



Public policies for happiness. Several guests among which Benjamin Radcliff, François Bourguignon and Giuliano Poletti. Here we are with the Social Cohesion Days!

Immigration policies, inequality, minimum income, educational services quality and innovation, attendance allowance and media education, to name a few. The crucial subjects dealt with during the "Social Cohesion Days" - the international festival of social cohesion to be held in Reggio Emilia on May 26, 27 and 28 - are several and very actual. Three days of discussion and more than 20 debates on social cohesion in Europe and Italy, with prestigious representatives from the world of business and politics: Minister Giuliano Poletti, Benjamin Radcliff, Alexander Pacek, Romano Prodi and François Bourguignon, to name a few.

Reduce economic, social and territorial disparities existent at the national and European level: those are the goals of the social cohesion policies, the main investment policies of the European Union. How? By fostering the creation of jobs, competitiveness between companies, economic growth, investment in policies for children, sustainable development and improvement of citizens' quality of life.

From May 26 to May 28 Reggio Emilia devotes three whole days for the promotion of the institutional and civil debate on these issues by hosting the second edition of the **Social Cohesion Days, the international festival of social cohesion** (www.socialcohesiondays.com): more than 20 free events, including conferences, roundtables, performances, screenings and concerts. Leading guests will be prominent personalities from economics and international politics: Labour Minister **Giuliano Poletti**, economists **Benjamin Radcliff** and **Alexander Pacek**, **Romano Prodi**, **François Bourguignon**.

The initiative is sponsored by three public and non-profit organizations: Easy Care Foundation, the Municipality of Reggio Emilia, Foundation for World Wide Cooperation. Reggio Emilia welcomes the second edition of the event being a city that, by vocation, considers the need for people and their desires to be at the center of the community project.

The "Politics of Happiness" is the opening theme: **Benjamin Radcliff**, political scientist at the University of Notre Dame, United States, and **Alexander Pacek** political scientist at the Texas A&M University discuss on the relationship between public policies and human happiness within industrialized democracies (Thursday, May 26, Teatro Cavallerizza). At the conclusion of the festival it will be held a dialogue on "Inequality, democracy and social cohesion" between **Romano Prodi**, founder and president of the Foundation for World Wide Cooperation, and **François Bourguignon**, former chief economist of the World Bank (Saturday, May 28, Teatro Cavallerizza). In between those two moments more than 20 events will be held, moderated by prominent journalists - **Riccardo Iacona**, **Ferruccio De Bortoli**, **Gad Lerner** - with more than 50 speakers coming from different sectors (university, public institutions, third sector and civil society organizations, business) who will address the various facets of social cohesion: immigration, social inclusion, education, media education, childhood, European integration.

The festival is also an opportunity to present a selection of tangible experiences of social cohesion in Italy: around 60 projects, ranging from the protection of vulnerable groups (elderly, children, disabled) to innovative ways of responding to community needs and the provision of welfare

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services, the promotion of intercultural dialogue, refugees shelter. The goal is to launch a process of incubation of social cohesion projects, creating relationships between the protagonists and developing sustainable and innovative ideas.

*"The Social Cohesion Days are the collective expression of those who believe that social cohesion cannot be built from the top or the bottom, but should be a circular process that involves all citizens" - said **Raul Cavalli**, spokesperson of the Executive Committee of the festival, who states: - "Hence the need to build infrastructures that will allow citizens to become the leading actors who operate dynamically to determine a better society, thus recreating a pact between generations and - looking at the bigger picture - between Nations and their citizens".*

The second edition of the festival was announced officially last February in Rome in an exclusive location: the meeting of Confindustria with Pope Francis, who for the first time has gathered the Italian companies in the Vatican. Seven thousand entrepreneurs have met with Pope Francis to celebrate the "Jubilee of Industry", where also Raul Cavalli has intervened as chairman of the Easy Care Foundation, who, reminding the rendezvous with the festival, has underscored: *"Enough with the tyranny of the GDP, we need to invest in sectors that contribute at creating a sense of belonging in civil society. "*

The Social Cohesion Days have received the patronage of **UNESCO**, the **European Parliament**, the Italian Representation of the **European Commission**, the **Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the Region of Emilia Romagna**.

The programme of the event is available at: www.socialcohesiondays.com

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