

# **IURC NA - ROME**

## **ROME'S FOOD POLICY:**

### **Striving for a sustainable, holistic and inclusive regional food system**

Thematic Networking Event

**16th – 17th October 2025**



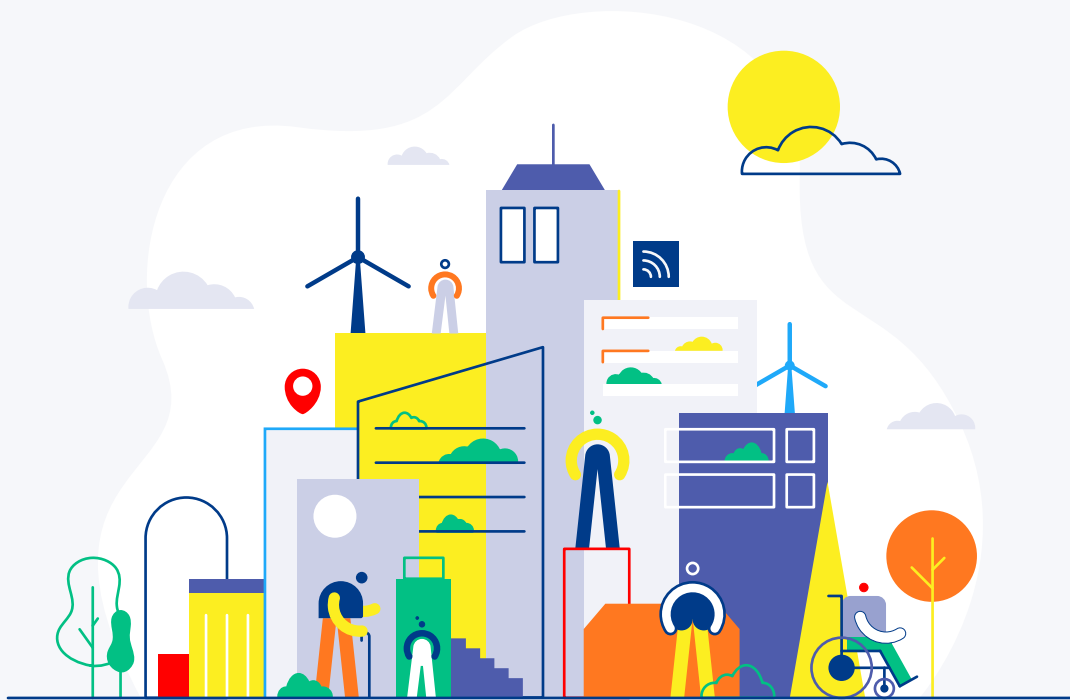


## About IURC

The European Union's International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) program is an international network of reference for urban innovation and sustainable urban development. IURC North America partners European cities with Canadian and USA cities to facilitate knowledge exchange through online tools and face-to-face support such as study visits, participation in thematic and networking events, and capacity building.

Implemented since 2017, the program contributes to the objectives of the New Urban Agenda, Agenda 2030 (SDGs), the Urban Agenda for the EU, and the political goals of the European Cohesion Policy by using city-to-city diplomacy to overcome shared challenges.

For more information about the IURC program please visit: [iurc.eu](https://iurc.eu)



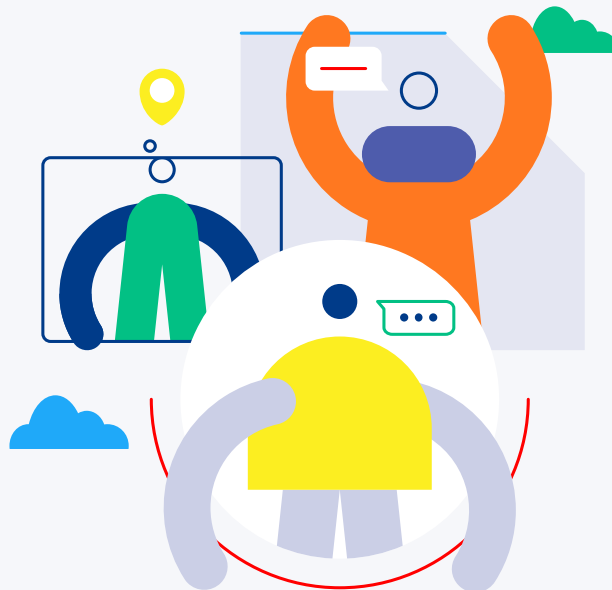
## Context

Rome's transformative journey towards developing a comprehensive food policy started as a grass-roots movement, beginning in 2018 when diverse stakeholders united to raise awareness and explore solutions, leading to the identification of gaps and priority areas for intervention. In 2021, the city of Rome solidified its commitment to adopting a Food Policy, establishing the instrumental pillars of the Food Council, the Food Plan, and the Technical Office for the implementation of food policy. With inclusive governance and collaboration at its core, Rome's Food Policy aims to foster sustainability, circular economy principles, and resilience in the city's food system.

**The conceptual framework behind the Rome food policy process is the city-region food system approach.** The term city-region refers to a large urban centre or conglomeration of smaller urban centres and their surrounding peri-urban region and rural hinterland. The City Region Food System (CRFS) is defined as "all the actors, processes and relationships that

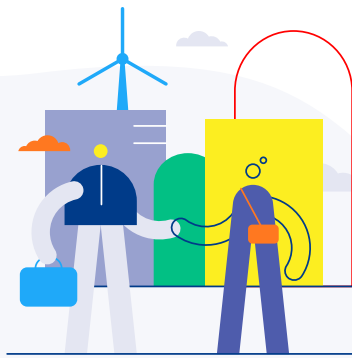
are involved in food production, processing, distribution and consumption in a given city-region". Additionally, CRFS fosters links to many other rural and urban sectors (e.g. food security, economic development, water and waste management, energy, transport, health, climate change, governance and spatial planning, etc.) to deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits.

In collaboration with the region of Rome-Lazio and its partners, the IURC-NA programme has designed a thematic event focused on discovering this ambitious and complex undertaking and interacting with many stakeholders to discuss governance, policy and implementation challenges, and innovative solutions. This unique event brings together representatives from cities and local governments from Canada, the United States, and Europe with experience in implementing nature-based solutions and provide the opportunity to learn, reflect and share their own experiences in supporting urban/ regional food systems.



## Objectives and format

The event will explore how the Rome Food Policy framework was developed, the implementation approach and how various groups are working together in its implementation. Participants will also have first-hand interactions with the various levels of governments that must work together to realize the goals of the Food Policy. Specifically the event will:



- Explain how the regional government arrived at the development of a comprehensive Food Policy Framework, how multi-level governance for implementation works, and how it integrates the role of stakeholders and innovation.
- Enable participants to share experiences, best practices and generate ideas about actionable solutions and problem-solving strategies to address challenges faced by local governments.
- Create direct interactions with stakeholders to hear how they innovate, overcome challenges and collaborate with various groups.

### The event will feature:

Meeting with regional, city of Rome and other peri-urban government officials

Site visits of unique urban agriculture initiatives

Interactions with local farmers and stakeholders

IURC delegate workshop to hear from other jurisdictions that are implementing Food Policies, share perspectives and best practices as well discuss the experience of the host Rome-Lazio

## Participants

The event will involve up to 18 delegates from IURC-NA cities and regions from Europe and North America, including metro areas from the IURC-NA Phase 3 and cities from previous IURC Cohorts (see Annex A for Participants List and bios).

- **Nanaimo**, Canada
- **Toronto**, Canada
- **St. John's**, Canada
- **Pittsburgh**, USA
- **San Francisco**, USA
- **Coimbra**, Portugal
- **Albuquerque**, USA
- **Atlanta**, USA
- **Austin**, USA
- **GZM**, Poland
- **Granada**, Spain
- **Bergamo**, Italy
- **Sofia**, Bulgaria
- **Braga**, Portugal
- **Hamburg**, Germany
- **Umeå**, Sweden
- **AM Barcelona**, Spain

**In addition to the delegates directly sponsored by IURC-NA, there will be participants from the following:**

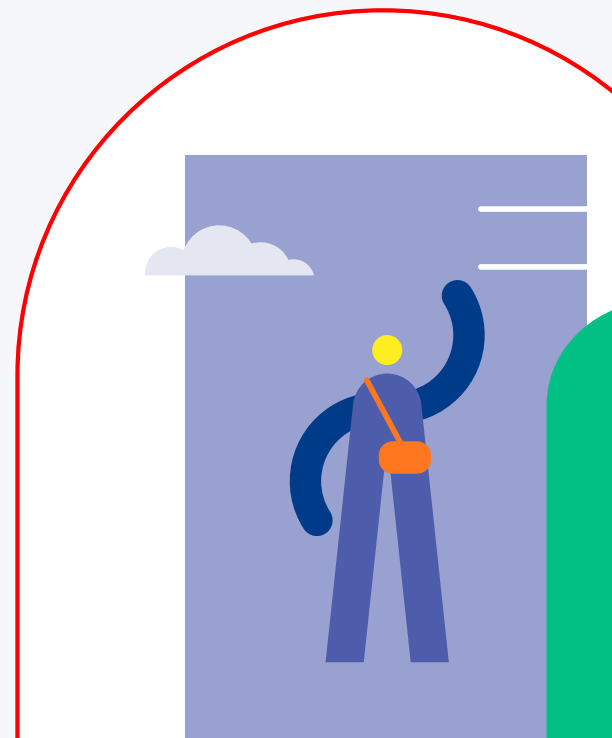
- Representatives from the local authorities of the host region: Roma Capitale and ANCI Lazio
- EU delegate: DG REGIONS and others (TBC).
- Molly Anderson, professor of Agroecology at University of Vermont (USA)
- Anisah Madden, regional food systems governance project in New England (USA)
- Fabio Tittarelli, researcher at CREA - Council for Agricultural Research & Economics (IT)
- Other local organisations and stakeholders: universities, non-profit organisations, etc.

**The activities of both working days will be coordinated in person by IURC-NA staff:**

- **David Calvo**, Team Leader
- **Jacinthe Séguin**, Senior Nature-Based Solutions Expert
- **Eva Vila**, Junior Expert
- **Blerina Qerimi**, Programme Manager

## Reading resources

- [Rome's interconnected, holistic and circular food policy - Cooperative City](#)
- [Rome Capital | Institutional Website | Food recommendation](#)
- [Milan Urban Food Policy Pact](#)
- [Food Waste Reduction: Local Actions & Education](#)
- [The Transformative Power Of Urban Agriculture](#)



# IURC NA - ROME

## ROME'S FOOD POLICY:

Striving for a sustainable, holistic and inclusive regional food system

### Venues:

#### THURSDAY 16TH

##### Palazzo Valentini

Via Quattro Novembre 119 a  
00187, Roma

##### Crossroads Hotel

Via Giovanni da Empoli 11  
00154, Roma

#### FRIDAY 17TH

##### Cooperative Garibaldi

Via di Vigna Murata 573  
00142, Roma

##### Community Garden ORT9

Via Armando Brasini 179  
00128, Roma



# Agenda



## Wednesday 15th October

### TRAVEL DAY

Arrival in Rome, Italy



## Thursday 16th October



### Palazzo Valentini

Sala di Liegro

(\* participants need to carry official identification document, e.g. passport)

### OBJECTIVE

Meet city officials and leaders of the City of Rome to explore the policies and initiatives supporting urban agriculture, renewable energy, green space development and community-based nature-based solutions for a more sustainable and resilient urban future.

07:50 AM

### REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST (IURC NA Team)

**Location:** Crossroads Hotel, Via Giovanni da Empoli 11, Rome

08:30 AM

### MEETING IN THE HOTEL LOBBY

08:30 AM - 09:30 AM

**TRANSFER:** Metro B from Piramide to Colosseum, promenade to Palazzo Valentini  
*Metro tickets will be provided by IURC*

09:30 AM - 11:00 AM

### OPENING SESSION: Welcome and context setting

**Moderators:** Jacinthe Séguin (IURC) and Claudio Bordi (Risorse per Roma)

**Lutz Koeppen**, Policy Officer, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission.  
Opening remarks and introduction to EU policies related to food security

**Riccardo Varone**, Vice-President of ANCI Lazio (National Association of Italian Municipalities – Latium Regional Committee)

**Giammarco Palmieri**, President of the City of Rome's Environment Committees

**Fabio Ciconte**, President of the Rome Food Council

**Sabrina Alfonsi**, Councillor delegate from the Mayor for Agriculture, Environment and Waste Management of the City of Rome

*Brief Questions & Answers*

11:00 AM - 11:15 AM

### COFFEE BREAK

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**EXPLORING THE WORK OF THE FOOD COUNCIL**


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11:15 AM - 11:45 AM

**SESSION A – Working Groups on Local production and agroecology and Distribution and local markets**

- **Presentation by Giacomo Lepri**, Food Council workgroup coordinator on the on the initiative of the two working groups
  - **Interactive session:** questions and exchange with the panel of stakeholders and experiences with IURC participants
- 

11:45 AM - 12:15 PM

**SESSION B – Working Groups on Combating food poverty and Combating food waste and losses**

- **Presentation by Francesca Felici**, Food Council workgroup coordinator on the on the initiative of the two working groups
  - **Interactive session:** questions and exchange with the panel of stakeholders and experiences with IURC participants
- 

12:15 PM - 12:45 PM

**SESSION C – Building bridges between local action and global networks**

- **Presentation by Laura Prota**, Food Council workgroup coordinator on the on the initiative of the two working groups
  - **Interactive session:** questions and exchange with the panel of stakeholders and experiences with IURC participants
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12:45 PM - 13:00 PM

**MORNING SESSION WRAP-UP**

Jacinthe Séguin (IURC) and Claudio Bordi (Risorse per Roma)

13:00 PM - 13:10 PM

**TRANSFER:** promenade to La Cabana restaurant

13:10 PM - 14:30 PM

**LUNCH AT RISTORANTE LA CABANA**

Via del Mancino 7 and 9, Rome (300 mt from Palazzo Valentini)

14:30 PM - 14:40 PM

**TRANSFER:** promenade to Palazzo Valentini, Sala Di Liegro

14:40 PM - 16:30 PM

**SESSION D – International perspectives on urban food systems and role of cities**

- **Moderator: Andrea Vignoli**, ANCI Lazio international office director and **Jacinthe Séguin** (IURC)

**Panel presentations:**

- **Riccardo Varone & Luca Masi**, ANCI Lazio regional strategy on food DE.CO.
- **Antonio Ragonesi**, ANCI Italia, responsible for International relations
- **Pierluigi Sanna**, Vice-Mayor of Metropolitan Area of Rome

**IURC Cities:**

- **Edwin Marty**, Food Policy Manager, Office of Climate Action and Resilience, City of Austin, USA
- **Anna Moreso Ventura**, Metropolitan Policy Analysis Specialist in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB), Spain

**Moderated roundtable with IURC participants short presentations**

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 16:30 PM - 16:45 PM | <b>TRANSFER:</b> promenade to Mercati Traianei                                                                                                                                                             |
| 16:45 PM - 19:00 PM | <b>GUIDED CITY VISIT: Mercati Traianei (Trajan's Markets)</b><br>EN language guided tour titled "Panem et Circenses", focused on the food habitudes of Romans during Traian's Empire and the Rome Republic |
| 19:00 PM - 19:30 PM | <b>TRANSFER:</b> Metro B from Colosseum to Piramide, and promenade to the hotel                                                                                                                            |
| 20:30 PM - 22:30 PM | Optional <b>DINNER</b> (Pizzeria Ostiense)                                                                                                                                                                 |

# Agenda



## Friday 17th October

### OBJECTIVE

To explore food system initiatives & innovations and meet local leaders

09:00 AM - 09:30 AM

**TRANSFER:** private shuttle from hotel to Cooperativa Garibaldi

09:30 AM - 12:00 PM

**FIELD VISIT:** Agricultural social integrated cooperative Giuseppe Garibaldi

**Objective:** Understand how an agriculture operation delivers social benefits beyond food production. The "Garibaldi" cooperative, which is a farm and not a therapeutic center, is an habilitation company, promotes an individualized habilitation plan based on the use of cognitive-behavioral techniques and directly inscribed in paths that are appropriate to be defined as "professionalizing."

- Introductory presentation by Andrea Messori (Proxima, regional resource centre for autism)
- Facilities to visit: productive area, photovoltaic green house, agritourism (hosting facilities), community garden, mobile delivery device (apecar), bees corner, trattoria (restaurant)

12:00 PM - 13:30 PM

**LUNCH** at the Cooperative Garibaldi's Trattoria Articolo 14

13:30 PM - 14:00 PM

**TRANSFER:** private shuttle from cooperative Garibaldi to Community Garden ORTg

14:00 PM - 15:30 PM

**DISCOVERY PROMENADE THROUGH ORTg COMMUNITY GARDEN**

**Objective:** Understand the development and organisation of one Urban Community Garden, created thanks to the recovery of an agricultural area in the outskirts of Rome that had been illegally used as a landfill and that has been regenerated and redeveloped through the European project ENPI SidigMed.

15:30 PM - 16:30 PM

**IURC GROUP MEETING AND EVENT WRAP-UP**

**Objective:** Roundtable exchange, moderated by Jacinthe Séguin What stood out for participants from the meetings and field visits

- What are some transferable lessons from some of the initiatives and engagement observed in Rome-Lazio
- Sharing experiences/solutions about what has worked in other jurisdictions & what are key knowledge sources
- Answer survey, next steps and closure

16:45 PM - 17:45 PM

**FOOD & NETWORKING:** Communitarian OrtoAperitif organized by ANCI LAZIO

18:00 PM - 18:30 PM

**TRANSFER:** private shuttle from Community Garden Ortg to Hotel

# Participant's Bios

## CITY/METRO

## BIO

### EUROPEAN COMMISSION

#### LUTZ KÖPPEN | POLICY OFFICER, DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY

Lutz Köppen is a professional currently serving at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, where he is involved in matters pertaining to cities and more specifically leading the International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) programme. With a breadth of experience at the European Commission, he has significantly contributed to strategic planning, policy making and implementation in the areas of construction products and sustainable urban and regional development.

Prior to his tenure at the European Commission, he held various positions in management consulting, media, automotive, telecoms and defence industries, where he gained extensive expertise.

Köppen holds a Bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the George Washington University and a Masters of European Management from ESCP Europe, further augmenting his understanding and approach to complex policy and administrative challenges.

### CANADA

#### - NANAIMO (CANADA)

#### BILL SIMS | GENERAL MANAGER OF ENGINEERING & PUBLIC WORKS

Bill Sims oversees a team of 170 staff responsible for a wide range of civic infrastructure, including water, sewage, roads, traffic, fleet, cemeteries, and solid waste. He also manages the city's infrastructure capital plan, renewal planning, engineering design, construction, and operations. As part of Nanaimo's senior administration, he advises the Mayor and Council on policy directions to ensure long-term sustainability. His leadership focuses on operational excellence, financial sustainability, and building a resilient city for future generations.

#### - ST. JOHN'S (CANADA)

#### EDMUNDO FAUSTO | MANAGER OF SUSTAINABILITY

Edmundo Fausto is a sustainability leader with over a decade of experience in climate action, clean energy, and environmental resilience. As Manager of Sustainability for the City of St. John's, he advances initiatives in energy transition, sustainable mobility, climate adaptation, and the circular economy. His career includes international collaboration on low-carbon solutions, working with governments, organizations, and communities across regions. Beyond his municipal role, he serves as a board director with The ReCover Initiative and advises CLIMAtlantic on regional climate priorities. His work reflects a strong commitment to building resilient communities locally while accelerating global sustainability goals.

#### - TORONTO (CANADA)

#### LESLIE CAMPBELL | POLICY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Leslie Campbell is a Policy Development Officer with the City of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy Office, focusing on food policy and food security. He leads the rollout of a universal School Food Program, updates to Toronto's Food Charter, and initiatives that strengthen collaboration between institutions and civil society. With a background in international development and environmental biology, he gained hands-on farming experience in Costa Rica, Thailand, Indonesia, and Ethiopia. Prior to joining the City, he worked with FoodShare Toronto as a food justice advocate and program director. He also serves on the board of Makeway, advancing partnerships for thriving communities and ecosystems.

## USA

**- ALBUQUERQUE  
(USA)****ANN SIMON | DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SUSTAINABILITY**

Ann Simon manages the sustainability team for the City of Albuquerque, bringing extensive expertise in sustainability, economic development, and environmental health. She previously served as Executive Administrator for the Village of Los Ranchos and as Economic Development Program Manager at the Mid-Region Council of Governments, securing major funding for community projects. Earlier in her career, she worked in Washington, D.C. at the White House Office of Environmental Policy, the Association of County and City Health Officials, and on Capitol Hill. Ann holds a Master's degree in Public Policy from Georgetown University and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Vermont. Her career reflects a strong commitment to advancing community-driven sustainability and public health initiatives.

**- ATLANTA  
(USA)****CHANDRA FARLEY | CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER**

Chandra Farley serves as Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of Atlanta, where she leads the city's sustainability and resilience agenda. She directs efforts to address climate inequities through strategies on clean energy, housing, food systems, waste reduction, workforce training, and transportation electrification. Her work includes developing a comprehensive climate resilience strategy and leveraging federal investments under the Justice40 Initiative with a focus on environmental justice. Prior to this role, she founded ReResolve Consulting, an energy justice firm, and created the "Good Energy Project" to amplify the leadership of Black women in clean energy transitions. Chandra also ran for the Georgia Public Service Commission in 2022, bringing her advocacy for equitable energy policy into the public arena.

**- AUSTIN  
(USA)****EDWIN MARTY | FOOD POLICY MANAGER**

Edwin Marty is the Food Policy Manager in the City of Austin's Office of Sustainability, where he advances local food production, community gardens, and institutional food purchasing reforms. He led the development of Austin's first comprehensive food plan, the Austin Travis County Food Plan, and supports its implementation through citywide partnerships. With a background in anthropology and agroecology, he has worked on sustainable farming projects worldwide and founded the Jones Valley Teaching Farm in Alabama. Edwin is also the author of *Breaking Through Concrete*, a book on urban farming in America, and has lectured widely on food systems. His work combines policy innovation, education, and grassroots engagement to build resilient and equitable food systems.

**- PITTSBURGH  
(USA)****FLORE MARION | ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE DEPARTMENT**

Edwin Marty is the Food Policy Manager in the City of Austin's Office of Sustainability, where he advances local food production, community gardens, and institutional food purchasing reforms. He led the development of Austin's first comprehensive food plan, the Austin Travis County Food Plan, and supports its implementation through citywide partnerships. With a background in anthropology and agroecology, he has worked on sustainable farming projects worldwide and founded the Jones Valley Teaching Farm in Alabama. Edwin is also the author of *Breaking Through Concrete*, a book on urban farming in America, and has lectured widely on food systems. His work combines policy innovation, education, and grassroots engagement to build resilient and equitable food systems.

**- SAN FRANCISCO  
(USA)****SOKO MADE | ZERO WASTE PROGRAM MANAGER, DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

Soko Made has been with San Francisco's Department of the Environment since 2007, playing a key role in advancing the city's zero waste initiatives. She currently manages a team of fifteen staff overseeing food waste prevention, edible food recovery, sustainable procurement, repair and reuse programs, and mandatory recycling and composting. Her leadership has also driven policies on construction debris recovery and the transition from disposable to reusable foodware. In addition to her program work, she serves as a co-Racial Equity Leader, fostering diversity and inclusion within the department. Soko holds a BA in Geology from Saint Louis University and a Master of Science in Environmental Management from the University of San Francisco.

## EU

**- ROME  
(ITALY)****CLAUDIO BORDI | ARCHITECT/URBAN PLANNER HEAD OF EUROPEAN UNIT AT RISORSE PER ROMA**

Claudio is the Head of the EU Unit at Risorse per Roma, Municipal Agency of the City of Rome where he manages recent/ongoing EU funded projects coordinated on behalf of the City of Rome: RU:RBAN, H2020 EFUA, H2020 FUSILLI, IURC-LA, GenerACTOR, IURC-NA. He has more than 25 years of experience in working as architect/urban planner on sustainable integrated urban development. He is particularly proficient in the thematic areas of urban innovation, with in-depth knowledge of urban trends and challenges in a wide range of countries around the world (sub-themes include: urban planning, sustainable mobility, regeneration of abandoned areas and brownfields, urban resilience, deprived neighbourhoods, urban heritage, energy efficiency in buildings, land use, smart cities, green economy and urban agriculture). Claudio holds a European Master degree in the Town Regional and Urban Design in 1994-1995 from the INEAA, European Institute of Urban planning, Rouen University, France.

**- ANCI LAZIO  
(ITALY)****ANDREA VIGNOLI | PROJECT MANAGER**

Since 1997 Andrea Vignoli provides consulting and assistance to numerous and public organizations at Regional, National and European level, in many fields ranging from research & development, sustainable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable development, sustainable mobility, active citizenship and cultural issues. He has great experience in the technology transfer area, business innovation and project management in several fields as sustainability, circular economy, smart cities and social inclusion. He is member of the Scientific Committee in ANCI Lazio (Italian National Association of Cities and Municipalities – Lazio) to support Municipalities on European project design and implementation. Since 2005 he is responsible for the management of Regional and European projects in ANCI Lazio.

Andrea is a member of the Technical Committee in charge to design and manage European Projects at the Chamber of Commerce of Rieti Viterbo. He manages the European projects office at I Borghi più belli d'Italia (Association of the Most Beautiful small towns of Italy). He has managed more than 100 million of Euros of granted projects, being involved as project coordinator, financial manager and communication manager in more than 50 European projects in particular in the field of sustainable mobility, circular economy, smart cities, energy efficiency, renewable energy, social inclusion, cultural dialogue and innovation support instruments for SMEs. Moreover, he has been member of the Italian Technological Platform.

**- ROME  
(ITALY)****ANDREA MESSORI | PRESIDENT AT REPLAY NETWORK**

While studying International Political Science at the University of Bologna, Andrea Messori spent 10 months on an Erasmus exchange at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and completed an internship at the European Parliament. This experience strongly rooted his interest in European citizenship, allowing him to contribute to the launch of the European Voluntary Service (now the European Solidarity Corps) and to the drafting of a guide on study, volunteering and training opportunities for young people at European level (now Eurodesk). Since 1998, he has been working as a trainer and project manager on projects related to European educational programmes, with a focus on training, learning mobility and active citizenship.

For 15 years, he coordinated the Italian team of trainers for the European Voluntary Service training and evaluation cycle for the Italian Youth Agency (now AIG). Since 2018, he has led a panel of 96 trainers from 36 countries for the French National Agency Erasmus+ Youth and Sport and the European Commission's SALTO Euromed Resource Centre. In recent years, he has promoted actions for sustainability, dialogue with institutions and the local network, supporting the recognition of community urban gardens in the city of Rome (Orti in Comune) and projects for young adults with autism and their families (Centro Regionale Proxima). He is currently contributing to the working group on education and food sustainability of the Food Council of Rome and as a member of the board of "Consulta Europa", an advisory body of Roma Capitale on European issues.

**- BARCELONA  
METROPOLITAN AREA  
(SPAIN)****ANNA MORESO VENTURA | METROPOLITAN POLICY ANALYSIS SPECIALIST**

Anna Moreso Ventura is a Metropolitan Policy Analysis Specialist at the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB), where she contributes to the city's cross-sectoral food policies. She holds a degree in Environmental Sciences from the Autonomous University of Barcelona and has over 15 years of experience in sustainability. Her career includes work in environmental consultancy and leadership roles in corporate responsibility at ALDI Spain and IKEA. At AMB, she supports the development of the Metropolitan Food Policy Action Plan 2025–2027, integrating food systems into territorial and sustainability strategies. Anna's expertise bridges public policy, private sector experience, and environmental planning for metropolitan-scale impact.

**- BERGAMO  
(ITALY)****CLAUDIO CECCHINELLI | DIRECTOR OF CULTURE & UNESCO DEPARTMENT**

Claudio Cecchinelli is Director of the Culture and UNESCO Department of Bergamo and serves as the city's focal point for the UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy. He is also Deputy Coordinator of the global UNESCO Creative Cities Network on Gastronomy, advancing international collaboration on cultural heritage and food policy. In his municipal role, he oversees cultural programming, UNESCO site management, and international partnerships, including the Venetian Works of Defence World Heritage Site. Claudio is a board member of the Bergamo Food District and the Association of Italian World Heritage Sites, and a lecturer on sustainable tourism and territorial development. With a background in economics and decades of public service, he has been a leader in connecting culture, gastronomy, and sustainable development.

**- BRAGA  
(PORTUGAL)****HÉLDER COSTA | ADVISOR, CABINET OF THE MAYOR**

Hélder Costa supports the City of Braga's sustainable development strategy as an advisor in the Mayor's Cabinet. A civil engineer specializing in Hydraulics and Environment, he also holds a postgraduate degree in Management Control and Strategic Execution from Porto Business School. His career includes academic research on sustainability assessment methodologies and advisory roles at the University of Minho, where sustainability practices earned global recognition. Hélder was named among the "100 Oportunidades" list by Global Shapers Lisbon, highlighting young Portuguese leaders shaping the future. His work focuses on helping organizations integrate sustainability principles to foster innovation, competitiveness, and responsible development.

**- CIM REGIÃO  
DE COIMBRA  
(PORTUGAL)****PAULA SILVESTRE | DIRECTOR OF INTERMUNICIPAL ORGANIZATION, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNIZATION**

Paula Silvestre is Director of the Department of Intermunicipal Organization, Social Development and Modernization at the Coimbra Region Intermunicipal Community. She holds a Law degree from the University of Coimbra and postgraduate qualifications in Development, Urban and Environmental Law, and Municipal Administration Modernization. Her career spans senior roles in Condeixa-a-Nova Municipality and in CIM Coimbra, where she has managed financial divisions, human resources, and quality systems. Paula has extensive experience coordinating national and European funding programs, including CERV, URBACT, and COSME, and currently manages Europe Direct for Coimbra and Leiria. Her leadership has been instrumental in advancing modernization, intermunicipal cooperation, and social development across the region.

**- GRANADA  
(SPAIN)****ÁNGEL LUIS BENITO PÉREZ | TECHNICAL DIRECTOR FOR SUSTAINABILITY, URBAN AGENDA AND EUROPEAN FUNDS**

Ángel Luis Benito Pérez is Technical Director for Sustainability, Urban Agenda and European Funds at the City of Granada, with over 20 years of experience in urban sustainability. An architect by training, he has led strategic planning, environmental policies, and EU-funded projects on circular economy, energy transition, and urban innovation. He studied at the University of Granada, the Technische Universität Berlin, and UNAM in Mexico, and received the Schinkel State Prize for architecture-engineering cooperation. Internationally, he has served as a peer reviewer for the European Urban Initiative, working with cities across Europe. Fluent in English and German, he is a frequent speaker on urban development, sustainability, and public-sector innovation.

**- GZM  
(POLAND)****BLANKA JĘDRZEJEWSKA | DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Blanka Jędrzejewska is Director of the Department of Infrastructure and Environment at the GZM Metropolis in Poland. With a background in environmental protection and waste management, she has led projects in municipal waste, water and sewage management, and regional environmental planning. Her work includes developing air quality and anti-smog programs, biodiversity protection, and circular economy initiatives across Silesia. At GZM, she coordinates metropolitan projects on energy efficiency, blue-green infrastructure, and climate adaptation. Blanka holds degrees in Environmental Protection, Business Management, and an MBA in Community Management, combining technical expertise with strategic leadership.

**- HAMBURG  
(GERMANY)****DR. REBEKKA KÜCHLER | HEAD OF FOOD BUSINESS, FOOD CLUSTER, MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, LABOUR AND INNOVATION**

Dr. Rebekka Küchler leads the Food Business Cluster at the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Innovation in Hamburg, supporting food industries through research, innovation, and partnerships. She holds a Master's in Food Technology and a PhD in Sustainability Management, and has worked in product development, academia, and corporate sustainability. Her experience includes sustainability management for SMEs, doctoral research in agricultural economics, and leadership roles at EDEKA, where she developed circular economy strategies. At the Hamburg Food Cluster, she fosters collaboration among businesses, academia, and government to strengthen the regional food sector. Her work emphasizes sustainability, circular economy, and the integration of innovation into food production systems.

**- SOFIA  
(BULGARIA)****NADEZHDA BOBICHEVA | DEPUTY MAYOR**

Nadezhda Bobcheva is Deputy Mayor of Sofia, responsible for Green System, Ecology, and Land Use. With extensive experience in municipal administration, she has held expert and managerial roles in Silistra and Sofia and served two terms as a municipal councilor in Silistra. She holds Master's degrees in Finance and in Urban Management (Erasmus University/IHS Rotterdam) and has managed and evaluated multiple EU-funded projects. Her leadership has advanced initiatives in waste management, recycling, digitalization, and sustainable urban planning. She is committed to environmental protection, transparent governance, and expanding local decision-making to better serve citizens.

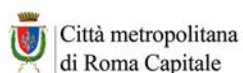
**- UMEÅ  
(SWEDEN)****HENNY FAREBO | SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIST**

Henny Farebo is a Sustainability Strategist at Umeå Municipality, where she works on climate neutrality goals and the Horizon project School Food 4 Change. Her role bridges politics, municipal departments, and community stakeholders, advancing collaboration on sustainability and healthy food systems. She holds a Master of Science in Biotechnology and began her career in quality assurance, later shifting to sustainability with experience in life sciences, logistics, and construction. For the past five years, she has focused on environmental strategy, circular economy, and public procurement. Her work reflects Umeå's ambition to reach climate neutrality by 2040 through innovation and broad community engagement.

**IURC- NA****JACINTHE SÉGUIN | CIRCULAR ECONOMY EXPERT**

Jacinthe has worked for over 35 years in the sustainability and environmental management field as a multi-disciplinary professional with training in economics and natural resource management. In her long career with the federal government, she focused on developing solutions at the national and international level to address solid waste management issues, toxic substances management, human health and climate change. She represented Canada at international fora such as the Montreal Protocol, Basel Convention, OECD, WHO, the G7 and UNEP and led the development of many best practices as well as the implementation of projects to test solutions at the local level. She currently brings her technical and policy expertise to various fora to facilitate the exchange of ideas and innovations in the pursuit of environmental sustainability.

# Thank you for joining us!



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