

# Questionnaire Democracy in Times of Corona

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## 1. Could you describe the work of your organisation, Cittadinanzattiva?

[Cittadinanzattiva](#) is an organization, founded in Italy in 1978, which promotes citizens' activism for **the protection of rights, the care of common goods, the support for people in conditions of weakness**. Our mission refers to **article 118, last paragraph, of the Italian Constitution**, proposed by us and implemented in the constitutional reform of 2001. Article 118 recognizes **the autonomous initiative** of citizens, individuals and associates, for carrying out activities of **common interest** and, based on the principle of subsidiarity, provides for the obligation of institutions to favor active citizens.

Cittadinanzattiva is independent from any political affiliation, trade unions, private companies and public institutions. Cittadinanzattiva's main objectives are the promotion of civic participation and the protection of citizens' rights in Italy and in Europe. It considers citizens a fundamental resource for democracy who play an active role in society and should have the opportunity to participate in everyday policy making.

The watchword of Cittadinanzattiva is "**so that it does not happen to others**": our role is to denounce deficiencies, abuses, defaults, and act to prevent their recurrence by changing reality, behavior, promoting new policies and the application of laws and rights. We are convinced that "**being citizens is the best way to be them**", meaning that, the action of citizens aware of their powers and responsibilities is a way to improve our democracy, protect rights and promote the daily care of common goods.

Our objectives are:

- **Strengthening citizens' power to intervene in public policies**, through the enhancement of their competencies and their point of view;
- **Intervene in defence of the citizen**, preventing injustices and unnecessary sufferings;
- **Activate consciences** and modify harmful behaviors for the common interest;
- **Implement the rights recognized by the law** and encourage the recognition of new rights;
- **Protect and take care of common goods**;
- **Provide citizens with tools in order to act** and communicate on a more conscious level with institutions;
- **Build alliances** and collaborations essential **to resolve conflicts and promote rights**.

**Cittadinanzattiva deals with:**

- **Health**, with the Tribunal for Patients' Rights and the National Coalition of Associations for Patients suffering Chronic Diseases (CnAMC).

- **Consumer policies and utilities**, with the Prosecutors of citizens.
- **Justice**, with Justice for Rights.
- **School**, with the School of Cittadinanzattiva.
- **European Citizenship**, with Active Citizenship Network.
- **Evaluation of the quality of services** from the perspective of citizens, with the Agency of Civic Evaluation.
- And, also, with **institutional reforms, transparency of administrations, the fight against corruption and waste, the promotion of health and the environment, livability and urban decorum, corporate citizenship**.

Since 2001, Cittadinanzattiva is active on a daily basis also at the EU level, thanks to its international branch called "[Active Citizenship Network](#) (ACN)", one of the most widespread and flexible European networks, able to involve and cooperate in the last few years with more than 200 civic, patients and users organizations from 32 Countries plus more than 30 EU and International networks.

The main objectives of ACN are the promotion of civic activism and participation in the political arena, and the protection of citizens' rights, which are both the strength and the uniqueness of ACN.

As an international interface of Cittadinanzattiva, ACN focuses on the following two objectives:

- encouraging the active participation of citizens in the European policy-making in order to promote the construction of an "European active citizenship", through the citizens' powers and responsibilities in public policies. This includes:
  - recognizing the primary role of citizens and civic organizations in the care of common goods;
  - supporting citizen's participation in policy making at local, national and EU level;
  - involving them in the defence of their fundamental rights as citizens, patients, consumers, passengers, users, savers, etc.
- promoting abroad all the successful experiences achieved by Cittadinanzattiva in Italy.

## **2. What are the major activities you are working on in relation to the Covid-19 emergency?**

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to reorganize ourselves, to reshape priorities and modus operandi. Evidently, it is in the DNA of this citizens' organization - which for over 40 years has been working to protect health as a common good - the ability to quickly read the needs of people in situations of fragility and to reinterpret their needs in concrete requests and initiatives of civic activism, as better described in the next paragraphs. As Italy was, and still is under attack of Covid-19, all the following 20 concrete COVID-19 related initiatives - at this stage self-financed by Cittadinanzattiva – have been carried out at the national level.

### **A) Advocacy activity for chronic patients & therapeutic plans:**

1. An initiative that supports the strengthening of the local dimension of continuity healthcare and the availability that Cittadinanzattiva has [received from Federfarma](#) (the national federation representing over 16,000 private pharmacies in Italy) to deliver home medical devices, in addition to medicines. [Federfarma and Cittadinanzattiva together asked the Regions](#) to simplify as much as possible the procedures with which the chronically and rare patients can obtain directly in the pharmacy the medicines and the medical devices usually distributed in public structures. This measure is in line with the indication to limit the displacements and is necessary to avoid exposing many patients to infection.
2. Through the [National Coalition of Associations for Patients suffering Chronic Diseases \(CnAMC\)](#), with a [letter](#) sent to the Presidents of the Regions, to the Regional Councilors for Health and to the Ministry of Health, we asked for an extension of at least 90 days for the supply of medical goods throughout the national territory indispensable for chronic patients, whose demand expires in the months of March and April. We are talking about people who use medical goods such as bags, plates, diapers, catheters, strips for measuring blood glucose, bags for special nutrition, protein-free foods, the periodic and extraordinary control of devices implanted for patients with heart failure, the devices for outpatient hemodialysis, for peritoneal dialysis and home hemodialysis and immunosuppressive drugs with direct and on-account

distribution for organ transplant recipients, trachea-aspiration tubes, matre as well as all devices for mechanical ventilation and enteral nutrition.

3. In recent days, together with the [Italian Scientific Society of Internal Medicine](#) (FADOI), we turned to the [Italian Medicines Agency](#) (AIFA) to extend the therapeutic plans, a request that the [Agency accepted](#) after a few hours.
4. A similar request has been sent to the Regions and to the Ministry of Health to ensure continuity in the use of the indispensable devices throughout the national territory, including through remote monitoring of clinical data, limiting the exposure of patients and healthcare professionals to the risk of infection and without distracting health workers from their emergency activities. The Sardinia Region has already responded to our request for information.

#### B) Advocacy activity for cancer & COVID-19 patients:

5. Together with representatives of medical-scientific community such as Periplo - which represents the Italian cancer networks - and the Foundation for personalized medicine, Cittadinanzattiva has sent to the National and Regional Health Italian Authorities, a request in order to adopt new measures to guarantee the continuity of treatment for cancer patients outside hospitals, in a more safety contest, able also to decongest the hospitals. Here you can find the [official request](#) and an [article](#) (both in IT language).
6. Federfarma and Cittadinanzattiva propose to distribute antivirals and antimalarials for coronavirus sufferers also in pharmacies, highlighting how the distribution of these medicines through pharmacies will not only reduce displacements, but will also allow the pharmacist to monitor patient adherence to therapy and to acquire useful information on the correct use of the medicine on compliance with the therapeutic plan. [Read more](#) (IT)



#### C) Advocacy activity & solidarity for vulnerable target groups:

7. **People living in the Assisted Healthcare Residences:** To control contagion in Assisted Health Residences (RSA), urgent regional extraordinary plans must be adopted as soon as possible. Cittadinanzattiva's letter of appeal to the Regions. [Read more](#) (IT)
8. **Prison population:** Protect the health of mothers and children in prison. A priority that affects all prisoners with the COVID-19 emergency. Cittadinanzattiva's letter of appeal to the Minister of Justice. [Read more](#) (IT)
9. **People living alone:** Cittadinanzattiva also joined the initiative "[The time of kindness](#)" promoted by the Italian Red Cross to carry out a home-based grocery shopping and medicines service for the elderly, fragile and immunosuppressed people who live alone. [Read more](#) (IT)
10. **0-6 years old:** Cittadinanzattiva decided to dedicate a special section of the "[XIV Scafidi Prize](#)" to "The 0-6 at the time of COVID 19" to collect the good practices made with young children, make them known, disseminate and reward the most significant ones. [Read more](#) (IT)

#### D) Support to the general practitioners:

11. **Fund raising campaign for general practitioners' safety:** titled "[Help us protect your family doctor](#)", it was launched last the 16th of March 2020 by Cittadinanzattiva and the Italian Federation of General Practitioners-[FIMMG \(Federazione Italiana Medici di Medicina Generale\)](#): with only 1 Euro you can help us purchase personal protective equipment to be distributed to all the family doctors working in Italy. We need you! For donation, [click here](#). Private entities has decided to support the campaign by donating [economic](#) or instrumental resources for a value of three million euro to the use of the entire National Health System. [Read more](#) (IT)



12. **Awareness campaign aimed to prevent/reduce infection among HCPs:** titled "#KeepCalm, Together, without fear", it sees Cittadinanzattiva alongside the Italian Federation of General Practitioners (Fimmg). "Together without fear. Coronavirus is a weak enemy if we fight it together. Family doctors and citizens": this is the message to inform citizens about the right prevention behaviors to follow, and to promote common sense and make it "viral". #insiemesenzapaura. To know more, watch the video and click here (IT). It has just started from Northern Italy the distribution of disinfectant gel, information material and the first PPE-personal protective equipment, found with many difficulties thanks to the support of Roche who, in such a difficult and



ever-changing situation, was the first company to comply with our request for support to family doctors. Read more (IT)

In a short time, this campaign has been supported and endorsed by many private and public actors. Here you can find the example of the City of Naples that has adopted the campaign. To know more, click here (IT).



**E) Citizens empowerment:**



13. **Addressing general public, users and consumers:** our website hosts a guide with specific insights on health, transport, taxes, school; links to official websites; short videos from experts; the contact details of our protection centers to avoid scams, fake news and speculation; and even a chatbot.



14. **Addressing foreign communities living in Italy:** together with Assogenerici and the Equivalente.it portal, Cittadinanzattiva has launched the social campaign "Why no one remains excluded", with the aim of providing all foreign communities present in Italy mother tongue information on how to avoid dangerous behavior and therefore contribute to stop the spread of the infection. The campaign unfolds thanks to a video in 11 languages, apart from Italian: English, French, Spanish, Portuguese (Brazilian), Romanian, Arabic, Russian, Filipino, Punjabi (India and Pakistan), Hindi (India), Bengali.



**F) Political proposals:**

15. **#COVID19 & its impact on the vaccination plan:** The Italian Federation of General Practitioners-FIMMG (Italian Federation of General Practitioners) and Cittadinanzattiva have written to the Government and Regions for setting up a flu and pneumococcal vaccination campaign that starts early, in October, and that provides for the lowering of the free administration to 55 years. Indications involving the need for additional supplies of flu shots. [Read more](#) (IT)
16. **#COVID19 & the concrete proposal to improve the integrated home care:** Cittadinanzattiva puts forward a proposal to amend the draft conversion law of the so-called "Cura Italia" to strengthen socio-health and home care for the chronically and rarely ill, immunosuppressed, acute non-hospitalized and disabled people who are not self-sufficient through the financing of extraordinary three-year plans by the Regions. The amendment was presented to the Senate on the proposal of Cittadinanzattiva and over 70 associations and aims to reduce the tax benefit for heated tobacco cigarettes: 1.2 billion euros would be obtained in 3 years to be used for integrated home care. [Watch the video](#) of Cittadinanzattiva's Secretary General and [read](#) the incredible decision taken inside the Italian Parliament (IT).
17. **#COVID19 & the fight against speculation:** coronavirus emergency has made protective masks more and more important and frequently unavailable or available at particularly high prices, with cases of real speculation. Hence the appeal of Cittadinanzattiva to the Governors to regulate the price of the masks. [Read more](#) (IT)
18. **#COVID19 & its impact on democracy:** The compression of many of the personal freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution occurs precisely when the Parliament - the guarantor of the rights of each of us - is unable to meet and fully perform its functions. The reopening of the Parliament is not just a return to "normal democratic life", but a message to the whole nation. The appeal to the institutions promoted by Italian civil society, to which Cittadinanzattiva has joined. [Read more](#) (IT)

**G) To update our constituency (volunteers, members, partners, etc.)**

19. Special edition of Active Citizenship Network monthly newsletter in [March](#) and [April](#) totally dedicated to inform abroad about the contribution of our organization to fight Covid-19 in Italy.
20. A reflection about the future starting from the current situation. A cycle of 10 free webinars to go beyond the emergency are organized by Cittadinanzattiva with the aims to share information, experiences, reflections on the current situation. [Read more](#) (IT)