

# [Re]Connecting Regions



Rural-Urban Cooperation Challenges  
and Pathways Forward



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Province of Lucca

## 8th Informed Cities Forum

**2-3 April 2020 | Lucca, Italy**

Co-presented by the Rural-Urban Outlooks: Unlocking Synergies (ROBUST) project and the Province of Lucca





save  
the  
date

2-3

april 2020

## [Re]connecting Regions

We invite you to join us in [Lucca, Italy](#), to connect with 100 other local and regional government representatives, researchers, entrepreneurs, topic experts, and policy specialists interested in stronger rural-urban linkages at the [8th Informed Cities Forum](#) - a renowned space for open exchange and learning.

Each Informed Cities Forum is rooted in the reality of a specific city, placing local challenges and solutions in the European context. The 2020 Informed Cities edition takes one step further and looks beyond city boundaries to [\[re\]connect regions with stronger linkages and better governance between rural and urban areas](#).

Forum participants will actively explore how strong, mutually-supportive connections between rural and urban areas can help realise more [sustainable food systems](#), foster [new business models](#) and labour markets, overcome [public infrastructure and social services](#) delivery challenges, integrate [ecosystem services](#), and strengthen [cultural connections](#).

Is there a more perfect place than Lucca - a thriving historic city and cultural centre surrounded by fertile farmland - to sit together and discuss the importance, value, and possibilities for stronger linkages between rural and urban areas - especially over a bowl of *tortelli lucchese* and a glass of local wine?

The [Province of Lucca](#) is proud to co-host the 8th Informed Cities Forum as part of the [ROBUST project](#) and share some of the best urban-rural experiences in northwest Tuscany.





R. Bianchi

## › [Re]connect with us in Lucca

The forum's plenary discussions will take place in Lucca's historic **Palazzo Ducale**, where participants will also be able to hang out and network in the **Living Lab Living Room** with other rural-urban thought leaders. Here participants will:

- explore the [interconnections and interdependencies between rural and urban areas](#) by asking: Why are urban-rural linkages so important? What is there to win and lose?
- examine ways of working together with [new rural-urban governance models and supportive public policies](#), including a practitioner-led session that discusses real-world implementation challenges;
- look for new and innovative ways to [connect rural and urban areas in practice](#), from new business models to new service delivery methods.

Thematic **field workshops** will be hosted at various locations in the Lucca Plain: a working urban farm, a cooperative olive oil mill, a repurposed Tuscan farm. Continue your discussions into the night during a traditional meal in Lucca's city centre.



# day one thursday, 02 april



8<sup>30</sup> – 9<sup>00</sup>

registration & coffee



9<sup>00</sup> – 9<sup>45</sup>

welcome sessions



Official Welcome  
from Local Hosts



Forum Welcome  
and Convening Activity

informecities.eu



9<sup>45</sup> – 11<sup>00</sup>

session 1 | Recognising Interdependence

*Why are urban-rural linkages so important? What is there to win and lose? What are these interdependences between rural and urban areas? How do they differ across rural-urban regions?*



Keynote:  
**Alexia Rouby**



Interview Panel:  
The first step towards a  
shared future



11<sup>00</sup> – 11<sup>30</sup>

coffee break



11<sup>30</sup> – 13<sup>00</sup>

session 2 | Working Together

*What are the challenges to and opportunities for effective collaboration and partnership working between sectors and across rural and urban areas?*



Practitioner-Led Panel:  
Rural-Urban Cooperation Challenges  
and Pathways Forward



13<sup>00</sup> lunch in the Palazzo Ducale





Province of Lucca

14<sup>30</sup> – 17<sup>30</sup>

## field workshops

Participate in one of five field workshops, organized in cooperation with the ROBUST Communities of Practice, project partners, and local initiatives:



Making Connections: **Fuzzy Cognitive Mapping** as a tool to better understand rural-urban dynamics (in the Palazzo Ducale)



Hidden Treasures: Exploring **Eco-System Services** at Fattoria Urbana Albogatti



The **Rural-Urban Relationships** Report Card: A Civic Debate (at Dello Scompiglio)



Rural Repurposing: **Connecting Culture** at Dello Scompiglio



Prodotti tipici Toscani: **Sustainable Business Models** that (re)connect producers and consumers at an olive oil mill social cooperative

19<sup>00</sup> – 20<sup>00</sup>

## optional: city walking tour

20<sup>00</sup>

## traditional Tuscan dinner





### carolyn steel

Carolyn Steel is a leading thinker on food and cities. Her 2008 book **Hungry City** received international acclaim, establishing her as an influential voice across a range of fields in academia, industry and the arts. It has been translated into seven languages and has become a key text for architects, planners, green thinkers and food professionals.

A London-based architect, academic and writer, Carolyn has lectured at Cambridge University, London Metropolitan University, Wageningen University and the London School of Economics. She is in international demand as a speaker and her 2009 TED talk has received more than one million views. Her new book, **Sitopia**, is due to be published by Chatto & Windus in March 2020.

 @carolynsteel



### alexia rouby

Alexia Rouby is a research programme officer at the **European Commission's** Agricultural and rural development department's research and innovation service.

An agro-economist by training, she is in charge of stakeholder engagement, and research and innovation activities on rural and social dynamics and policies, including rural-urban linkages. She also follows smart specialisation strategies, the smart specialisation thematic platform on agri-food, links with EU's regional policy innovation components and open innovation approaches, such as living labs. Before joining the European Commission, she worked on European network coordination, rural development, traceability and food safety.

 @alex\_rouby



# day two friday, 03 april



9<sup>00</sup> – 10<sup>00</sup>

## knowledge exchange

Grab a coffee and network in the **Living Lab Living Room** to continue discussions from the previous day and learn about various rural-urban projects and initiatives throughout Europe.



10<sup>00</sup> – 12<sup>30</sup>

## session 3 | Rural-Urban Synergies and Possibilities in Practice

*What happens when we put rural and urban resources together to create new economic opportunities?*

*How can rural-urban synergies be harnessed for local development? How can we connect rural producers and urban consumers?*

*Can cities act as gateways to wider markets for rural goods?*



Welcome and  
Workshop Re-Cap



Keynote:  
**Carolyn Steel**



Ideation and  
Creative Warm-Up  
Activity



Campfire Discussion:  
Rural-Urban Synergies and  
Possibilities in Practice



12<sup>30</sup> – 13<sup>15</sup>

## reflection and wrap up



Critical Friend:  
Reflections from  
the Outside



Learning and  
Commitment  
Exercise



Concluding Remarks  
and Farewell

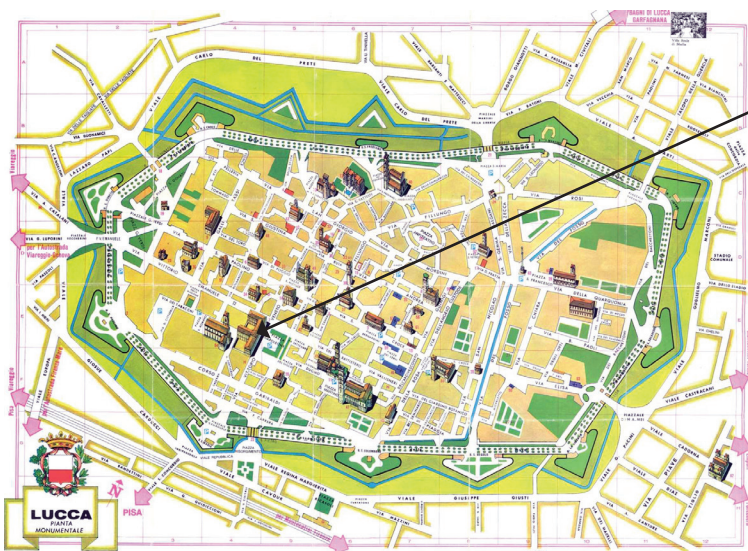


13<sup>15</sup> lunch in the Palazzo Ducale



# travel and accommodation

Lucca is well-served by train, bus (local and long-distance), and auto. Nearby Pisa (PSA) and Florence (FLR) have international airports with daily flights to most major European airports.



The 8th Informed Cities Forum venue, **Palazzo Ducale**, is within 20 minutes easy walking distance from anywhere within Lucca's walled City Centre. We recommend that you reserve your accommodation as soon as possible, due to the Easter holidays. You can find a wide range of comfortable accommodation from these websites:

- [Lucca Tourist Office](#)
- [Booking.com](#)
- [AirBnB](#)





# making research work for local sustainability

Informed Cities is a series of international events on urban governance, renowned as a space for open exchange and learning. Each Informed Cities Forum is rooted in the reality of a specific city, placing local challenges and solutions in the European context.

**Participation in the 8th Informed Cities Forum is free of charge. Registration will open in December 2019.**

For more information visit:  
[informedcities.eu](http://informedcities.eu)

 [info@informedcities.eu](mailto:info@informedcities.eu)

 [@InformedCities](https://twitter.com/InformedCities)

 [@InformedCities](https://www.facebook.com/InformedCities)

The 8th Informed Cities Forum is co-organised by the EU Horizon 2020 [Rural-Urban Outlooks - Unlocking Synergies \(ROBUST\) project](#) with support from the Province of Lucca.



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