



City Innovation Snapshot BOLOGNA, Italy

Overview

- ▶ **Mayor:** Virginio Merola
- ▶ **Term:** 2016 - 2021
- ▶ **Population size:** 392 027 (2019)
- ▶ **Innovation / open data website:**
www.fondazioneinnovazioneurbana.it
<http://dati.comune.bologna.it/>

What is the organisational structure?

The Deputy Mayor, in charge of Civic Imagination, is responsible for innovation. The work of his office is supported by the Urban Innovation Foundation, through the Civic Imagination Office, the Digital Agenda Department and the Culture and City Promotion Department.

Staff skills and profiles include:

- Project Manager
- Data Scientist
- Designer
- Community Engagement



Spotlight | Civic Imagination Office and District Labs

In Bologna, the Civic Imagination Office serves as an urban policy innovation lab to research, communicate, and co-design urban transformations. The Office helps oversee six District Labs—hubs of collaboration and innovation where city officials and residents work together to tackle challenges facing Bologna. These Labs not only accompany citizens' project proposals (called collaboration pacts), but also facilitate the participatory budgeting process in Bologna. These efforts have led to a significant increase in citizen engagement: resulting in more than 480 collaboration pacts being implemented, and more than 14,000 people voted in the first year of participatory budgeting.

What is the city's innovation vision?

Like 50% of cities surveyed, Bologna has a **formal innovation strategy**.

The city most closely associates innovation capacity with:

- Resident engagement
- Data analytics

What is the city's innovation approach?

Similar to more than half of the cities surveyed, Bologna approaches innovation capacity **both from a holistic / macro level and in specific policy areas**.

The top two priority policy areas for the city's innovation work are:

Citizen
Engagement

Urban
regeneration

What innovation partnerships exist?

Bologna has developed partnerships to **promote innovation capacity** with other public agencies, not-for-profit organisations, and city residents/resident associations.

To **improve data use**, the city has also developed data partnerships with the University of Bologna and the City of Barcelona with the aim of establishing their Data Office.



City Innovation Snapshot BOLOGNA, Italy



What funding is available?

Like 81% of cities surveyed, Bologna has dedicated funding to support innovation capacity, which comes from the following sources:

- **International/multilateral institution budget**
- **Municipal budget** (operating budget / participatory budgeting)
- **External (non-public) funding** (philanthropic or non-profit / academic or think tank resources)

Bologna's funding for innovation capacity is generally directed towards **investing in digital systems and physical infrastructure**.



How is innovation helping the city?

- ✓ **Engaging residents and other stakeholders**
- ✓ **Simplifying administrative procedures for firms and residents**
- ✓ **Improving service delivery**

The most critical success factors in supporting the city's innovation work are **dedicated funding, a focus on metrics, Human Resource involvement, a culture of innovation within the municipal administration, support from the broader community and leadership from the Mayor**.



How is data used?

Bologna does not currently use data to align its budget process with its strategic priorities. Challenges preventing the use of data to support innovation goals include **insufficient interaction with data producers, insufficient staff capacity to collect and analyse data and limited compatibility of data across policy areas**. Bologna also reports that **data are seldom shared among agencies**.

Bologna **publishes open data** to a central, public online location. The city is also **in the process of building a Data Office** to make data more accessible and to allow better evaluation of results.



How are outcomes measured?

Policy areas **with sufficient data** or **without sufficient data** to support innovation capacity in the city.

Transport / Mobility	Economic Development	Housing	Policing and Law Enforcement	Health
Government Finance	Waste and Sewage	Labour Market and Skills	Environment and Climate Change	Education
Culture	Social Inclusion, Equity	Public Works	Tourism	Digital Governance

NB: No response provided by the city for the policy areas in grey.