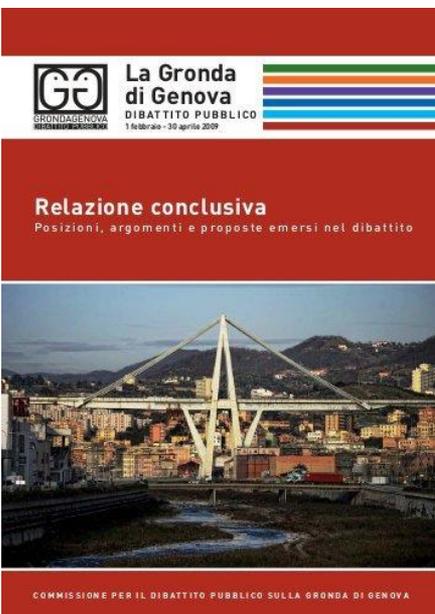
- **FOR MANY INSTITUTIONS, PB was about SMALL investments of proximity (equipments, mobility infrastructures, etc.) at neighborhood level, and NOT ABOUT STRATEGIC choices for the territory.**
- **Some MUNICIPALITIES (and many regions) had difficulties in imagine a CO-DECISIONAL process where the LAST DECISION is left to citizens...**

In this situation, another type of participatory process was born: THE PUBLIC DEBATE (PD)

- It is specific for infrastructures (and huge decisions), but can also be used for plans on specific policies (energy, industrial development, water protection...)
- **It was formally structured in France** in 1995, and perfected in 2002, through a National Law
- **It leaves the final decision to the funder** of the specific OBJECT/SERVICE that is been discussed (called “the proponent”) but oblige those who finally take the decision **to EXPLAIN THE REASONS in a certain amount of time** (usually 4 to 6 months) , and with a clear language
- It mainly aims at **improving the quality of the project**, through enriching it with the point of view of different actors
- It must dialogue with different “circles” of communities affected by the choice (direct impacts on neighbors, indirect impacts on the city’s economy)
- It is a tool for visualizing (and choosing among) different alternatives
- **It must incorporate the “zero option”** (no NEED of that infrastructure) and being done when the important choices are still open to the possibility of being modified
- It must use an understandable language and clear/short deadlines

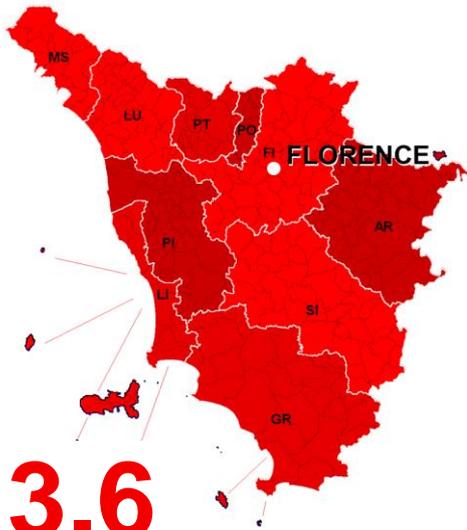
- **During the PD all procedures that can affect results must be BLOCKED**

Genova was the first PUBLIC DEBATE (at municipal/metropolitan level) and in 2009 took a wise decision on an alternative highway branch that had been discussed only by technical experts for 25 years, being constantly blocked by citizens protests... But it took 8 years to finalize the project, despite the PUBLIC OBSERVATORY CREATED:



THE SCALING-UP OF PUBLIC DEBATE: from municipality to Regions...

In the case of Tuscany, in 2007 the Regional Gov. approved Regional Law 69 to promote “a culture of participation”. Social dialogue faced the challenge of a solid institutionalisation....



3.6
million
inhabitants

- ✓ 3.6 million inhabitants and **172** (municipalities, a declining number thanks to voluntary merging/fusion)
- ✓ Voter participation in the 2008 national election: 83.70% (today 45%)
- ✓ High organised Social capital: : 25% of Tuscans state they are “really involved and interested in politics”
- ✓ About ½ of Tuscans are members of political, economic or social associations (Parties, NGOs, Unions, Business associations, Cooperative organizations)
- ✓ There is a tradition of strong and widely felt civic sense: citizens participate in local matters more than elsewhere in Italy

While Lazio Regional Gov. (since 2005) was experiencing a small PB (5 millions euros) at regional level – on rotating issues, and devoting 11 million Euros to incentivize PBs in municipalities and other levels (through funding the processes and co-funding the first selected infrastructure), **Tuscany preferred to stimulate PBs and other participatory processes at local level, but to use PUBLIC DEBATE at the regional scale**, on all issues related to regional infrastructures. In Law 69/2007 Public Debate was not mandatory (could be activated collecting signatures, or requested by elected officials) and in 2013 (with Law 46/2013) became compulsory for all regional infrastructures more expensive than 50 Million Euros



The LAW 69/2007 on participation came from a long path, including a participatory collective writing of the legal text for 2 years....

✓ A tense process of confrontation



There was **NEED** to create an Independent Authority to oversight the processes, similar to the National Commission on Public Debate of France and the BAPE of Quebec (Canada) **This authority must fight against the reduced will to implement the law, and must guarantee to choose NEUTRAL PROFESSIONALS to coordinate the process, must analyze all the document used, and control te respect of deadlines for RESPONDING to people proposals.**

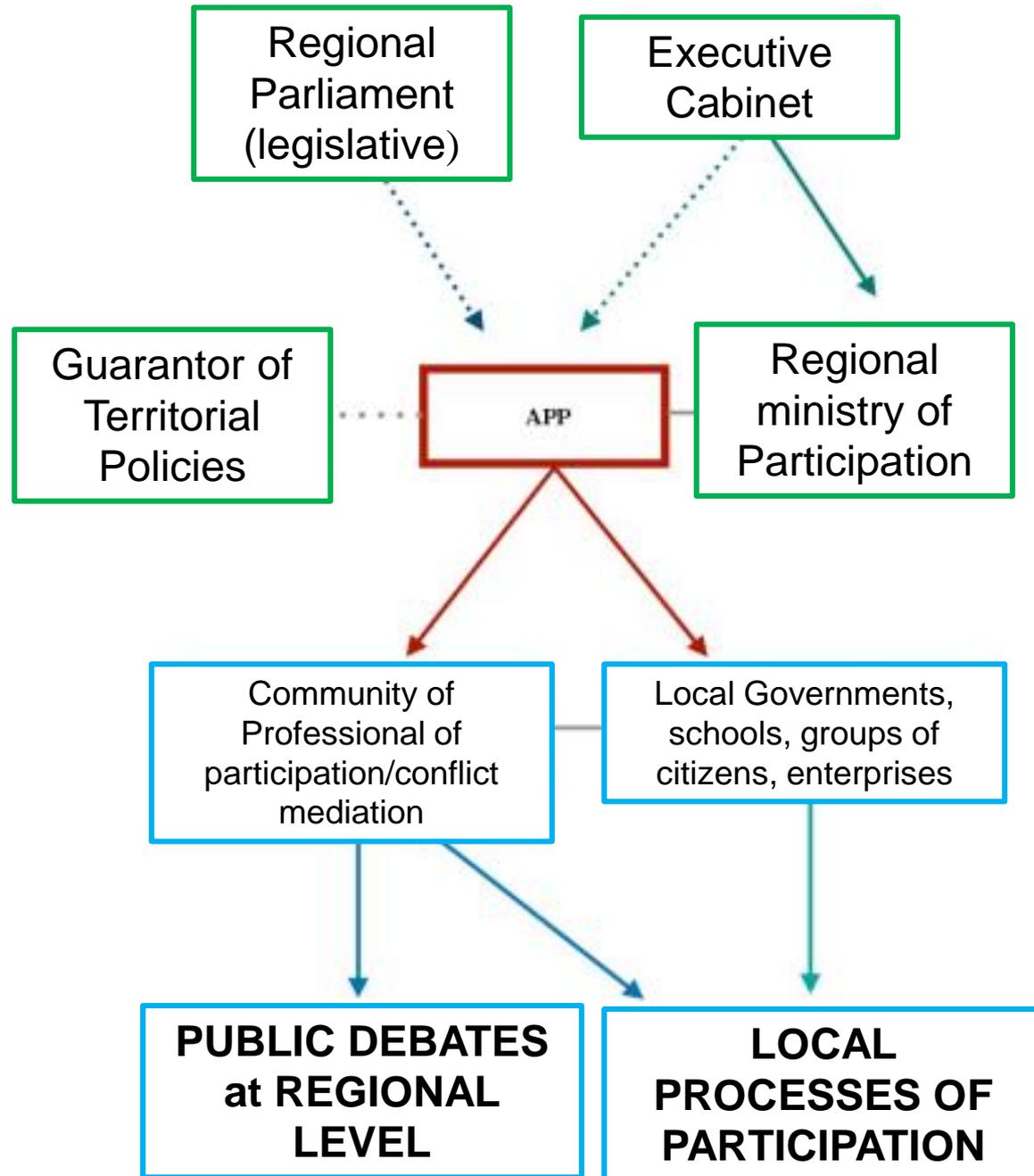
WHAT IS APP (Independent authority for the Guarantee and the Promotion of Participation or APP)?

It is an institution funded both by the Regional Parliament and the Executive, that oversees all participatory processes and try to diffuse 'a culture of participation', through comparing and incentivize the use of different methodologies. It has a budget (it was 750,000 euros, now is around 450,000)

Originally it was a Monocratic institution (only 1 coordinator), now has 3 chairmen.

The APP oversees the Public Debate and choose a professional to conduct it

<http://www.consiglio.regione.to/scana.it/partecipazione>



In Tuscany the Public Debate (molded on French Law) is mandatory for public infrastructures, **but for private sector proposals** (industries, caves) **is a voluntary option** on which the private stakeholders **MUST AGREE** and put the money to implement.

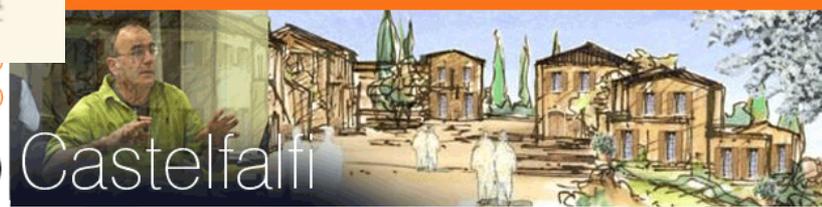


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When Public Debate is not Possible

The Law 46/2017 is shy and does not allow to “impose” public debate to reluctant private companies.... This TWO_TRACKS did not work (in cases as the FLORENCE AIRPORT)

But it can fund alternative opportunities to value social dialogue and “counter-expertise” (a key-element to contribute to the reconstruction of mutual trust between citizens and institutions)...



Often methodologies of “expertization” (i.e. calling experts to critically analyze other experts’ reports) are applied, because there is no time to charge the main proponent with studying all alternatives possible, and the important is showing to citizens that expert reports are not fake or politically-driven) open.toscana.it/web/aeroporto-parliamone

SELECTION CRITERIA

(for funding participatory processes at local level)

Explicitly set in the Law

- **Methodological Innovation**
- **Larger number of beneficiaries (territorial size of the processes)**
- **When proposers are LOCAL AUTHORITIES or ENTERPRISES: number and size (consortia) and minimum co-funding of 15%**
- **When proposers are CITIZENS: collection of signatures proportional to the territorial width of the process**
- **When proposers are SCHOOLS: process through the entire year**

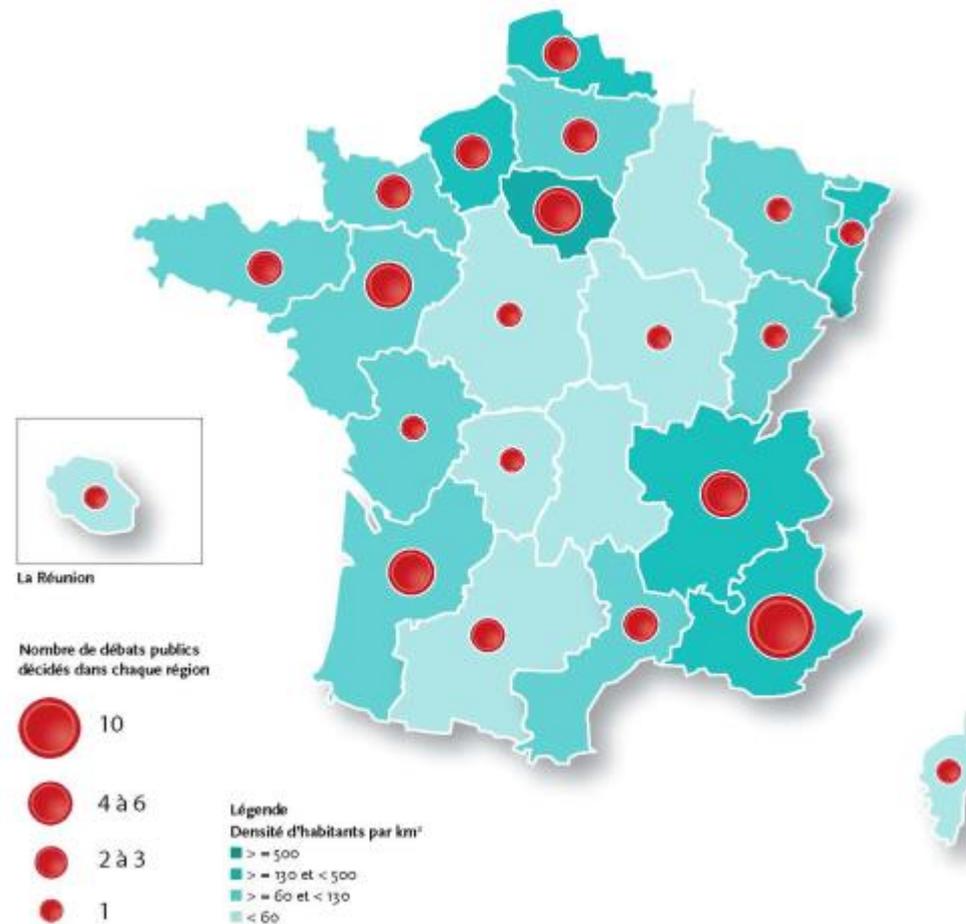
Added values for selection commissions

- **Variety and demodiversity of members of proposing consortia**
- **Content Innovation (new topics)**
- **Additional CO-FUNDING in Money or KIND**
- **Coherence between GOALS and MEANS**
- **Connection with previous participatory experiments**
- **Express connection with other future participatory actions self-funded**

In France since 2002 to 2013 (when Tuscany emulated them) there have been:

- 69 Public Debates
- 45 Public Consultations (different from PB, more simple)
- 21 public consultation process post-debate

85% of the debates modified the original project, only 1% decide NOT TO IMPLEMENT the infrastructure...



The first three Public Debates in Tuscany

- The Requalification and extension of Livorno's Harbour



**DIBATTITO
IN
PORTO**
DIBATTITO PUBBLICO
SUL NUOVO PORTO DI LIVORNO

APP
Autorità Portuale
Livorno

- The use of industrial red chinks for environmental reclamation of old mines



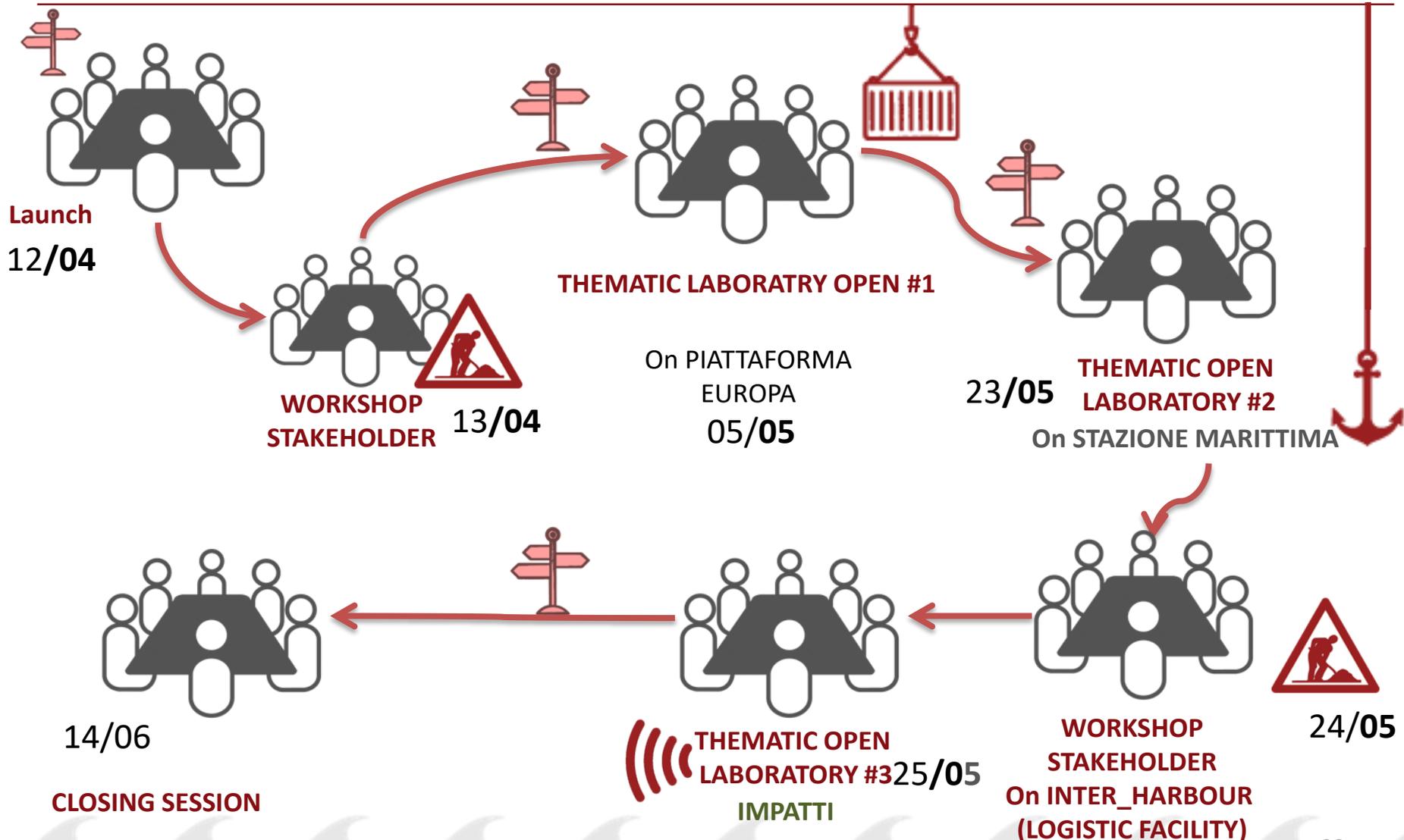
dp Comunità in Dibattito
Dibattito Pubblico ai fini della L. 46/2013 sull'uso dei gessi per il ripristino dei siti di attività estrattive nel comune di Gavorrano (GR)

- The new bridge on river Arno between Signa & Lastra a Signa

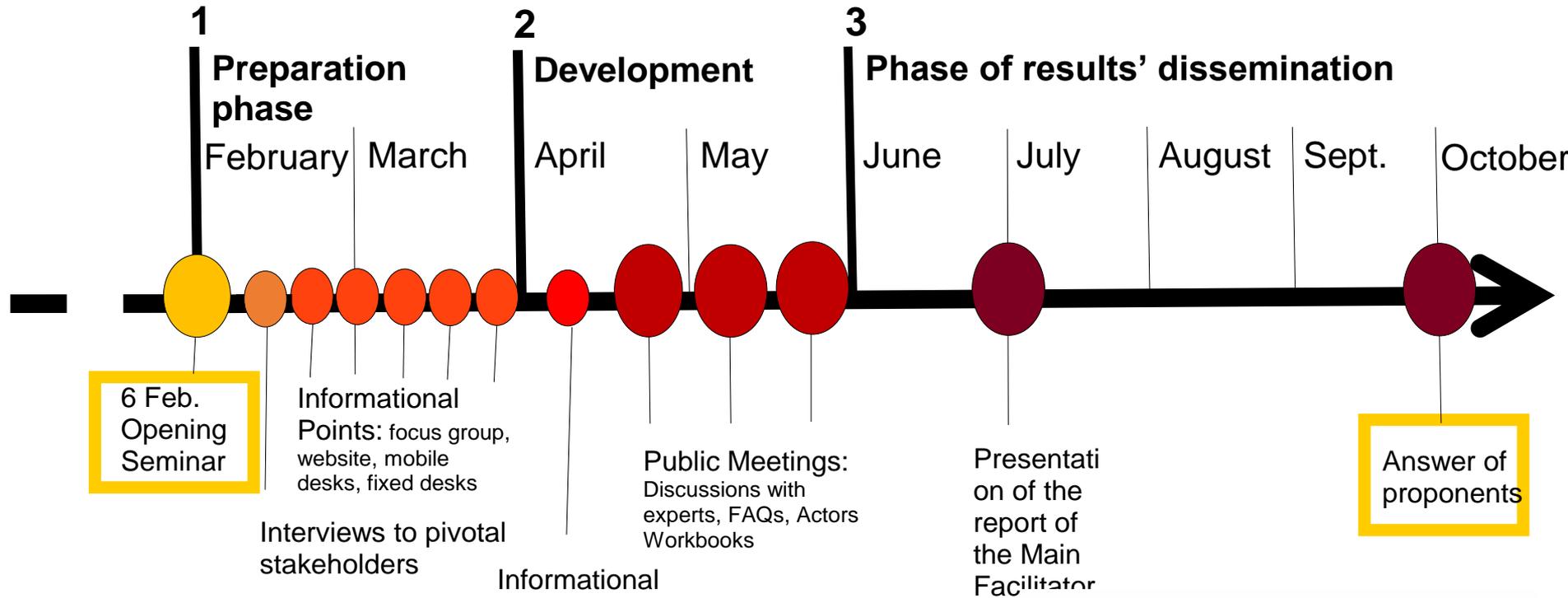


DIBATTITO IN PONTE
mediatore: Rossana Marinari

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES IN LIVORNO (2016) to attract citizens to discuss the Harbor requalification

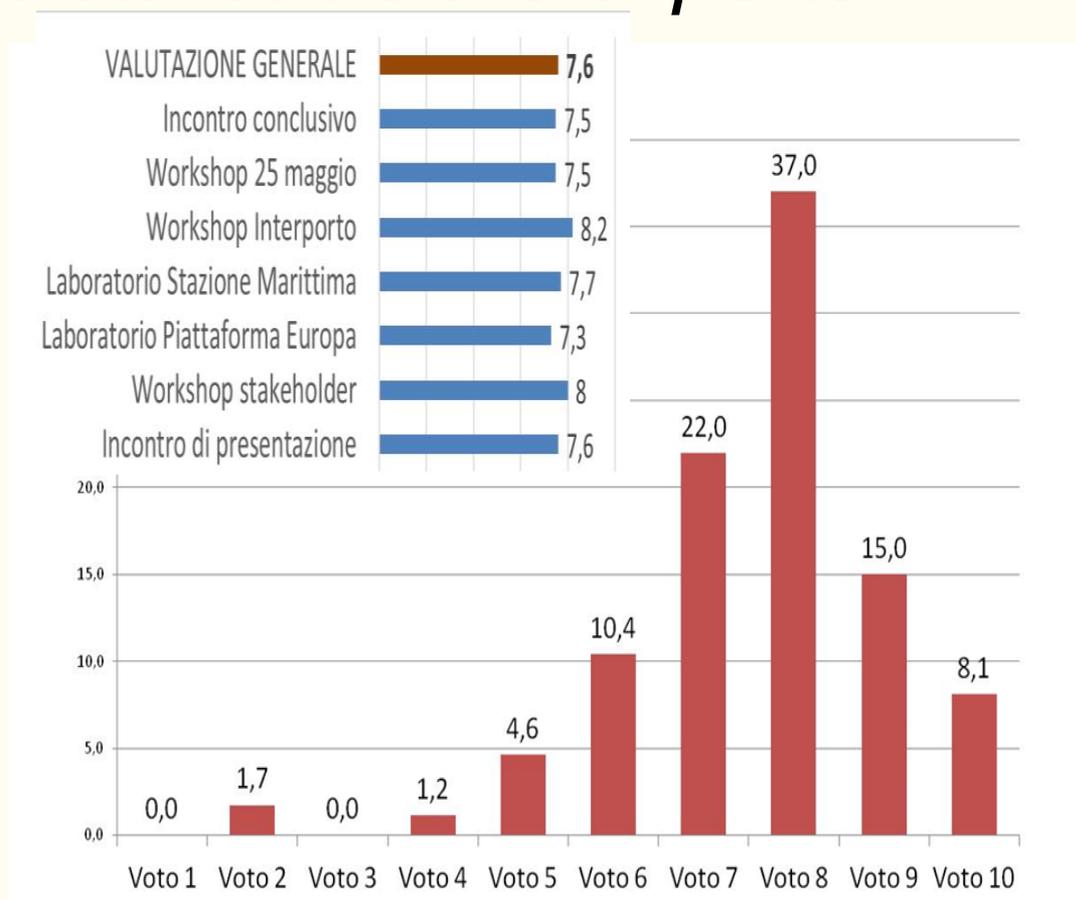


Timeline of Public Debate in Gavorrano on Red Chalks produced by the chemical industry Huntsman (2017).

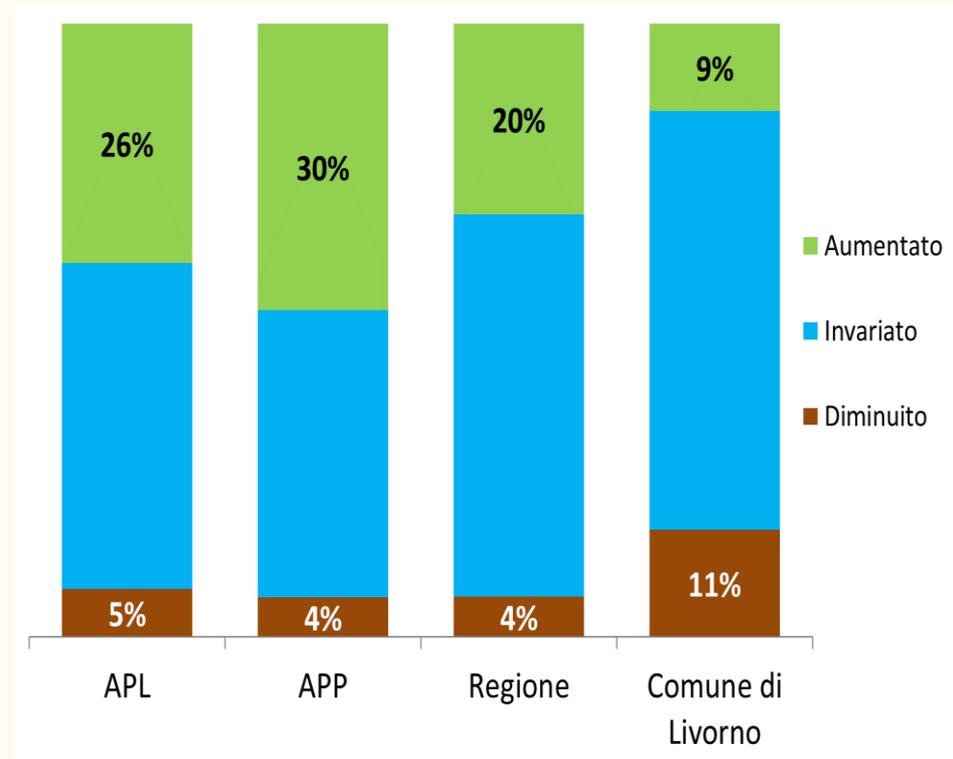
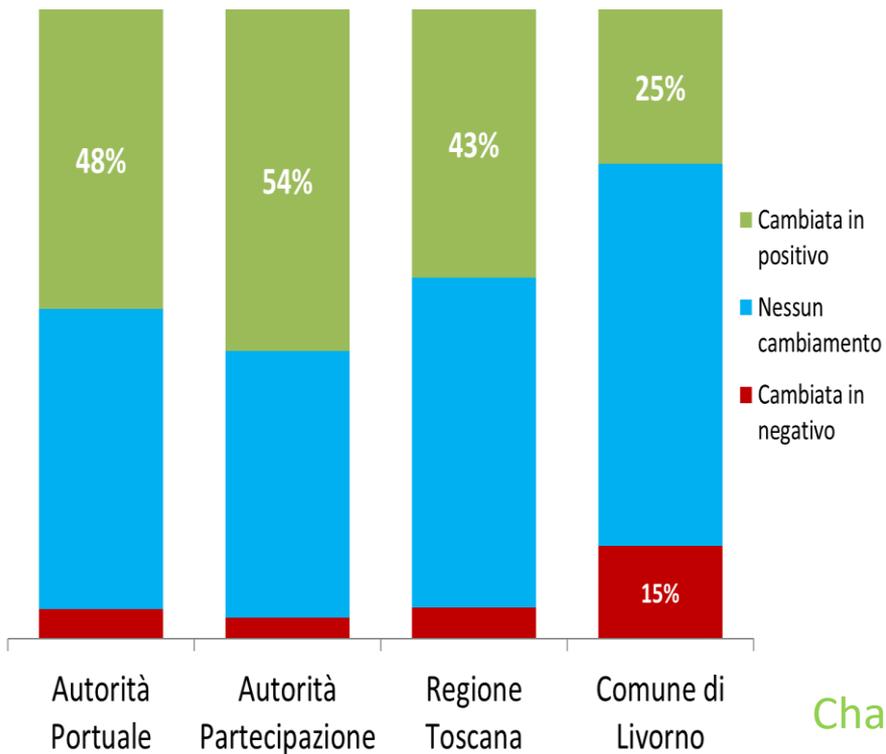


THE MONITORING STRUCTURE: Evaluating the quality of information

How much understandable *are experts?*



RESULTS, BEYOND THE CONSTRUCTION: How does the citizens' views on involved institutions change?



Change of opinion of citizens towards involved institutions (the case of Livorno)

The new trend: linking Open DATA and memory of experiments- the creation of the portal OPEN-Toscana



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Aperta,
innovativa,
online



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www.open.tos



"I dati sono il nuovo petrolio"

=>

La PA è ricca di materia prima che deve essere
estratta e raffinata
al fine di poterla
trasformare in carburante

=>

ottenere questo risultato richiede alla PA
consapevolezza, competenze, conoscenze
e comporta uno **sforzo organizzativo ed economico**



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- Gli strumenti
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THE NEW DEAL: SCALING UP TO NATIONAL STATE

The new Italian-wide Law on tendering (decree 50/2016, art. 22) makes Public Debate compulsory for any huge infrastructure in all country: its rules on public debate (DCPM 76, signed by the Prime Minister on May 10, 2018) **entered in force on August 24, 2018, to try to reduce corruption and avoid the mistakes of Genoa.**



THE NEW DEAL: SCALING UP TO NATIONAL STATE

Definitely, it is an important conquer, because it will make CONFLICT explicit and open, trying to find alternative projects, and making different counter-expertise available. But alone is not enough, because approval of projects it is still very slow, in the post-debate phase. The multiplication of PD is also at risk for the lack of a class of prepared professionals to facilitate them. A lot was learnt from Tuscany, improving its laws (for example PRIVATE actors have same duty than public institutions to do PD).

The new horizon: avoiding the *excesses of proceduralisation* and maintaining a “living laboratory” of multiple practices and techniques



Thanks for your patience! Questions are
welcome



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