

## **Italy-Argentina: Bilateral Meeting in the Name of Civil Defense.**

At the Regional Council of Lazio, a meeting took place between Marino Fardelli, Civil Ombudsman of Lazio and President of the Coordination of Italian Civil Ombudsmen, and Walter Domingo Martello, Vice General Civil Ombudsman of the Province of Buenos Aires. Also present were Rita Cutini and Marinella Perciballi, representing the Office of the Guarantor for Childhood and Adolescence, held by Monica Sansoni, and Federico Giannone for Co.re.com. (Regional Committee for Communications) Lazio, chaired by Maria Cristina Cafini, along with the Chief of Staff of the Regional Council Presidency, Dr. Pollari. Among the councilors, Edy Palazzi and Marietta Tidei were in attendance.

The purpose of the meeting was to exchange experiences between the two institutions, and this goal was fully achieved with a commitment to continue in the future. Initially, the representatives of the Office of the Guarantor for Childhood reported on their functions: Dr. Cutini emphasized how issues related to childhood have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The problem of youth loneliness is significant: according to an estimate, there are a hundred thousand affected youths. Additionally, the issue of material and educational poverty among youth is serious, concluded Cutini. Dr. Perciballi reported on the activities of the Guarantor regarding youth: primarily school-related, but also encompassing life outside of school institutions, which are the main areas of activity for Guarantor Sansoni.

The founding laws, both for the Guarantor and the Civil Ombudsman, are outdated, said Fardelli, and furthermore, Lazio still lacks a guarantor for the right to health, a role currently fulfilled by the Civil Ombudsman himself. In fact, there are a couple of Italian regions that still lack a civil ombudsman. Councilor Edy Palazzi commended the work of the Civil Ombudsman, but stressed the need for collective effort to protect the rights of citizens, especially the young.

Dr. Martello then spoke, stating that issues in Argentina are exacerbated by poverty, with approximately 50 percent of youths estimated to live below the poverty line. The Argentine Ombudsman has not been elected for 14 years due to the lack of agreement between the Argentine Chamber and Senate, both of which must agree on the appointment. This lack of agreement is caused by Argentina's highly fragmented political situation, Martello added. Only nine out of 24 provinces in Argentina have an elected ombudsman at present.

There used to be a figure of the Ombudsman for the Public, mainly functioning in the field of communication, but it has been abolished. Then there is the Ombudsman for Children, which is only established at the national level. There is also a figure that defends the rights of tourists. However, these functions are also exercised by the Civil Ombudsman. Unfortunately, the figure of the Civil Ombudsman is viewed by the Argentine public administration almost as that of an enemy, despite there being a prohibition on political affiliation as a condition for holding the position, Martello further stated. The Argentine Ombudsman then described the main areas of his activity, of which he wanted to leave a trace for his colleague Fardelli through documents he donated, especially on the topic of combating alcoholism, which is a real social scourge in Argentina, Martello concluded.

"Welcome a figure of guarantee like that of the civil ombudsman, who fights above all the citizens' disaffection towards politics," this was the main line of Marietta Tidei's intervention during the meeting.

Federico Giannone of Co.re.com intervened regarding the theme of cyberbullying, reporting on the initiative to establish a digital license, aimed at educating young people about responsible internet use. The Argentine guest commented on this, stating that unfortunately, his country lacks specific legislation in this matter.

The meeting concluded with an exchange of gifts and the commitment made by Fardelli, also on behalf of the present structures and the Regional Council as a whole, to continue this exchange of experiences beneficial to both institutions.

To view the photos of the meeting, kindly consult the original version of this article in Italian [here](#).