

# Alternative approaches in the implementation and the management of infant toddler centers in Reggio Emilia in the Eighties and Nineties of the XX century: Between public engagement and private enterprise, on the tracks of Loris Malaguzzi<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

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The paper discusses aspects of the pedagogical framework, organization and management of a form of Italian institutions for early child education, known as *nidos*. It presents the historical background and the transformations of the institution of *nidos* during the 20th century, stressing the close relationship of the institution with Reggio Emilia. Furthermore, it examines the cases of four such institutions with different types of management regimes: 1. *Nidos* run by cooperative enterprises, 2. *Nidos* managed by parents, 3. *Nidos* managed by a cooperative enterprise of young women and 4. *Nidos* managed by a company set up by skilled women.

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1. Κείμενο εισήγησης του Ν. Barbieri στην ημερίδα που διοργάνωσε η Ελληνική Εταιρεία Συγκριτικής και Διεθνούς Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΛΕΣΔΕ) σε συνεργασία με την Εταιρεία Οργάνωσης και Διοίκησης της Εκπαίδευσης (ΕΟΔΕ), το ΠΜΣ «Πολιτική, Διοίκηση και Αξιολόγηση στην Εκπαίδευση» του ΕΚΠΑ, και το Τμήμα Κοινωνικής Πολιτικής του Παντείου Πανεπιστημίου, στην ΕΟΒΕ στις 5/4/2019.

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## Introduction

Καλημέρα!

This is to thank the organizers of the conference for hosting me as a speaker at this event.

As a former student of the Italian “Liceo Classico”, the only high school in the world where ancient Greek language is one of the foundational subject matters, for me it is always a pleasure to be in Greece and in Athens particularly.

This presentation deals with the pedagogical framework, the organization and the management of the Italian infant toddler center, educational institution for children from 0 to 3 months. In Italian this institution is called *nido*, which means “nest”, and just because it is a simpler word, I will use it for the rest of the speech.

After a historical outline of the birth and development of this institution in Italy, I will pinpoint the particular situation of Reggio Emilia, describing both the enterprise of municipal *nido* and the widespreading of alternative approaches of managing a *nido*, generated by a qualitative culture of early childhood education.

### 1. Historical outline of the infant toddler centers in Italy

The infant toddler center as an institution for early childhood education and caring appears in the mid-XIX century's Europe, and in Italy too, in a double form. It could be a *crèche* (crib), a place managed by private charity and donations, where poor mothers could leave their children during the day and where these children receive food and medical caring, or it could be a “lactating room”, a room in a factory, where the female workers could leave their children and go there just for the moment of feeding their babies. No public institutions were engaged in this enterprise, mainly diffused in the Northern Italy, where the first factory system was growing.<sup>1</sup>

Things started to change during the Fascism. In order to give answers to social problems, gaining at the meantime political consensus, one of the first decisions of Benito Mussolini's government was the implementation of the National Organization for Motherhood and Childhood (ONMI), in December 1925, only 10 months after the establishment of the

dictatorship. The ONMI set up a capillary network of *nidos*, covering the entire territory of the State, mainly devoted to take care of children coming from poor families. The main tasks of the service were to provide an answer to the biological and medical needs of the children, without any educational purpose: the ONMI's *nidos* looked like hospitals, the personnel were not pedagogically trained, families were not engaged at any level, spaces were anonymous and ready to receive masses of children (the recreation room, the refectory, the dormitory).<sup>ii</sup>

The ONMI *nidos* survived also in the first decades of the Republican era: they continued to be mainly a form of collective babysitting for the working mothers. Starting from the Fifties and Sixties, the organizations of women (mainly the Union of Italian Women – UDI, linked to the Socialist and the Communist Parties) and the most powerful trade unions (linked in a Confederation) asked for a public network of *nidos*, managed by the municipalities, supporting the aspiration of working women, whose working places were always at risk because of or during motherhood.

In December 1971, the so called *Nido Act* (n. 1044) stated for the first time the engagement for the public institutions: the State would have financed a five-year national plan of *nidos*, the Regions would have coordinated them (approving a regional act) and the Municipalities would have built and run them. The *nido* was a public service, for all children (and not only for the poorest ones), and it was organized to provide the first step of the educational track.<sup>iii</sup>

Since 1971, all the Regions produced specific norms in order to specify what kind of *nidos* had to be set up in the Municipalities and all the greatest municipalities, mainly in the Northern Italy, started to set up a wide network of *nidos*. Even if the goal to set up 5000 *nidos* in 5 years was not reached, a new ECE culture was implemented in Italy.<sup>iv</sup> In order to understand the importance and the innovative power of this legislation, we have to take into account dramatic changes in the structure of family and in the idea of children at that time: familiar roles were not so stable as in the past, and women would not renounce anymore the possibility to build a job career; furthermore, childhood was seen not as a transitory age of the life preparing to schooling, but as an autonomous world needing special cares, places, times and projects.<sup>v</sup>

In the storm of critical financial problems,<sup>vi</sup> in the mid-Nineties, to give answers to the new situations of familiar and social life, an act called

*Disposizioni per la promozione di diritti e di opportunità per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza* (Norms for the Promotion of Rights and Opportunities for Childhood and Adolescence) was approved in August 1997, under the action of Livia Turco, Minister of Social Solidarity. The act was not renewing norms only for the youngest children, but it was promoting new policies for the entire young age, from the birth to the end of the high school.<sup>vii</sup>

Within this innovative framework, new typologies of ECE services were normed: synthetically called *Centers for Children and Families*, they were specific services in order to offer educational experiences to children and families cut out from the traditional *nido* service. The *Family Space* was thought mainly for the parents taking care of babies at home: they were spaces where it was possible to meet other parents with the same problems, in flexible times. The *Children Spaces* were occasions for children, for a few hours per day and for a few days per week; playing and interacting with peers could be useful for their socialization, mainly because it was the first occasion to separate children from parents, preventing traumatic reactions when they started the kindergarten or even the primary school. The *Family Center* was for parents as parents, in order to help them in living their parental role in a climate of commonality and solidarity.

After an intense regional work in order to update the norms regarding the *nido*, in April 2017 the educational area 0-6 was stated for the first time as a whole by a governmental act (*Sistema integrato di educazione e di istruzione 0-6 – Integrated System of Education and Instruction 0-6*, Legislative Decree 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2017, nr. 65), within a general plan of schooling reorganization emphatically called “the good school”.<sup>viii</sup> In this norm, the whole age 0-6 was given in charge as a whole both to the municipalities and the State, the public institutions managing *nidos* and kindergarten. The organizational tool for managing the new task is the *Polo per l'infanzia* (*Pole for the Childhood*), an organ coordinated by the Municipality but open to all the subjects delivering ECE to children in a specific territory, expressly financed with a special national fund distributed at regional level.

## 2. The Reggio Approach and the *nidos*

The so called “Reggio Emilia Approach” is a very popular pedagogical approach in early childhood education today, founded by Loris Malaguzzi<sup>ix</sup>

and his team of collaborators: among them, Carla Rinaldi, the President of the Reggio Children Foundation – Loris Malaguzzi Center.<sup>x</sup>

In Reggio Emilia, in the early Sixties the municipal administration, led by a Socialist and Communist majority, whose frontmen were Renzo Bonazzi, the Lord Mayor, and Franco Boiardi, the alderman for schools, promoted a campaign for the foundation of a municipal kindergarten, a public institution in order to give answer to a social demand for an early childhood education not linked to the Catholic Church.

In this political framework, the Reggio Emilia municipal school system started in 1963 with the first kindergarten “Robinson”, followed very quickly by many others, and in 1971 with the first infant toddler center “Genoeffa Cervi”, 15 days before the Nido Act.

The municipal network of ECE grew up year by year, in parallel with the growth of educational demand, since the award of “best kindergarten in the world” given by the US magazine “Newsweek” in 1992 to the kindergarten “Diana”, as representative of the whole Reggio ECE system.<sup>xi</sup>

In the mid-Eighties, due to a demographical increase<sup>xii</sup> and to the growing favour towards the *nido* shown by all the social classes,<sup>xiii</sup> the Reggio municipal system was not able to accept all the children asking for enrollment: there were huge waiting lists every year. In the Nineties, because of the economical crisis and the new models of families, the municipal system of early childhood education was not able to accept all the children needing the service, and so new solutions were given to these problems.

In 1986, the Reggio municipal administration started to suggest and promote new paths for giving answers to this huge sociopedagogical demand. Beside this direct political action of the public institutions, some initiatives started from the bottom.

We will see 4 of the solutions set up in Reggio Emilia from 1986 to 1999.

### **3. Four new solutions for the quantitative and qualitative problem of the *nido***

The problems to be faced were mainly two, one quantitative and the other qualitative. On one hand, the goal was to be able to host the maximum of children asking for the service. On the other hand, it was impor-

tant to maintain a high quality of the service, on the same level of the best practice available in the territory, most of them municipal.

### 3.1 Nidos managed by cooperative enterprises

In Spring 1986, the Municipality of Reggio Emilia – by input of the alderwoman of the municipal schools Eletta Bertani – asked to two cooperative enterprises, SILA (Scuole e Istituti Liberi e Autogestiti – Free and Self Managed Schools and Institutes)<sup>xiv</sup> and Helios (now Coopselios),<sup>xv</sup> the implementation of two infant toddler centers, in agreement with the rules of the municipal enrollment, in order to reduce the huge waiting list existing at that time, with the partial intervention of municipal funding. Therefore, the SILA started to manage the *Nido* “Giobi” and the Helios started to manage the *Nido* “Linus”.

According to the agreement, the enrollment of children was the same of the municipal *nidos*: children were enrolled according to the waiting list, following the existing order, and this operation was managed by the municipality. The cooperatives had to grant the full service: spaces, personnel, pedagogical project. Another possible intervention of the municipality, in order to grant the stability of the service, was the engagement in case of losses, due to the scarcity of enrolled children.

As a conclusion about this first non-municipal way to manage the *nidos*, we can easily see that there is a direct engagement of the public powers: they ask from cooperative subjects to provide a service to the social environment of the city, and this subject – which is not “private” in the strict sense of the word – did not take the initiative, but it moved after the public input. After some years of experience, for instance, the Coopselios started to project by itself some pedagogical services.<sup>xvi</sup> In this case, the public power promoted the multiple management of educational service, granting both pedagogical assistance and administrative control.

### 3.2 Nidos managed by parents

In February 1991, a group of parents<sup>xvii</sup> whose children were excluded by the *nido* service and were enrolled in the waiting list, discovered that

in a building<sup>xviii</sup> located in Brigata Reggio Street there was a space fully equipped for hosting a *nido* section (14 children) but it was not working because of the lack of money of the municipality and the consequent impossibility to hire caregivers and janitors.

They asked a meeting with the municipal officers, who suggested to adopt a formal organization. So, these parents founded the association 'AGORA', which means "public square" in ancient Greek and it is also the acronym for Associazione per la Gestione e l'Organizzazione di un Asilo Nido – (Association for the Management and the Organization of an Infant Toddler Center). In the statute they wrote, the power of deciding was given to the general assembly of the parents, electing a President and a Treasurer in order to manage the ordinary administration of the association.<sup>xix</sup> The assembly had the power to hire the personnel and to regulate the enrollment of children, not passing through the municipal waiting list.<sup>xx</sup>

The new Agorà association then had an agreement ("convenzione") with the municipality, according to which the association would have paid two caregivers<sup>xxi</sup> and one part time janitor, and the Municipality would have provided the equipped spaces (tables, chairs, beds, toilets), some didactical materials, the laundry service and the daily food.

On the contrary of the case of the cooperative *nidos*, the enrollment in the Agorà (formally a private association) was outside the municipal process: so many children came also from other municipalities, because their parents were working in Reggio Emilia, and it was easier to manage the transport of children to the *nido*. The caregivers, according to a decision of the Agorà assembly, followed the Reggio Approach, with the supervision of a municipal pedagogical coordinator.<sup>xxii</sup>

As a conclusion about this unique experience of self-managed and parent-managed *nido*, we can say that parents are the real "heroes" of this original project: they are the real managers and organizers of the situation, in a not so widespread case of bottom-up organization in order to solve a social problem.<sup>xxiii</sup>

### 3.3 Nidos managed by a cooperative enterprise of young women

In 1997-1998, at Reggio Emilia a master-class-level training program in Early Childhood Education for 30 unemployed young women, mainly

graduates in humanities, was implemented, in order to help them work in different typologies of educational services and/or start an educational enterprise for children. The program was funded by the European Union within the project N.O.W. (New Opportunities for Women), promoted by the Municipality of Reggio Emilia and managed by Reggio Children. After the program, some of the participants decided to found a social cooperative enterprise in order to offer educational services to the city.

On 12<sup>th</sup> of July 1999 the cooperative Panta Rei (in ancient Greek “Everything flows”) was born, with six founders, starting to manage a *nido* called *Choreia* from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September of the same year. The foundation of the *nido* was followed by a sort of “incubation period” of 3 years: the municipality of Reggio Emilia sent an expert teacher for tutoring the beginners and Reggio Children offered to the cooperative enterprise many services, both administrative and economical.

The cooperative grew up very quickly:<sup>xxiv</sup> in September 2001, Panta Rei started to manage the *nido* “Otello Sarzi”<sup>xxv</sup> with the Totem, under a general agreement with the Municipality of Reggio Emilia;<sup>xxvi</sup> in September 2003, it started to manage the *nido*-kindergarten Faber; in December 2007, after a very challenging public tender, Panta Rei obtained the management of the *nido* “Giulia Maramotti”, built by the Giulia Maramotti Foundation / Max Mara Fashion Group,<sup>xxvii</sup> whose real educational activities started at the beginning of 2008;<sup>xxviii</sup> in September 2010, Panta Rei, under the supervision of Reggio Children, started to manage the *nido*-kindergarten ENI06, in San Donato Milanese (MI), originally thought for the children of the workers of the ENI company.<sup>xxix</sup>

As a conclusion about this cooperative enterprise helped to grow by the public power, we can observe that in this case the Reggio Children (formally a private subject but mainly financed by public funds) generates and supports models of educational management, in this particular case a cooperative enterprise of young women, whose level of education was very weak in the labour market. The main characters of the enterprise are anyway the members of the cooperative, the oldest ones and the newest ones: without their ability to maintain the goal of becoming educational entrepreneurs fixed, nothing could be reached. The patronship of Reggio Children was important at the very beginning of the story, but also in the following steps of Panta Rei’s life.



### 3.4 Nidos managed by a company set up by skilled women

In 1998, a group of five women coming from different jobs and professional experiences (teaching, managing stores, officers in public administration), after having done an empiric survey about children needs in Reggio Emilia, decided to found Totem, a company in order to offer educational services to children from 3 to 12. At the very beginning, they used the technical instrument of the limited liability company, helped by the local Chamber of Commerce. After a few months, they shifted to the infant toddler centers, because of the huge demand and the scarce supply of this kind of socio-educational service, and after a few years they complemented the Totem company with a Totem cooperative enterprise, in order to have an easier access to tender procedures for educational services.

In order to differentiate their *nido* from the municipal ones, Totem decided to offer a service covering more hours per day (from 7.30 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.),<sup>xxx</sup> more days per week (also Sunday morning if at least 10 families required it) and more months per year (also July and some days in August if needed: in one word, more flexibility.<sup>xxxi</sup> Furthermore, the fee is proportional to the real presence of the children at the *nido*: parents pay an hour package, so when the child is sick and stays at home they do not pay anything.<sup>xxxii</sup> Finally, it is possible to enroll children all over the year.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

In 2010, the Totem opened a bilingual section Italian/English for children 2-5 years old, with mother-tongue teachers: it is the first experience in Reggio Emilia. In 2016, because of the success of the proposal, a new bilingual section is open, for younger children (9-24 months).<sup>xxxiv</sup> In 2013, the Totem cooperative merged with Ambra social cooperative enterprise, in order to open new horizons, both local and national, in managing social and educational services.<sup>xxxv</sup>

As a conclusion about this particular enterprise, we first note that it started from the intellectual energies and the professional expertise of a small group of young motivated women. Second, the enterprise was helped to grow by the support of the economical public level (Chamber of Commerce), not involving public powers. The very innovative ideas about the organization of the service (whose watchword is “flexibility”) have certainly to face pedagogical problems (especially regarding the adaptation of the children to variable times), but nobody could deny the

attempt to give some kind of answers to real social and familiar problems, answers which are not still existing in the local environment.

## Conclusions

The paper has tried to describe four particular types of managing an educational service for younger children, highlighting strengths and weaknesses of each proposal, within the educational framework of the Reggio Emilia Approach.

In the Italian (and Reggio) environment, the good quality of ECE municipal services pushes forward new ideas of management: bottom-up and not top-down, run by parents or young women, under public supervision or not.

According to a comparative perspective, these models could be studied and adopted/adapted in other contexts.

## Notes:

i. Cfr. Sala La Guardia L. & Lucchini, E. (eds.) (1980). *Asili Nido in Italia: Il Bambino da 0 a 3 Anni*, vol. 1, Milano: Marzorati.

ii. *Norme sul Funzionamento delle Istituzioni dell'ONMI (Norms about the Functioning of the ONMI's Institutions)*, 1941 in <http://www.lombardiabeniculturali.it/archivi/profilo-istituzionali/MIDL000222/>.

iii. Cfr. Manuzzi P. & Gigli A. (eds.) (2005). *Per una Pedagogia del Nido. Scenari e Orientamenti Educative (Towards a Pedagogy of the Nido. Educational Scenarios and Orientations)*, Milano: Guerini.

iv. Cfr. <http://www.progettoasilonido.org/index.php/preparazione-concorso/236-leggi-e-asilo-nido>.

v. Cfr. Bertolini, P. (ed.), (1987). *Dove va l'Asilo Nido?*, Firenze: La Nuova Italia; Bertolini, P. et al., (1988). *Le Ragioni del Nido*, Firenze: La Nuova Italia; Bertolini, P. (ed.) (1997). *Nido e Dintorni*, Firenze: La Nuova Italia.

vi. In 1983, the State Financial Act stated that the *nido* was not anymore a "public service", but a "service at individual demand": according to the norms, this kind of service was not free, but its costs had to be covered by the applicants on reason of at least the 30% of the real total cost.

vii. Barbieri, N. S. (2015). *Asili Nido e Servizi Educativi per la Prima Infanzia in Italia. Lineamenti Storici, Fondamenti Pedagogici, Modalità Operative (Infant Toddler Centers and Educational Services for Early Childhood Education in Italy. Histori-*

*cal Outlines, Pedagogical Foundations, Management Strategies*), Padova: CLEUP, pp. 44 and following.

viii. Cfr. <http://www.flcgil.it/leggi-normative/documenti/decreti-legislativi/decreto-legislativo-65-del-13-aprile-2017-sistema-integrato-di-educacion-e-di-istruzione-0-6.flc>.

ix. Instead of writing a long footnote about Loris Malaguzzi, most quoted than known, there is an appendix at the end of the article: the appendix is conceived as an occasion to learn something historically grounded about Loris Malaguzzi.

x. The Reggio Children Foundation - Loris Malaguzzi Center is an International foundation born in 2011 in Reggio Emilia; its mission is to promote projects of solidarity through research (cfr. [www. https://reggiochildrenfoundation.org/](http://www.reggiochildrenfoundation.org/)).

xi. Information about the growth of the system is available in the Appendix to this text.

xii. The population of Reggio Emilia grew up from 114.000 in 1961 to 133.000 in 2001 (cfr. <https://www.tuttitalia.it/emilia-romagna/12-reggio-emilia/statistiche/censimenti-popolazione/>).

xiii. As we have seen, for many years the *nidos* were conceived, in the social imaginary, as institutions for poor families or problematic mothers, unable to take care of their children by themselves.

xiv. The SILA Cooperative Enterprise started to be engaged in educational services at the beginning of the Seventies: the professor Giovanni Riva gathered young families and teachers desiring for their children an educational processes based on the research of “meaning”. Schools were not set up neither for making money, nor for confessional proselytism. SILA was engaged in the Nineties in projects of cooperation with educational institutions located in developing Countries (Mexico, Honduras, Salvador, Venezuela), maintaining at the same time relationships with schools in Canada, Japan, France, Great Britain and Spain. At Reggio Emilia, with a special agreement with the Municipality, at the beginning of 2000 SILA was managing the nido Giobi (21 people employed), the kindergarten “Mirò” and other 8 educational services distributed in the province of Bologna. It was composed by 170 members, 80 of them real workers. In 2007 its revenues were 1.574.000 euros. In 2013 it was put in administrative forced liquidation. Its heritage is now passed to the new Cooperativa Comunità Educante - Cooperative Educating Community (cfr. <http://www.scuolenidi.re.it/SchedaStruttura>).

xv. In 1982, in Piacenza, the Coop.S.E. was founded to run educational services for disabled people and educational centers for minorities. In 1985, at Reggio Emilia, the Cooperative Elios was founded to run educational service for disabled people, in agreement with the Azienda Sanitaria Locale – ASL (Lo-

cal Healthcare Company); in 1986 the Cooperative Elios accepted to organize a *nido* service. After some common initiatives, in 1995 Coop.S.E. e Coop Elios joined together, assuming the new denomination Coopselios, a literal synthesis of the experiences grown up both in Piacenza and Reggio Emilia. After the acquirement of Coop. Sociale Favrega in Fabbrico (RE) in 2001 and of the Cooperativa Il Girasole (Sunflower) in La Spezia in 2010, in 2014 the new Strategic Plan 2014-2018 was launched to support the growth of cooperation in Italy and abroad (cfr. <http://www.scuolenidi.re.it/SchedaStruttura>).

xvi. La Cooperativa sociale Coopselios è stata fondata nel 1984 con il nome di ELIOS per fornire ad Enti pubblici e privati soluzioni a problemi socio-sanitari ed educativi degli anziani e dell'infanzia. A seguito della fusione con altre due Cooperative, "COOP.S.E" di Piacenza e "Favrega" di Reggio Emilia, Coopselios ha ampliato la propria esperienza nel settore della psichiatria, dei disabili e dei minori. In the Nineties, Coopselios lived a great increase of personnel and widened its influence from the province of Reggio Emilia to the whole Northern Italy. Today Coopselios has 2140 members workers and 29 employees: its global revenues in 2007 were € 71.000.000. Regarding the management of *nidos* in official agreement with the Institution of Kindergarten and Nidos of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia, Coopselios has 223 caregivers and teachers, and 82 janitors: they host 323 children in 5 *nidos*: Arca (Ark), Airone (Heron), Girasole (Sunflower), Haikù e Linus. Revenues specific for ECE in 2007 was €11.660.000 (cfr. <http://www.coopselios.com/storia/>).

xvii. The leaders were Moreno Cagnoli, at that time librarian in the Municipal Library "Panizzi" of Reggio Emilia, and Ethelina Carri, lawyer.

xviii. The building, still existing, was a former private house, Villa San Giusto, in the country suburbs now absorbed by the growing town. It is now used by the cooperative enterprise Panta Rei (see part 3.3).

xix. Since the early 2000, the Agorà moved to another site, the Nilde Iotti School Building, hosting 2 sections of kindergarten, and a *nido* section in coordination with the cooperative *nido* Haiku: at that time, the Agorà *nido* had 21 children (11-32 months old), 3 caregivers and 1 janitor. In 2010 the *nido* had to close because of the demographic decrease (cfr. [www.agora.re.it](http://www.agora.re.it)).

xx. Original documents about the early life of the association are kept in the personal archive of Nicola Barbieri, who was president of the Agorà in the school years 1995-1997.

xxi. Agorà's caregivers had the same requirements of the municipal ones: a high school diploma in the Nineties and an academic degree when it became compulsory since the mid-2000. The same happened when Agorà hired kindergarten teachers.

xxii. After the great expansion in 2000, reaching quite the membership of 60 families, the association decided to elect a Council, with a President, a vice

President, a Treasurer, responsible for enrollment, advertising and external relationships. In 2017 Agorà managed 2 sections of kindergarten, 54 children (3.5 years old), 4 teachers, 1 “atelierista” (responsible of the atelier) and 2 janitors (cfr. [www.agora.re.it](http://www.agora.re.it)).

xxiii. It is interesting that in 1997 a delegation from a group of municipalities of the Province of Milan (the head of the delegation was the Lord mayor of Mezzago Brianza) visited the *nido* (whose president at that time was Nicola Barbieri, the author of this paper) in order to solve the problem to have many children needing a *nido* service, but widespread in an area of small municipalities. The solution was to help the parents set up an association like Agorà, dealing with the municipalities joined in a consortium: the *nido* “Tom Thumb” was set up in Mezzago Brianza, because of its central location, geographically speaking, but all the municipalities were financially engaged in this enterprise. The “Tom Thumb Parent Association” and its *nido* are still surviving (cfr. <http://nidopollicinomezzago.altervista.org/asilo-nido-pollicino.html>).

xxiv. At the present moment Panta Rei has 13 official members, 7 of them constituting the Board of Directors, ruling 58 workers: 35 caregivers and teachers, 1 pedagogical supervisor, 2 “atelieristi”, 8 cooks and 8 vice cooks, 19 janitors. The global revenue in 2007 was 1.070.000 euros.

xxv. Otello Sarzi (Vigasio - Verona 1932 – Reggio Emilia, 2001) was an artist and a puppeteer since his youth. After the work with his family, he founded companies all over Italy. In 1969 he settled down in Reggio Emilia, where he worked in the Reggio Approach environment, widespreading the art and the technique of puppeting (cfr. <http://www.fondazionefamigliasarzi.it/wordpress/pagina-di-esempio/>; <http://www.maribur.ch/otello-sarzi/>).

xxvi. Technically speaking the type of management was the “Associazione Temporanea d’Impresa” (ATI), that is, a temporary joint venture.

xxvii. Giulia Maramotti was the mother of Achille Maramotti (Reggio Emilia 1927-2005), founder of the Max Mara Fashion Group, whose first activity was set up in 1951. The foundation was born in 1994 (cfr. <https://www.maxmarafashiongroup.com/it/projects-fondazione>).

xxviii. Cfr. <https://www.maxmarafashiongroup.com/it/projects-fondazione>.

xxix. Cfr. <https://www.pantareiservizieducativi.it/nido-scuola-eni06/>.

xxx. There is the possibility to leave the children even at 6.45 a.m., if needed. Another possibility is to agree for a presence of the child differentiated day by day: for example, for one week the child is at the *nido* all the morning, another week for the afternoons. This is required especially by parents who have job turns (in the police, in a hospital).

xxxi. The traditional *nido* is open from 7.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., with the possibility to have 2 additional hours for special reasons (parents working until 6 p.m.); from Monday to Friday; from the 1st of September to the 30th of June.

xxxii. In a traditional *nido*, you pay a monthly fee, and if the child is sick you have also to stay at home or paying a baby sitter.

xxxiii. In the municipal *nidos* and kindergartens the process of enrollment starts in March and ends at June of the previous year: after this deadline, it is impossible to enroll a child in a municipal *nido* or kindergarten.

xxxiv. At the present moment, the *nido*-kindergarten Totem Reggio Emilia, manages 3 sections of *nido* (1 of them bilingual) and 2 sections of kindergarten (1 of them bilingual), in total 105 children, a proportional number of caregivers and teachers, pedagogical supervisors and “atelieristi”.

xxxv. Totem offers even a counseling service to parents and to external potential clients willing to set up socio-educational spaces and services for children and young people.

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Official website of Panta Rei cooperative enterprise in Reggio Emilia

## Appendix. The life of Loris Malaguzzi<sup>2</sup>

Loris Malaguzzi was born in Correggio, a small town nearby Reggio Emilia, on the 23rd of February 1920. In 1923, his family went to live in Fiume Square, in the center of Reggio Emilia, but in 1929 the Malaguzzi family moved to Zappello Street, in the area of Santa Croce ("Holy Cross"), in the northern part of the town, nearby the factory "Officine Reggiane" and the railway station. In that year, Loris Malaguzzi was enrolled in the Institute for Teacher Training "Princess of Naples", and he studied there for 7 years, 4 of primary course and 3 of secondary one.

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2. Sources for this appendix are A. Hoyuelos Planillo, *Loris Malaguzzi: Biografia Pedagogica - Loris Malaguzzi: Pedagogical Biography*, Azzano San Paolo (BG), Junior, 2004; P. Zanetti, *I Servizi Educativi Prescolastici a Reggio Emilia: Le Scuole dell' Infanzia e le Colonie Estive - Preschool Educational Services at Reggio Emilia: Kindergartens and Summer "Colonie"*, Padova, CLEUP, 2011; P.V. Pignataro, *La Pedagogia Relazionale di Loris Malaguzzi - The Relational Pedagogy of Loris Malaguzzi*, Padova, CLEUP, 2014. Most of them are not translated in English.



In the school year 1938-39, he was appointed substitute teacher at Reggiolo, a village nearby the Po river, in the flat area of the province. In the school years 1940-1942, he was appointed substitute teacher at Sologno, a small village in the municipality of Villa Minozzo, in the Apennino Mountains. The 10<sup>th</sup> of December 1940, with his friend Sergio Masini, he decided to be enrolled in the Faculty of Teacher Training at the University of Urbino, because that was the only university site permitting to be enrolled without attending the classes. In the school year 1943-1944, Malaguzzi was sent first to the elementary school of Guasco Street, and then he was compulsorily enrolled in the Army of the Italian Social Republic, the State set up by the Germans after the armistice of the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1943. He was assigned in the railway military services, in a headquarter at Bologna: after a night bombing of the town, he came back to Reggio, without adhering neither to the Republican Fascist Party nor to the units of the so called "Resistance". In the school year 1944-1945, he went back to teach, and since 1947 he taught in a junior high school at Guastalla, the main center of the flat part of the province of Reggio Emilia. On the 31st of December 1944, he married Nilde Bonacini.

In May 1945, people started to build a kindergarten at Villa Cella, in the suburb of Reggio Emilia: Malaguzzi went to see riding a bicycle and was enrolled as a voluntary teacher. The school opened on 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1947. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 1946, Malaguzzi was a graduate in Pedagogy, discussing a dissertation about Johann Gottlieb Fichte's educational philosophy. In that year, he was also appointed director of the school for veterans at Rivaltella, nearby Reggio Emilia. In 1947, with a very serious decision, Malaguzzi left the job of teacher in the State schools and started to find his professional career elsewhere. Enrolled in the Italian Communist Party after the end of the war, in the years 1947-1951, he worked as a journalist for some local newspapers; starting from 1951, he organized some theatre festivals, for adults and for children. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 1949, Malaguzzi wrote to the famous educationist Ernesto Codignola, living at Florence, for joining the schools he was managing to the International Federation of Youth Communities.

Starting from January 1951, for six months, Malaguzzi attended a master class in psychology of education, held in Rome by the National Center of Researches. It was a very pioneeristic experience and the real turn of Malaguzzi's life. The director of the master class asked to

Malaguzzi to remain at Rome as assistant, but he preferred to go back to Reggio Emilia, where, in June 1951, he was appointed director of the Medical-Psycho-Pedagogical (MPP) Center by the Municipality of Reggio Emilia. From 1951 to 1966, Malaguzzi was the director of the MPP Center, helping families at risk or with disabled children, starting to disseminate the activity of the center. For example, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 1953, by his impulse, the Municipality of Reggio Emilia organized an International Exhibition of Children's Drawings. In 1958, and since 1966, Malaguzzi was also appointed director of another school for disabled children, dedicated to "Giuseppe Lombardo Radice", a famous Italian educator, the main collaborator of the philosopher of education Giovanni Gentile, who was the Minister of Public Education during the first Mussolini government (1921-1923).

Another important event for Malaguzzi's professional life happened in 1960, when the Municipality of Reggio Emilia built the "colonia" (summer camp) of Cesenatico, nearby Rimini, on the Adriatic Sea: 2 years after Malaguzzi was appointed director of the "colonia" of Igea Marina, nearby Rimini too, run by the United Municipalities of the Province of Reggio Emilia. In this period, he was still very intrigued with psychological interests: in March-April 1962, he organized a Symposium about the relationship among psychiatry, psychology and pedagogy. The educational works developed both in the MPP and in the "colonia" was very important in order to set up the municipal engagement in the early childhood education, traditionally managed by private institutions, most of them Catholic.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 1962, after a long struggle against the conservative political forces and the State administration, the Municipality of Reggio Emilia opened the first municipal kindergarten, called "Robinson", for 3-to-6-year children, and Malaguzzi was appointed pedagogical coordinator of this experience. One year after, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 1963, a Municipal Commission was formed in order to study the opening of the first municipal "asilo nido" (infant toddler center), an educational institution for 0-to-3-year olds, whose real implementation happened in 1971. In 1964, he was also appointed director of the "colonia" of Cesenatico, that first of all he renamed "Casa di Vacanze" (House of Vacations), to mark the substantial difference between the past and the present, as we will see in the following part of this text concerning Malaguzzi. In the meanwhile, the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1964, the second municipal kindergar-

ten “Anna Frank” was opened, starting to build up a municipal system of early childhood education. In May 1965, Malaguzzi and some collaborators went to a visit to the University of Geneva (Switzerland), the cathedral of the Piaget-oriented early childhood education. Partly linked to this experience of opening the mind, in November 1965, the first “Pedagogical November” was set up, a meeting about educational questions and problems, both local and general. Starting from 1966, many educational experiences were set up in the municipal kindergartens, starting from the needs of the children and the interaction of them with the teachers and the parents. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1967, the historical kindergarten (formally a private school) of Villa Cella became a municipal school.

In the years 1968-1974, Malaguzzi was also appointed pedagogical counselor of the municipal kindergartens of Modena, but the experience stopped roughly after 6 years, when the Municipality accepted the nationalization of some schools, in order to gain money to front some budget cuts. So Malaguzzi focused his educational work only towards the Reggio institutions: for example, in these years he had the idea to hire some experts of a pedagogical use of fine arts that were called “*atelieristi*” (*atelier* means workshop in French). In February 1970, the municipal kindergarten “Diana” was opened, in the centre of Reggio Emilia. In that year, a 5-year municipal program of development was prepared, with the goal of reaching 20 municipal kindergartens. Diana was a young girl met by Malaguzzi in the elementary school of Sologno, at the beginning of his career. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 1970, the first general meeting of the committees “The school and the city” was set up, in order to improve the participation of the families. These committees (mixed assemblies of teachers and parents) were set up in order to manage each single school, from the enrollment to the pedagogical guidelines to follow. In the days 18-19-20 March 1971, Malaguzzi and his team organized the national symposium “Experiences for a new kindergarten”: 100 people were expected, but 1,000 were the real participants, so the meeting was held in the Municipal Theatre (now dedicated to the actor Romolo Valli). This is one of the best indicators of the interest provoked by the Reggio experiences, later well known as “Reggio Approach”.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 1971, 15 days before the promulgation of the national act regulating the question, the first infant toddler center (“*asilo nido*”) was opened, dedicated to Genoeffa Cervi, the mother of 7

brothers killed by the Fascists in 1944. According to the national act n. 1044, 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1971, the State had the task to provide funds, the Regions had to supervise the general aspects of organization and the Municipalities had to build and manage the new institutions for children from 3 to 36 months.

From 6 to 10 March 1972, Gianni Rodari, the famous writer for children, was at Reggio Emilia, meeting children teachers, parents, administrators and citizens. After this experience, he dedicated his book *La Grammatica della Fantasia* (*The Grammar of Fantasy*) to the town of Reggio Emilia. 2 months later, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May, the Municipal Council approved the *Rules for the management of the municipal kindergartens*, and 2 important meetings were held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of August 1972, for the explanations of the *Rules* to the whole personnel of the municipal schools.

At the end of this year, in November, some critiques to the *Rules* were moved by the catholic educationist Luciano Corradini, professor of education in many Italian universities, who complained the absence of religion in the school activities, the bureaucratization of the social management and the lack of didactical freedom. Malaguzzi and his team answered that the municipal school is neutral about the issue of religion (whose education is a task of the family), that councils were the expression of a democratic approach to the school management and the didactical approach is discussed by the teachers all together, in order to realize common projects. In 1973, some events for helping the Vietnamese children were organized in the municipal schools: as easily imaginable, this idea was criticized by the conservative forces. At the end of this school year, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, Malaguzzi and his team, following an idea of the "atelieristi", organized a school trip to San Polo d'Enza, nearby Reggio, for 1,500 children, parents and educators.

In 1974, Malaguzzi and the whole municipal school system were very active in the defense of the idea of a public early childhood education, attacked by many conservative forces. In 1975, the second infant toddler center was opened, dedicated to Pablo Picasso. In the school year 1975-1976, some infant toddlers centers still managed by the OMNI (National Organization for Children and Mothers, set up by the Fascism in 1925 and survived to it after the 2nd World War), following the new trends inaugurated by the Act 1044, became municipal. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 1976, another infant toddler center, called "Sole" (Sun), was opened:

for the first time, an educational institution for small children, earlier hosted in recycled building, was projected and built with the cooperation of educators and architects.

The track of pedagogical success of the Reggio Approach was full of traps: for an entire week, from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1976, Gustavo Selva, the director of the GR2 (the news program of the national channel Radio 2, a conservative-oriented network), attacked the Reggio Emilia municipal school system, without any possibility to debate during the transmissions: one of the main issues was the presumed ideological indoctrination of the children, performed by a group of “Communist” teachers. The next year, Malaguzzi and his team organized an answer, both political and pedagogical, in the form of a general meeting about *Religious education and early childhood education*. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1976, the first number of the magazine “Bambini” (Children), published by the company Fabbri Editori (and still living, published by Edizioni Junior, Bergamo), owned by the Agnelli family, was printed: Malaguzzi was the director of the enterprise. This review was the only not religious voice in the field of early childhood education in Italy, with “Infanzia” (Childhood), edited by Piero Bertolini and Franco Frabboni of the University of Bologna.

In the school year 1976-1977 many pedagogical projects were set up in the schools: the compass, playing with the water and the air, the ant, the snail, all of them starting from the real questions posed by children. In the days 3-18 December 1977, the photographic exhibition *Experiences and researches of children: Discovering themselves and the world* was set up: pictures were used as a communicational tool in order to show the educational works of the Reggio Approach. In the days 10-11 July 1978, a special seminar *Observations at the nido* was set up. In the school year 1978-1979, a great program of in-service training was organized, in order to face questions like general education, section meetings, adult-child relationship, child health, meals, family and children, from the infant toddler center to the kindergarten, the role of the *atelierista*, children’s language and relationships with everybody, children’s identity.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 1978, the national act n. 463 was promulgated in order to renew the kindergarten’s organization and pedagogy; in that act, the idea of an academic training for the educators of kindergarten was suggested (it happened in 1998), and Malaguzzi and his team were in full agreement with this perspective. At the end of 1979, the peda-

gological project "To make the portrait of a lion" was set up, starting from the special emotional link between the Reggio Emilia's children and the marble lions in front of the church of Saint Prosper, the patron of the city. Some years later, in June 1987, a video was made in order to provide a documentation of the experience: it was the first time for a documentation through this new *medium*, of which Malaguzzi was a real fan. In January 1980, Malaguzzi wanted to promote some reflections with the *atelieristi* about the Gestalt approach in order to give value to visual languages.

In the days 16-17 May 1980, a national conference about *Asili nido 80* was held. Starting from this experience, and 9 years after the Act 1044, the birth of the "Gruppo Nazionale Asili Nido" (National Group for Infant Toddler Centers, today National Group Infant Toddler Centers-Childhood) was promoted, in order to give answers to social questions and developing researches and experimental approaches to the management of the *nido*, whose implementation was not uniform in Italy both for quantity and quality. In December, some meetings with parents about *Seeing hands and working eyes* were set up: this title shows perfectly his idea of engaging parents and not only teachers and educators in a new pedagogical enterprise.

In the days 6-31 May 1981, the first version of the exhibition *L'occhio se salta il muro* (*The eye if it jumps the wall*) was set up in the center of Reggio Emilia. The moviemaker Carlo Barsotti and his wife Anna, educationist, visited the exhibition: they lived in Sweden, and asked Malaguzzi to show the exhibition in Stockholm. A lot of work was done and the exhibition went to Sweden, but in the meanwhile many others cities asked for the exhibition (Barcelona, Madrid, Palma de Mallorca, Berlin). This was the real communicational jump for the Reggio Approach.

In the next years, many activities were set up, both local and national. In March 1982, there was a seminar about *Asili nido and kindergarten: participation and social management as a pedagogical and cultural project*, focused on the strict link between the ages 0-3 and 3-6, and on the need to share a pedagogical vision with many actors (mainly parents, but also citizens). In 11-12-13 November 1982 a conference in memory of Gianni Rodari's visit to Reggio was set up. In the school year 1982-1983, some mixed commissions (composed by parents, citizens and personnel) discussed about didactics, educational environment and relationship with the external environment. In January 1983, Malaguzzi sug-

gested to his team to reflect about the issue of self-identity, and in 24-27 March 1983 a national conference about the infant toddler center (nido) was organized: *New conceptions for the infant toddler center and the early childhood institutions in a society in crisis and forced to change?* 13 years after the implementation of the Act 1044, the age 0-3 was still not fully considered an age to take care with pedagogical projects.

In April-May 1983 there was a strong mobilization against the governmental proposal of anticipation at 5 years of the elementary, because this proposal was not supported by educational reasons, but only by socioeconomic ones. In 1984, the exhibition *L'occhio se salta il muro* arrived at Barcelona, and new strong relationships were established with Spanish schools and educators. On 31 May – 1-2 June 1984, a national conference was held in Reggio Emilia, *To stay with the children. The knowledge of educators*, in order to show the attention of Malaguzzi and his team to the teachers training. In the same year, an important project was set up with Coop Italia, a popular cooperative enterprise, whose supermarket is widespread all over the country. *The Coop* was the title of the project managed by the kindergarten “Villetta”, and the subtitle, *We children and he Gulliver*, was the expression of the perception of the children about that place where families spent a lot of time to buy food. At the end of 1984, another project about *Long jump*, managed by the kindergarten “Diana”, started after some insights of the children, generating a long discussion about the approach to mathematical teaching and learning. In January – March 1985, the exhibition *L'occhio se salta il muro* reached Palma de Mallorca and Madrid. On 29 May – 1-2-3- June 1985, an international conference was organized at Reggio Emilia: *Experiences and problems. Theoretical and practical models and hypothesis in early childhood education*. As we can easily see by the title, the idea was to treat ECE as a scientific object, and not a simple pedagogical practice, set up always and anyway. In the same year, a pioneeristic reflection about children and computer sciences and technologies started: *Approaches to the future. The intelligences of children and the intelligences of the computers*. Malaguzzi and his team did not see the “computer” as the devil or as the only possible tool for future education, but something to be explored starting from the perceptions children had of it.

At the end of 1985, Malaguzzi was 65 years old and he had to retire from his official municipal job: he worked for some years as pedagogical counselor. Sergio Spaggiari became director of the Municipal



School and Carla Rinaldi was appointed coordinator of the pedagogical supervisors. In 1986, going to Berlin, the exhibition *L'occhio se salta il muro* changed its name (it was not politically correct to go to Berlin talking about a "wall") and widespread its contents, becoming *The 100 languages of children*, that became and still is a sort of pedagogical slogan for the Reggio Approach. In this year, the never ending question of teaching Catholic religion in the kindergarten was debated (Malaguzzi was always in favor of talking about the religious insights of the children, never with its "teaching", in any form), some international relationships (Pamplona, Stockholm) were strengthened, the pedagogical project *The town and the rain* was launched. In March 1987, in the seminar *You have to become a parent*, Malaguzzi talked about the role of the television, another critical issue: television, as the "computer", was alternatively exalted or demonized, and he wanted to talk about it from a pedagogical point of view, starting from the children's experiences of this box full of colored images, at that time becoming a new nanny for many children.

In this year, for the first time, the Municipality, unable to front the huge demand of educational services (especially the *nido*) gave some cooperative enterprises (Coopselios and SILA) the task to set up 2 infant toddler centers, after a mutual agreement about the quality of the service. In 1988, many other pedagogical projects were set up under Malaguzzi's supervision: about the shadow (*Everybody has a shadow except ants*, ended in 1990), about the rainbow, about *The very little children of the silent cinema*: after the computer and the television, now was the turn of the movies, to be challenged in their pedagogical implications. In 1989-1990, all the municipalities had to face the problem of the reduction of State funding and the consequent nationalization of many municipal schools (not at Reggio Emilia).

In 1991, the new *National Guidelines for Kindergarten* were approved by the Ministry of Public Education, and Malaguzzi gave a personal version of them: "1. learning the desire of waiting and of international exchange / 2. learning to communicate and to increase the synchronization of communicational codes / 3. learning to express loves, feelings, desires / 4. discovering how friendship is beautiful / 5. learning to talk and discuss with him-herself / 6. learning the laws of listening / 7. to see, to feel, to express, to know with the body / [other 35 points skipped] / 43. to express gratefulness to the teachers for having offered situations of deepening and for having shared resources, consciousness and



knowledge (in Italian “*coscienza e conoscenza*”). 1989 is also important because in this year the Centre of Documentation and Educational Research was born, as a special branch of the system, devoted to preserve the documentation (oral, written, visual) of the pedagogical activities and to promote further researches and discussions. The Centre is still operating in the “Loris Malaguzzi International Center”. In 28-31 March 1990, the international conference *Who am I? Tell me first this! (Alice in Wonderland) A Comparison among knowing in order to grant citizenship to the rights and the potentialities of children and adults* saw the coming of 1,700 participants, from all over the world. In September – October 1990, some interviews were delivered in order to edit a book about the “Reggio Approach”, critically showing theories and practices and not establishing a “method” from above.

The years from 1991 to 1993 were full of work and also of satisfaction for Loris Malaguzzi. In Autumn 1991, the pedagogical project *The shoe and the meter*, started from the discussion of a group of children about the construction of a wooden table, was presented in Paris. In 2 December 1991, the U.S. magazine “Newsweek” states that the kindergarten “Diana” was the best in the world: this event was the beginning of an uninterrupted flow of pedagogical tourism to Reggio Emilia. Just because a procession of delegations coming from all over the world started to visit Reggio Emilia, in order to worship the “sanctuary” of a new approach to early childhood education, Malaguzzi had the first idea to constitute an organization devoted to this task: this organization was Reggio Children, born in 1994, whose first Constitution was drafted by Elena Poppi, a young administrative officer of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia.

In 1992, Malaguzzi was the pedagogical counselor of his last pedagogical project: *The amusements’ park for birds*. In 11 November 1992: Malaguzzi received the LEGO Award in Kobenhaven (Denmark) and in June 1993 the Kohl Foundation Award in Chicago (U.S.). In 8 October 1993, Malaguzzi launched a call for delivering the Nobel Prize for Peace to the besieged children of Sarajevo. On Thursday 27 January 1994, Malaguzzi was engaged in his last pedagogical event, a meeting with the Pedagogical coordinators and the personnel of the municipal infant toddler centers and kindergartens: he asked for reflections about the internal organization of the educational system, where adults had to be a *place* where children could exercise their skills of projecting something always new.

On Saturday 29 January, Malaguzzi had a dinner with his beloved friends of an entire life, talking about politics and anticipating to them the idea to go to San Francisco, for a critical availability of the Reggio Approach. During the morning of Sunday 31 January 1994, Loris Malaguzzi was reading a book about the German painter Paul Klee and started to feel bad: at 14.30 he died of a heart attack. His coffin was put in the Hall of the Tricolor, where the Municipal Council keeps its meetings (and where he showed the movies about the Houses of Vacations, in the Sixties ...).

At the end of February 1994, some friends (among them Alfredo Hoyuelos Planillo, the author of the only biography existing about Loris Malaguzzi), received a letter, dated 26 January 1994, in which Loris Malaguzzi highlighted his spiritual and pedagogical heritage: "... and let the children always give form to things, rather than things give form to children!"

**Εναλλακτικές προσεγγίσεις στην εφαρμογή  
και διαχείριση βρεφονηπιακών κέντρων στο Reggio Emilia  
τη δεκαετία του '80 και τη δεκαετία του '90 του 20ου αιώνα:  
Μεταξύ δημόσιας δέσμευσης και ιδιωτικής επιχείρησης,  
στα ίχνη του Loris Malaguzzi**

## ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Το κείμενο παρουσιάζει το πλαίσιο παιδαγωγικών αρχών, λειτουργίας και οργάνωσης ενός τύπου ιδρυμάτων πρώιμης παιδικής ηλικίας, γνωστών ως *nidos*. Εξετάζεται η ιστορική τους διαδρομή από τη θεσμοθέτησή τους μέχρι το τέλος του 20ού αιώνα και η στενή σχέση τους με το Ίδρυμα Reggio Emilia. Τέλος, παρουσιάζονται τέσσερις διακριτές περιπτώσεις τέτοιων ιδρυμάτων με διαφορετική οργανωτική δομή και διαχείριση: 1. *Nidos* που λειτουργούν από συνεργατικές εταιρείες, 2. *Nidos* που οργανώνονται και λειτουργούν από γονείς, 3. *Nidos* που λειτουργούν ως συνεργατικές επιχειρήσεις γυναικών και 4. *Nidos* που συστήνονται ως μορφή γυναικείας επιχειρηματικότητας.