

Amapola – Projects on safety and security of cities and citizens is a non-profit organisation founded in January 2002. Since 2008, it has become a membership organisation made up of individual members.

Its mission is to work on urban safety and security, adopting a **holistic and multi-sectoral approach**. This means taking into consideration causes and impacts of different risk factors underlying the safety of residents and cities: not only crime, but also social, economic, political, and cultural conditions, environmental factors, urban planning, social cohesion, and individual and public perceptions.

Core competencies of the organisation include:

- crime, social deviance;
- use of public spaces, social cohesion and inclusion practices;
- organised crime, corruption, confiscated assets;
- local community development;
- new technologies, smart cities.

Its multidisciplinary team of experts and professionals boasts different backgrounds and expertise in criminology, urban renewal, social science, statistics, immigration, and project management.

They carry out research, consultancy, and projects aimed at raising awareness and promoting citizens' rights, social cohesion, and liveability of cities.

Amapola's work is strongly policy-oriented in order to contribute to building safer and more inclusive cities. Great attention is paid to the study of good practices as well as policy responses to meet the needs of citizens and local communities (analysis, feasibility studies, and elaboration, testing, and evaluation of interventions).

Amapola works with local authorities, private organisations, universities and research centres, thematic networks, associations, and schools. It develops and runs local, national and international projects together with other institutions and partners.

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1. Technical assistance

Amapola provides consultancy services in the design and implementation of local policies for urban security and legality. Over the years, it has developed significant experience in providing technical and methodological support for the development and management of projects, promoting the role of public institutions in security policies and supporting capacity building of local authorities on specific issues (e.g. models of governance, funding schemes, and project monitoring and evaluation).

RECENT PROJECTS

transparency and legality

Amapola implements projects aimed at promoting the dissemination and application of the values of transparency and legality. Amapola takes part in a four-year project that involves 17 European organisations with the aim of applying Integrity Pacts, i.e. a tool applied in public procurement with a view to guaranteeing transparency. Furthermore, in 2015 Amapola provided the Region of Sicily and 28 local authorities in the Province of Palermo with technical capacity-building assistance in defining strategic goals and common actions in the area of security, reuse of confiscated assets, video-surveillance systems, and local police coordination.

Further info: Patti d'integrità; Città a rete: trasparenza e legalità

local governance on safety and security

Across several years Amapola assists local authorities on securities policies, as well as in the evaluation of its impact at local and regional level. The engagement covered a variety of areas of work: drafting of regional guidelines on urban security; definition of funding programmes; organisation of the annual regional conference on safety; design and coordination of pilot projects; and monitoring and evaluation of funded projects.

Further info: Politiche locali di sicurezza - Regione Piemonte

civic monitoring

The involvement of citizens in the safeguard of public assets is the challenge of our time. The Municipality of Settimo Torinese (Piedmont) believes that citizens and the government should cooperate towards enhancing urban liveability and social cohesion. Amapola supports this vision and cooperates with the municipal authorities towards establishing civic monitoring practices for the maintenance of public assets and the adoption of a regulation governing the forms of collaboration between citizens and local authorities for the safeguard and regeneration of urban commons.

Further info: Verso una manutenzione civica

2. Research

Amapola carries out research projects within the action research paradigm which allows knowledge and practice to co-exist and co-work simultaneously in problem solving. The aim is twofold: to study an issue or a system, and to contribute to changing the situation in a desirable direction. The main topics are urban security and liveability, organised crime, technology and its impact on society.

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urban security and liveability

Amapola promotes the adoption of a multi-sectoral approach to designing and implementing local security policies. In the framework of the technical assistance service provided to the Local Police Department of the Region of Piedmont, Amapola coordinated a regional census of video-surveillance systems in order to make the most of this tool as to the perception of security. In 'Cruscotto sulla Sicurezza Urbana' project, Amapola created an urban 'security dashboard' based on a set of indicators concerning four areas of analysis (context, policies, media, and citizens' perceptions).

Further info: Cruscotto sulla Sicurezza Urbana; CIVIVO. Sicurezza in libertà; Indagine sull'in/sicurezza nella città di Torino

organised crime and corruption

Criminal infiltration in public procurement and in State-owned enterprises represents an economic and moral burden upon civil society. Amapola has implemented two EU-funded projects aimed at investigating these phenomena by analysing the actors involved, public corruption patterns, and existing European and national tools to combat corruption in public procurement. The project WOC compares Members states legislation and practice in countering corruption in public procurement. The project SOESC is aimed at conducting research on the level of autonomy of public enterprises, as well as on the level of potential corruption risk.

Further info: SOESC; Warning on Crime

technology, risks and rights

Technology makes our lives easier but it also entails risks particularly as to the use of personal data. Amapola conducts research on the risks implied by the disclosure of personal information. In the framework of the 'Profiling' project, Amapola has identified the challenges posed by technology to fundamental rights and values. In 'Security of the Digital Natives' project Amapola has investigated the level of awareness and perception of IT security amongst university students. More recently, Amapola is updating the publication of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights on ethic profiling, which is aimed at supporting border and law enforcement officials.

Further info: Profiling; Security of Digital Natives; FRA Guidelines

3. Management of local initiatives

Amapola supports cities and towns in adopting citywide urban security strategies and action plans building on socially inclusive and participatory approaches. Local initiatives are designed to implement effective prevention measures, meet citizens' security expectations, develop local partnerships, reduce and prevent conflicts among residents, and raise awareness on specific security-related concerns. Interventions are implemented at metropolitan, local, or neighbourhood level, and may include different types of actions (e.g. pilot projects, community-based actions, and awareness-raising campaigns).

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active citizenship, empowerment and youth participation

Amapola encourages active citizenship processes through the implementation of local projects involving young people, teenagers and NEETs in their communities. Through participatory processes, Amapola helps groups of young people make the most of a dedicated budget for projects in their neighborhood. In Gratosoglio, one of Milan's peripheral areas, Amapola engages young people in activities that impact on them and the wellbeing of their community, such as interviews on the perceptions of urban security, neighborhood mapping, short videos, clean-up and urban regeneration activities.

Further info: C-entro anche io; Gratosoglio attivi#Gratosoglio sicuri; Piano Locale Giovani Ivrea; Gratosoglio TVB-Attiva le tue risorse

innovation and smart cities

Based on the idea that a smart city is a sustainable and inclusive environment, Amapola supports local authorities in the promotion of smart cities. In 2015 it implemented the 'IoTiBevo – Internet of Things e acqua pubblica' project aimed at applying the Internet of Things (IoT) technology to the public water supply system in the city of Turin. In 2016 it offered technical support to SAT, a Municipality-owned company of Settimo Torinese, with a view to raising awareness among citizens on energy consumption reduction.

Further info: Risparmio energetico, si può fare!; IoTiBevo-Internet of Things

conflicts, social cohesion and public spaces

Public spaces become contested spaces due to the conflicting uses made by citizens or specific groups (teenagers, foreigners, sex workers, etc.). Amapola carries out several projects aimed at managing conflicts arising from nightlife and other phenomena of urban disorder such as prostitution and deprivation. Furthermore, it has developed territorial mediation projects, as well as actions for the adoption of shared rules for the proper use of public spaces.

Further info: Chance; Dare un posto al disordine; Divertimento notturno e conflittualità; Patto per lo sviluppo della Maddalena

4. Monitoring and evaluation

Amapola offers support to local authorities in monitoring and evaluation of projects implemented in the domain of urban and social policies. There is an increasing demand for measurable indicators and results not only to provide transparency on the cost/benefit, impact and effectiveness of interventions, but also to prepare evidence for political decision-making. It moreover runs exploratory surveys and carries out feasibility studies to assess the potential of innovative actions and policies.

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security and video-surveillance policies

Nowadays video-surveillance systems are part of our cities, and they make a contribution to our security. However, they are often at the heart of debates and evaluations involving local authorities. Amapola boasts significant experience in this field and, in the framework of technical support provided to the Region of Piedmont, it has carried out systematic surveys on the extent, nature, and use of closed-circuit television throughout the regional territory. Furthermore, Amapola – in cooperation with “CSP innovazione nelle ICT” – designed and developed a digital platform for the rationalisation of the use of video-surveillance all over Piedmont.

Further info: Observo; Assistenza tecnica per la Regione Piemonte

social services

A good local welfare system contributes to meeting citizens' needs as well as improving their sense of civic duty. In order to improve the strengths of the welfare policies implemented by the Municipality of Milan, Amapola is part of a network tasked with designing, monitoring and evaluating services provided by the local administration. The information collected will help to assess the effectiveness of Municipality-led programmes targeted at different population groups. Within the 'Custodi sociali' project, Amapola develops guidelines on the management of municipal social services and organises training activities for social workers with a view to sharing evaluation results and the guidelines themselves.

Further info: Custodi sociali

migration and discrimination policies

Migrants and asylum seekers are at the core of the world political agenda. It is essential to study data and policies related to the migration phenomenon in order to adopt the right tools. Amapola is cooperating with Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini in carrying out monitoring research activities concerning the respect of fundamental rights and the state of implementation of EU legislation in Italy. More specifically, Amapola will collect data about the situation of fundamental rights of migrant people, focusing on: control and border management, the use of biometric data in border IT systems, the current migration crisis and the application of the visa and asylum policy.

Further info: Fra-Net. Raccolta dati e servizi sui diritti fondamentali in Italia

5. Training, manuals and handbooks

Amapola contributes to strengthening skills, knowledge, and experience concerning urban security-related issues, as well as enabling the effective implementation of policies. Its training courses, workshops, and publications address different topics, covering both theoretical aspects and more practical issues (focus on specific problems, case studies, and good practices). Training tools and materials are developed for different targets: policy makers, police officers, civil servants, professionals, civil society practitioners, and citizens.

RECENT PROJECTS

urban security, perception of insecurity and police proximity

Social cohesion could be hampered by social problems or phenomena that could increase citizens' perception of insecurity. In order to identify the necessary policies, it is fundamental to clarify how and why this perception of insecurity is generated in a specific context. Amapola supports local public administrative authorities in scrutinising the perception of security/insecurity in urban settings through training actions, focus groups, and workshops. The goals are: to involve different subjects playing a role in the urban environment; to carry out research on the perception of security/insecurity; and to promote social cohesion and pilot actions of moral suasion and soft local control.

Further info: Progettare la prossimità; Divertimento giovanile notturno; Essere anziani a Mirafiori; Chance

guidebook on urban security policies

Safety conditions in the urban context depend on a variety of factors. The local administration should know which are the main factors that contribute to local security, as well as what is the level of citizens' perception of insecurity in order to identify the best policies to implement. Created by Amapola within the technical assistance service provided to the Region of Piedmont, the guidebook provides useful tools to design and manage policies aimed at citizens' safety. It moreover aims to support the development of new and stronger initiatives for cooperation between institutions and citizens.

Further info: Manuale sulla sicurezza urbana

transparency and legality: guidelines for policy makers

The guidelines are targeted at policy makers and civil servants, and provide them with a set of 10 thematic sections offering in-depth analysis on legislation, good practices, and recommendations on how to work together towards increasing transparency, accountability, and integrity in local institutions. The sections address the security-related issues local authorities are confronted with, such as integrity in public procurement, anticorruption plans, CCTV, the new central purchasing bodies in public contracts, promotion of citizen participation, social reuse of confiscated assets, local police, youth forums, databases aimed at preventing corruption, and regulations on gambling.

Further info: Linee Guida - Città a Rete: trasparenza e legalità