

Study tour on Participatory Governance and Sustainable Tourism for a delegation from Senegal



From 14 to 26 September 2014, a delegation from Senegal participated in a two-week peer-learning programme with actors from the Italian Regions of Emilia Romagna and Liguria, coordinated and facilitated by the KIP Universitas Programme. The delegation was comprised by the Secretary General and technical staff from the

Ministry of Local Government, Development and Territorial Management of Senegal, a representative of the Ministry of Finance, the directors of the local development agencies of the Regions of Kaolack and Sédhiou and two senior researchers specializing in local development. The programme was made



possible thanks to contributions from the two Italian Regions to the KIP International School and thanks to support from the CIDEL programme in Senegal, managed by the Ministry of Local Governance, Development and Territorial Management and financed by the Italian Government. The communities of Senegalese immigrants in both Regions played an important role in accompanying the delegation.

Participatory governance of territorial development was the theme of an international training seminar in the Emilia Romagna Region. Given the decentralization reforms that are presently being discussed in both countries, the seminar was an occasion to share experiences and discuss common concerns. In particular, week's activities addressed the current crisis between citizens/territory and public institutions, a crisis that is being felt, in fact, around the world. Possible tools and approaches to revitalize institutional processes and improve the quality of local development were explored, drawing on the knowledge and experience from both realities. The delegation visited several experiences of participatory planning of local development priorities put in place by municipalities



and local institutions: the development of a community welfare model in Casalecchio di Reno and Comacchio, participatory urban planning in Bagnacavallo, the revitalization of Brisighella's medieval centre, the reconstruction of Novi di Modena following the 2012 earthquake and the flood of 2014. They exchanged experiences with actors from several municipalities, the Regional administration and directors of regional and local health and social services. Thanks to an innovative law intended to promote and monitor citizen participation in public policy formation, the Legislative Assembly of the Emilia Romagna Region supports several such processes every year.

The second week of the programme focused on the role of sustainable tourism as a potential motor for integrated territorial development. In the Liguria Region, the



delegation encountered directors and technical staff of the regional authorities responsible for health and social services, food security and tourism, as well faculty from the University of Genoa. They also met with representatives of the Ministry of Health, and the business association

“Confindustria”. During site visits to health services in Sestri Ponente (Genoa), experiences of “pescaturismo” and “ittiturismo” – fishing tourism – in Sestri Levante and to a diffuse hotel model to revitalize an abandoned medieval town of Castelbianco, the Senegalese visitors met with mayors, local professionals and technical staff to ask questions and share their own experiences, with a view to establishing technical, economic and research partnerships for the future.

Thanks to the richness of the exchanges and discussions that took place throughout the two weeks, several opportunities emerged to capitalize on the experiences visited for future collaboration:

- An initial working group of interested researchers and practitioners from Senegal and the Emilia Romagna region has agreed to produce a substantive report based on the week's discussions around participatory governance and territorial development, in the context of decentralization reforms. They will also develop a proposal for a special issue of the international journal *Universitas Forum* on the topic that would facilitate the systematization and capitalization of innovative experiences and methods in Senegal, Italy and other countries around the world.
- The delegation from Senegal also identified several areas for further collaboration with partners from the Liguria Region: on experiences of fishing tourism, the control of food quality and safety in application of European norms for import of food products, the experience of diffuse community-based hospitality, the



creation of multifunctional health and social centres as a citizen-friendly point of entry, information and coordination mechanism for a variety of health, social and educational services available at the local level, drawing on the experience of the family consultation service visited in Genoa.

- Creating a network of community-university research partnerships on participatory local development and sustainable tourism between Italian and Senegalese actors and with other countries also emerged as an important context for collaboration, and the KIP Universitas programme agreed to work together to concretize this.
- Finally, the delegation also underlined the opportunity for the communities of Senegalese immigrants to play a facilitating role in establishing territorial partnerships between the Regions in Italy and in Senegal.

A first concrete opportunity for taking forward collaboration on these issues is a summer school being organized for early 2015 in Senegal, with the support of the CIDEL programme and the technical assistance of the Universitas programme of the KIP International School. During the summer school, several of the partners identified during the two-week visit to Italy will be invited to participate and share their knowledge, tools and experience with a wider audience. The summer school will also be an opportunity to plan and initiate one or more action research processes through a community-university research partnership approach to adapt and experiment some of the ideas that were generated during the study tours in Italy.

To view the programme of the seminar, in French, click [here](#), in Italian, click [here](#).

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