



## BOLOGNA CITY BRANDING PROJECT

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SMART CITY EXHIBITION

## Aims of the Project

- Identification of the most significant features of the ***identity*** of the city of Bologna
- Definition of the ***repositioning*** of the city
- Identification of ***narrative structures*** to tell the new positioning of the city



## Bologna City Branding Project: the International and National Perception of the Image of the city of Bologna

The BCBP devoted the first five months to extensive research aimed at analysing perception of the current international (national) brand image of Bologna and at identifying the traits that characterise its desired identity.

The **international (national) image** of Bologna was analysed by:

- Giving a **questionnaire** to a sample of foreign/italian citizens who have visited and or stayed in Bologna in recent years (questionnaires completed 405, of which 250 in English and 155 in Italian).
- Recovering data resulting from **research carried out previously** on the perception by residents
- **"Reputational"/"Sentiment" analysis** of the presence of **Bologna on the net**, which examined 20.000 texts (during the period December 2012 – February 2013): posts and comments made available on the internet (forums, blogs, micro-blogs, social networks, etc.).

**The desired identity** (Aspirational brand identity) via:

**7 Focus Groups**, which saw the participation of around 90 significant witnesses from the city, representing the economical, cultural, social and institutional world.

**#Caroamicotiinvito** – an online contest to gather stories about the city in the words and pictures of its citizens

The results of the **Metropolitan Strategic Plan**

**Quantitative analysis.** The following are among the main perceived characteristics of Bologna:

**Bologna is ... *Art, Culture, Food.***

- There is wide availability and a good quality of artistic heritage and cultural sites (8.54)
- There is variety and quality of food, wine and restaurants (8.51)
- There is wide availability of cultural events and attractions (7.94)

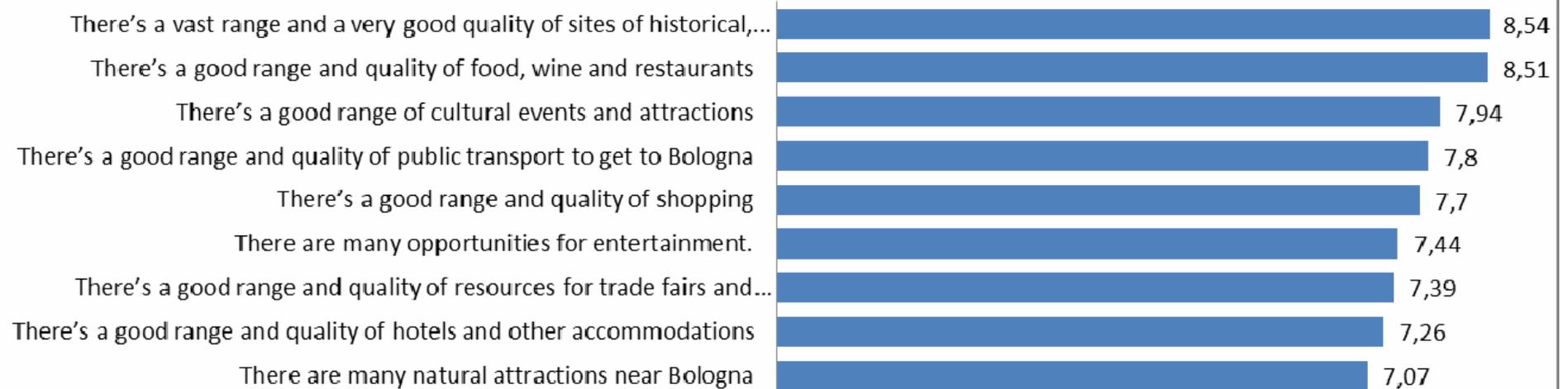
**Bologna is ... *Appealing, friendly, lively, expensive, busy, polluted***

- It is an appealing city (8.26)
- The people are friendly (8.06)
- It is a lively city (7.94)
- The air is not polluted (5.49)
- There is not much traffic (4.52)
- The cost of living is not high (4.29)

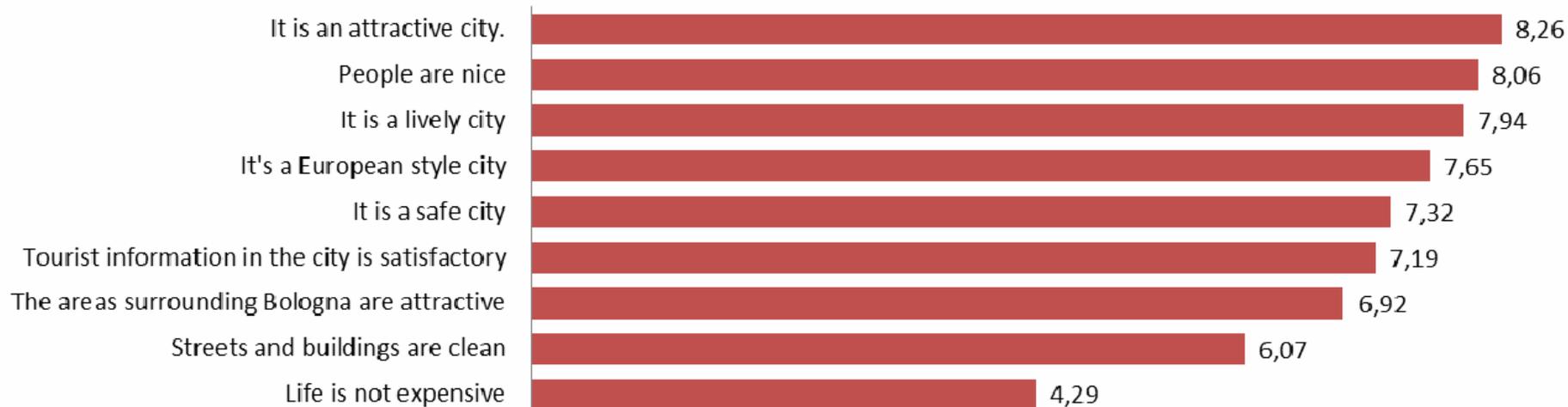
**Bologna is ... *University, youth, porticoes, a people friendly city***

- Bologna is home to the oldest university in Europe (95.93)
- Bologna is a city that is easy to walk round (95.92)
- Bologna is a city for youngsters (89.80)
- Bologna has more than 30 Km of porticoes (83.56)

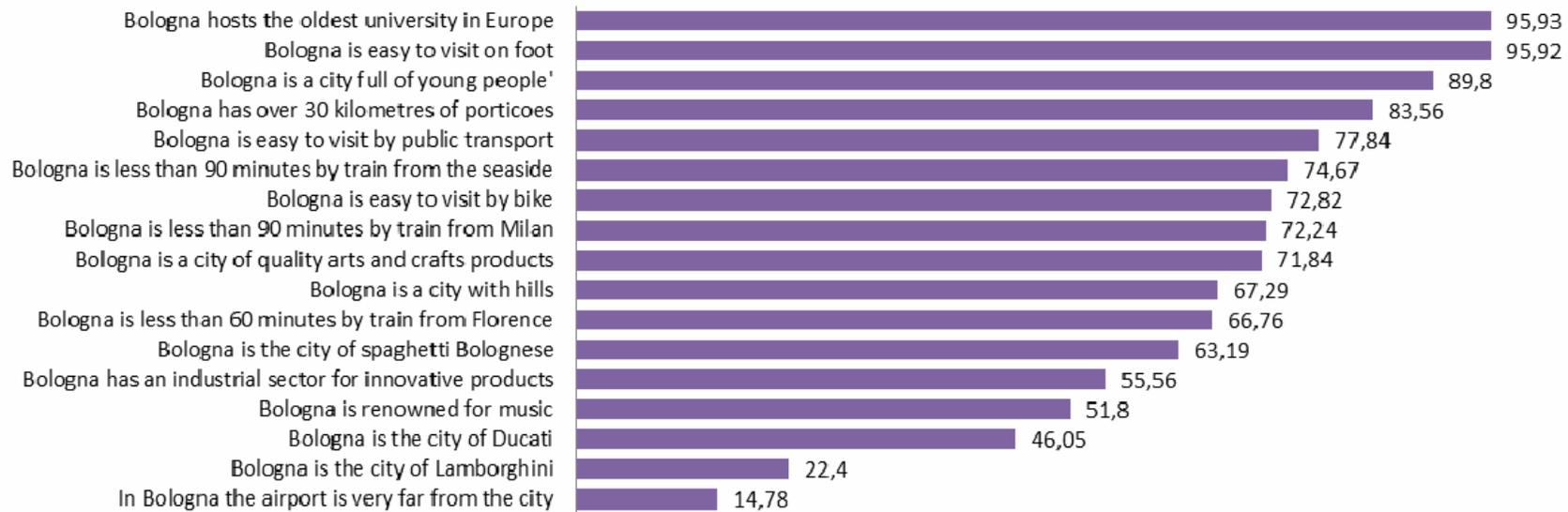
**When you think of Bologna, how strongly do you agree with the following statements, on a scale from 1 to 10 (mean)**



**If you think of Bologna to what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements on a scale from 1 to 10 (mean)**



**Do you agree with the following statements about Bologna?**  
(% of yes answer)



The results of quantitative research have provided a large frame to identify the characteristic features of the perception of the identity of the city.

The answers to these questions were most helpful in detecting some clusters on the perception of Bologna by crossing the answers to closed questions with answers to open questions (quantitative research and qualitative research).

The most interesting qualitative questions in the questionnaires were:

*If you had to describe your experience in Bologna to a friend how would you describe it?*

*Could you tell us 3 to 5 mental associations for the city of Bologna*



*If you had to describe your experience in Bologna to a friend how would you describe it?*

- ...the **porticoes** add atmosphere, and the central square near the fountain and library are a wonderful place to sit back and have a coffee...
- ...it's a very accessible city ... without the inconveniences of a touristic attraction, It's a «**real**» **city**, not an open air museum, yet there is a lot to discover in art and culture...
- ...it is a city **you must** visit...
- ... the city is the perfect size. You can **become familiar** with the streets quickly, but there are always more to **explore**. ...
- ... Bologna isn't like the usual tourist attractions in Italy – Florence, Rome, Venice ... It is a city that many people miss. One good thing, then, is that it **is not overrun with tourists**...
- ... Visit museums, the food hall, both the reastaurantes and older trattorias. Walk a lot – do not miss the **university** area...
- ... It is **not a touristic place** ...

The Sentiment and Knowledge Mining system is built on the following components:

### **A) The Crawler**

- The crawler is a multimedia content gathering and storing system.

### **•B) The Semantic Engine**

- This component identifies the relevant knowledge from the whole raw text, by detecting semantic relations and facts in texts.

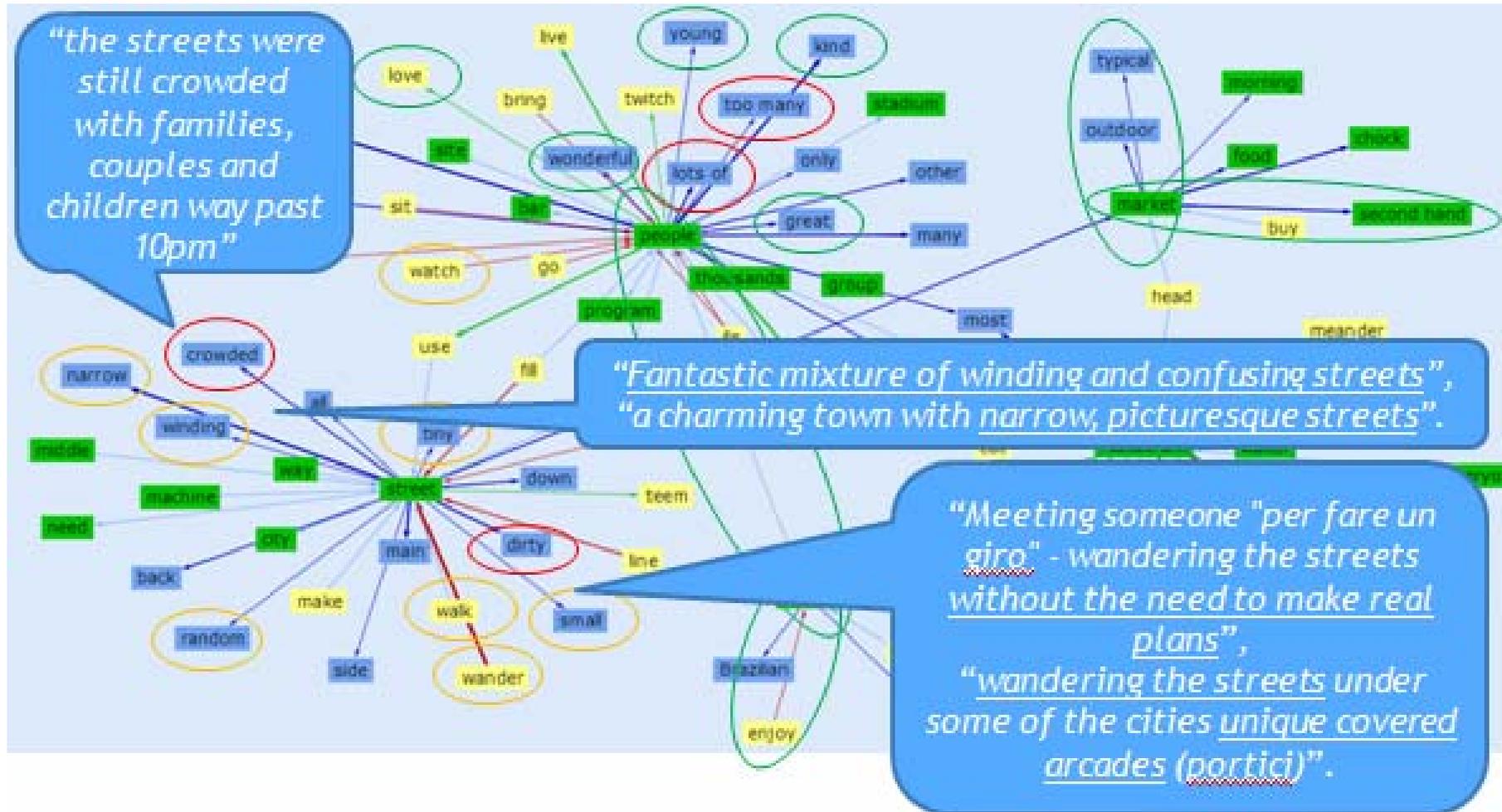
•**a) Lexical and Semantic Analyses.** The automatic linguistic analysis of the textual documents is based on Morpho-Syntactic, Semantic, Semantic Role and Statistical criteria.

•**b) Sentiment Analysis.** The Sentiment Analysis is based not only on the polarity of words, but also on the syntactical tree of the sentence being analyzed.

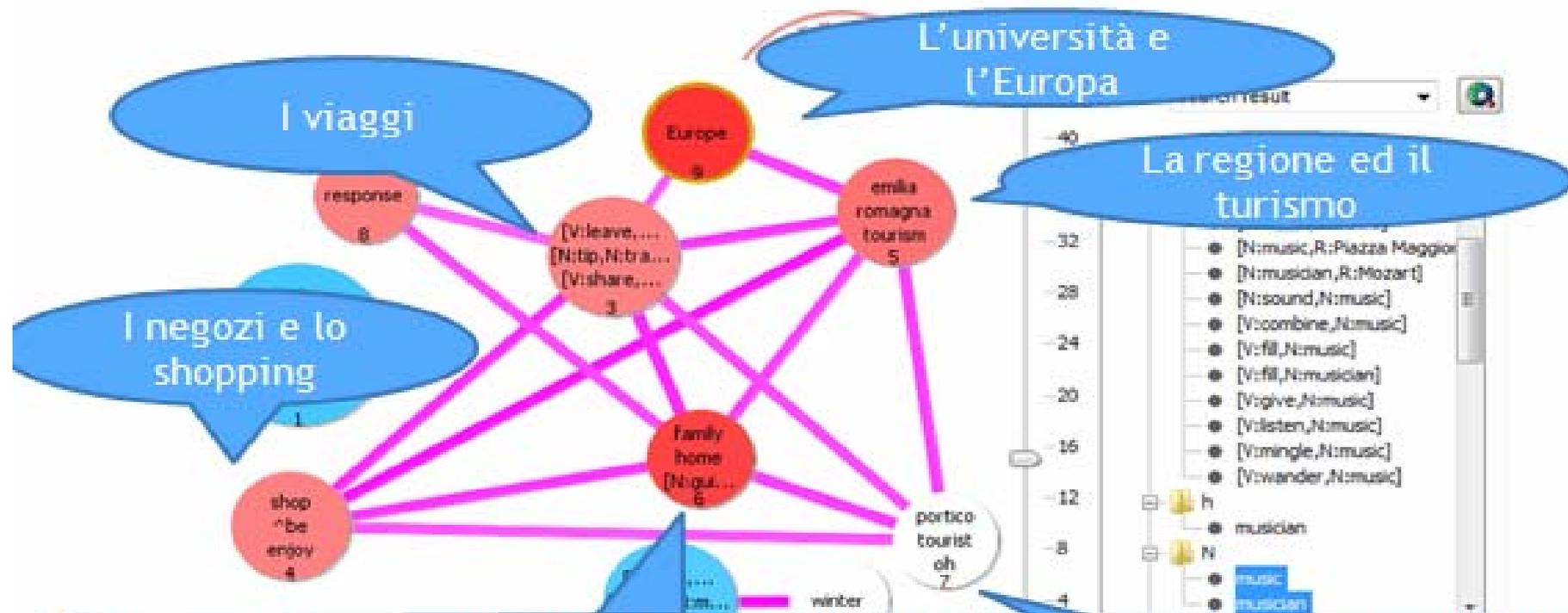






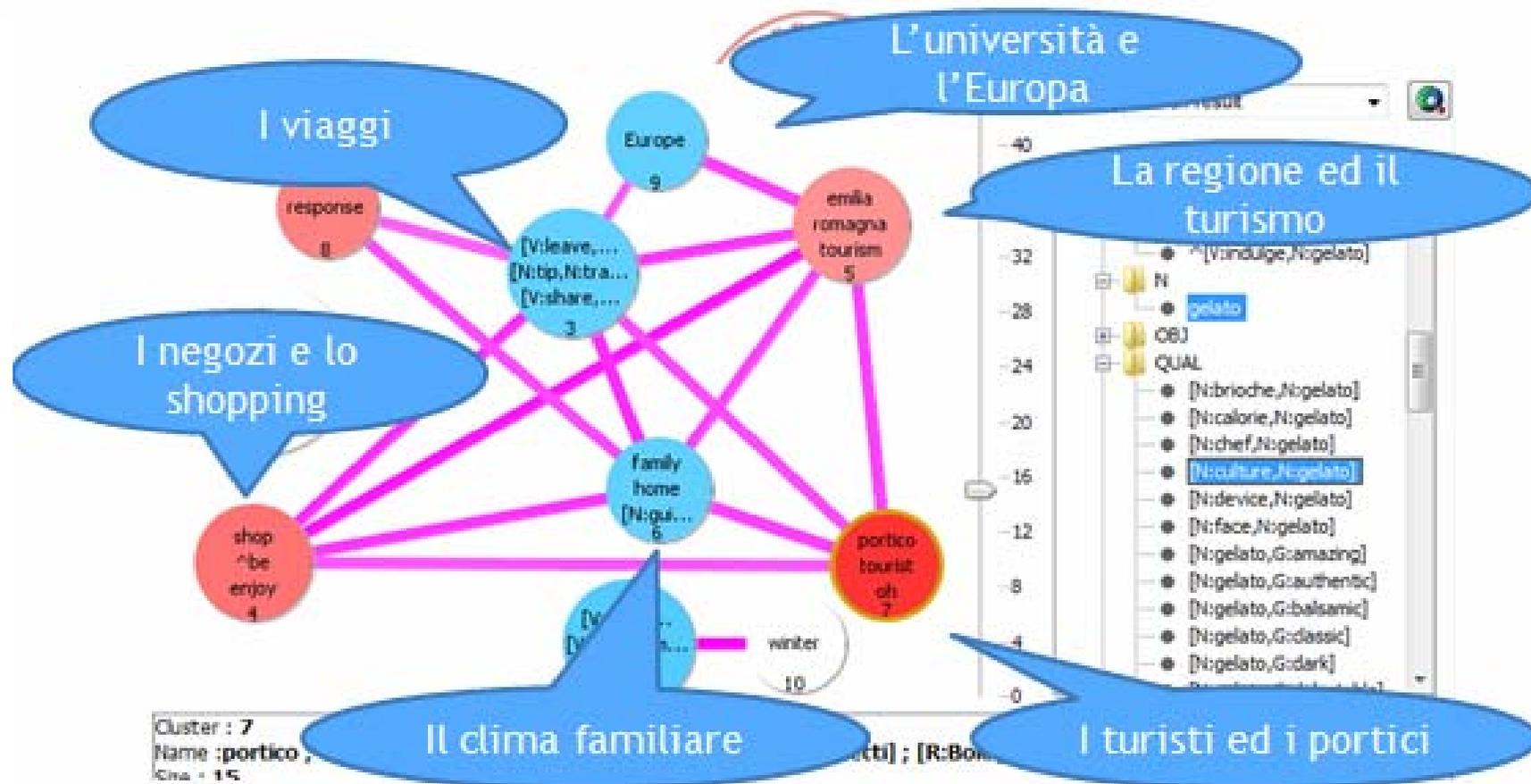


Gli stranieri amano il cibo e la gentilezza delle persone. «Apprezzano l'accento», ma trovano le «strade affollate e sporche». Amano «vagare» per le strade «strette» e «tortuose», camminando sotto i portici.

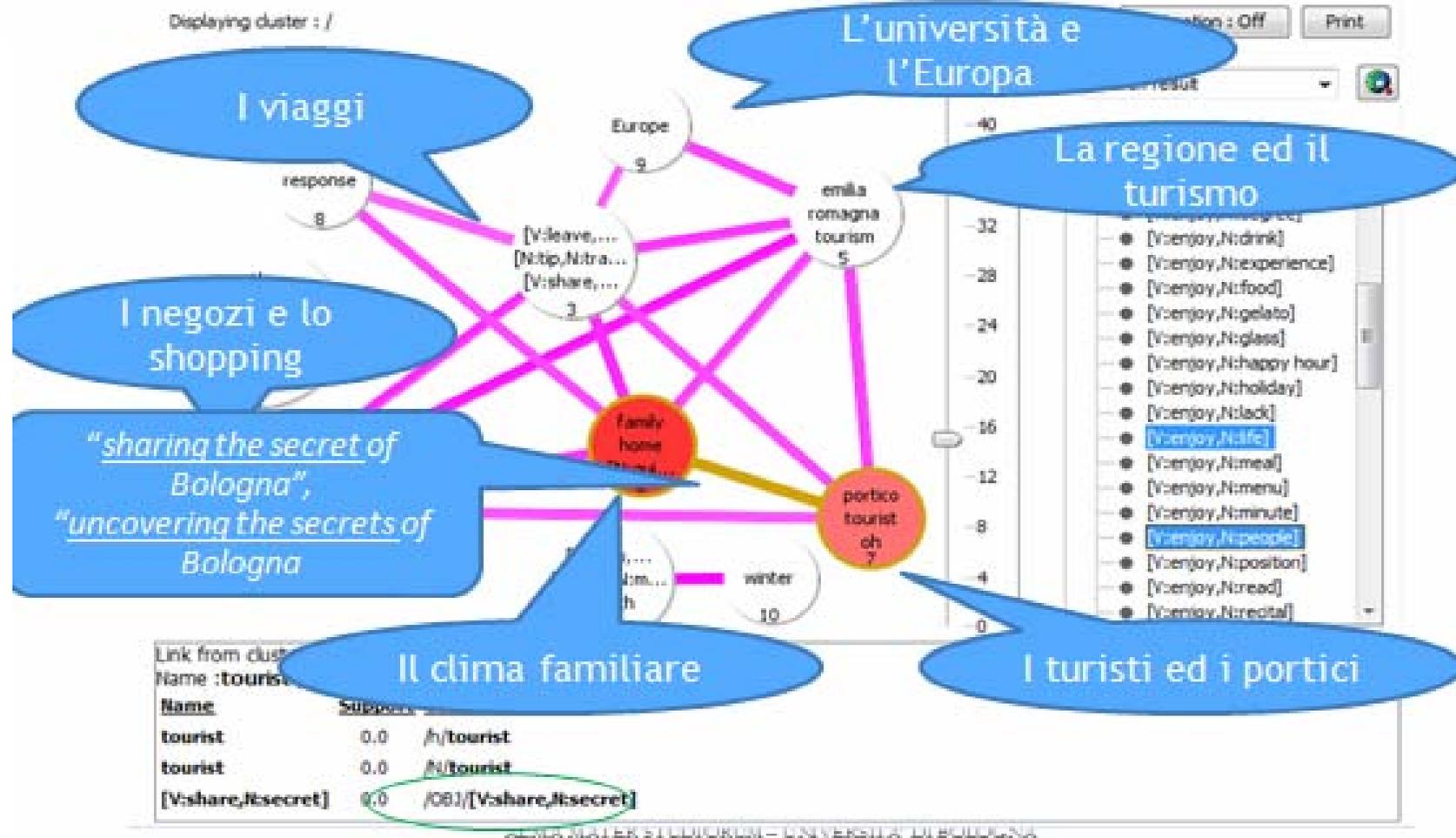


"All evening we wandered the streets, people watched, bought masks, drank wine, listened to music,  
 yelled, sang, danced, and laughed",  
 "... the streets with people, vendors, and music!",  
 "... listening to street music, taking too many pictures, and again, people watching.",  
 "... following the meal, a di set up and started playing music."

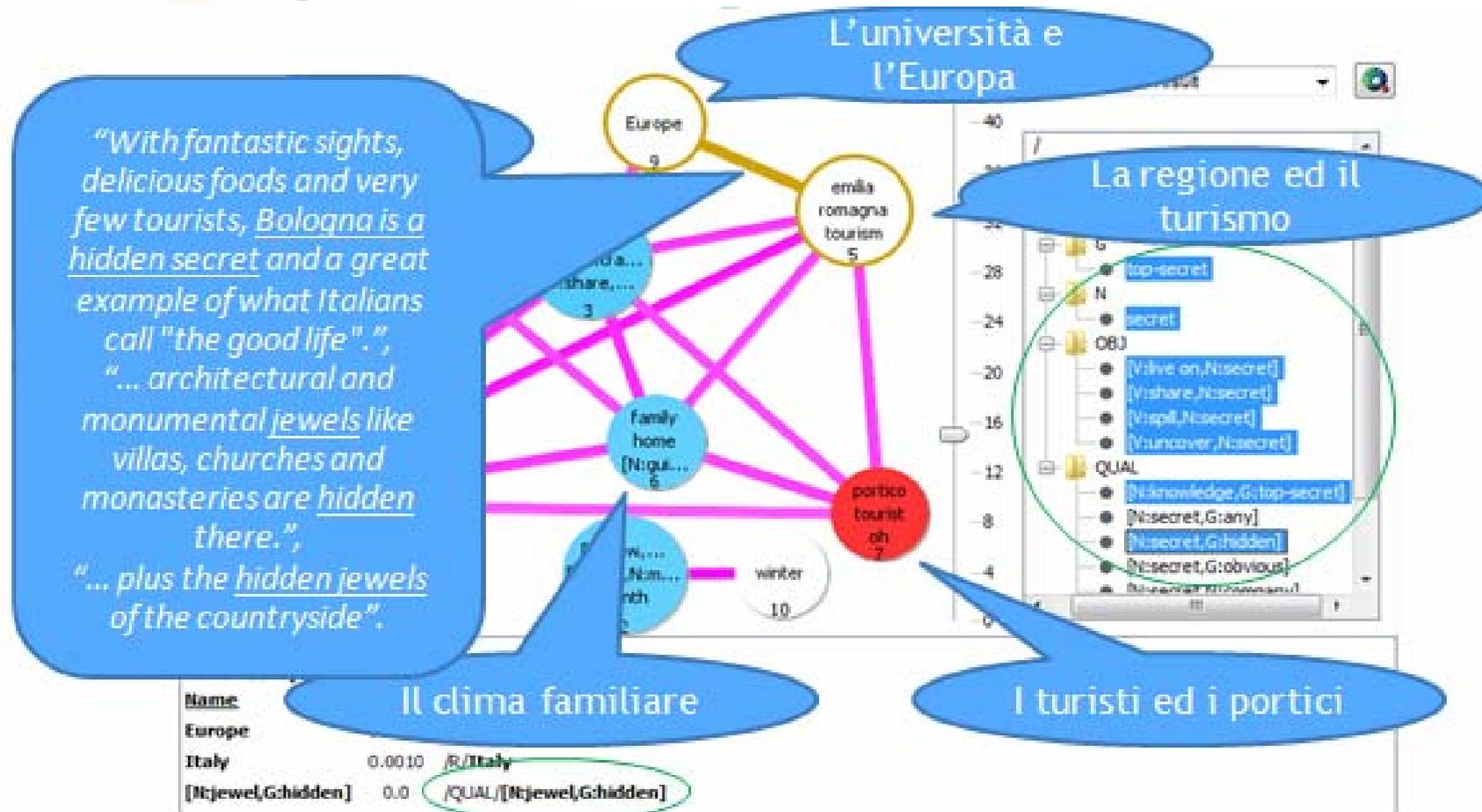
Gli stranieri associano Bologna alla musica e ai musicisti. Numerosi sono i concerti dal vivo nei locali della città.



Gli stranieri ed il gelato, artigianale, gustato sotto i portici



La necessità di «condividere un segreto»: i portici ed il clima familiare



Agganciata all'Europa con l'Università e incastonata nella regione, Bologna è un «gioiello nascosto». La magia è nei «portici» della città.

The perceived image of a city is determined by both tangible and intangible characteristics.

❖ The perception of the atmosphere of a city is affected by how the tourists feel when they walk into town alone. They like to *"wander"* in the *"small"*, *"winding"*, *"narrow streets"* without a clear destination. This wandering is facilitated by the structure of the historic city center (*"a charming town with narrow streets"*, *"wandering the streets without the need to make real plans"*). The streets of Bologna are considered *"crowded"* and *"dirty"*, too.

❖ Foreigners associate Bologna to music and musicians. They listen to the numerous live concerts, which are held in the streets and in the city clubs (*"we wandered the streets, ... listened to music, yelled, sang, danced..."*). This association legitimizes the appointment of the city as *City of Music* by Unesco.

❖ The presence of verbs, adjectives and adverbs, such as *“find”, “share”, “love”, “like”, “different”, “incredible”, “interesting”, “also”,* associated to Bologna has been influenced by a generally shared image of the city, characterized by its ***not being considered a major tourist destination***. The fact that Bologna is not perceived as a touristic city lowers expectations and increases the chances that visitors will be positively surprised. Visitors often emphasize their pleasant surprise to discover an unknown city. Bologna is perceived as several cities in the same city and it is considered *“really” “also”* something else. Bologna is perceived as a *“hidden jewel”* and the magic of its arcades (*“porticos”*) are a secret *“to share”* (*“... Bologna is a hidden secret and a great example of what Italians call «the good life»”*).

❖ Generally speaking Bologna is generally described as the capital of the so-called Italian Motor Valley. Until now, this recognition has always been considered an important feature of the perceived image of Bologna shared by all. Surprisingly, foreigners have never associated the city of Bologna to brands such as Lamborghini

## **Tangible features**

*Porticoes*

*Two Towers (the traditional tangible characteristic of Bologna)*

*The Centrality/hub*

*The University*

*The hill*

*The medieval structure,*

*Piazza Maggiore*

*The markets in the Centre, the shopping*

*The craft workshops*

## **Intangible features**

*"Bologna, city of the young and open minded"*

*"Bologna, city of quality"*

*"Bologna, authentic, affectionate and welcoming city"*

*"Bologna, city of workshops, innovation, experimentation"*

*"Bologna, city of culture and creativity"*

*"Bologna, city of good food"*

### **Tangible uniqueness: horizontal vs. vertical city**

Historically Bologna is considered a city with many medieval **towers**. Bologna is also characterized by **arcades** (its porticoes run for more than 40 Km, linking the centre of the city to the surrounding suburbs).

**Tower: Vertical**

**Porticos: Horizontal**

- ❖ Is there a *semantic relationship* between the intangible characteristics associated to the city of Bologna and the two dimensions of tangible characteristics (vertical and horizontal)?
- ❖ The intangible characteristics perceived belong to the *semantic field* of the Two Towers or to the *semantic field* of the Arcades (porticoes)?

In Bologna people of all ages find the porticoes a natural place to walk, meet, stop and chat, regardless of their lifestyle.

The porticoes are a place of activity, not just an ancient relic to be observed from afar.

No other Italian city has such a long stretch of covered walkways, and the advantages are obvious when it rains.

Strolling under the porticoes allows the visitor to let go, to *lose* himself/herself but *with the certainty of finding* himself/herself once more.

The ***porticoes***, rather than a functional space to help us to reach our destination as quickly as possible, are a far reaching ***public space***, where the rhythm of our stroll is punctuated by *pauses* to look in the shop windows, chat with those we meet, enjoy an ice cream while strolling along or sitting outside a bar.

The portico is a space that is consumed constantly by the lives of people; it is an **experience** that takes away the sensation of being a tourist, as you become a part of everyone's journey.

The *portico is a metaphor for a city that does not impose predefined routes, but lets you make a choice*: when you come to Bologna you can choose the itinerary that most interests you, or the one you like most.

In a way, *you can be a scout*, gathering details until almost becoming pleasantly lost in your wanderings, with no set destination.

For all these reasons, ***the portico's semantic field of horizontality is the one that best overlaps to the intangible characteristics attributed by visitors to the city of Bologna.***

The porticoes could be considered the metaphor for a city that does not offer you a totem to worship, but with its openness and diversity allows you to weave your own story, to make up your own pathway of visits or of life, just walking.

***The narrative structure of the city can be developed starting from the semantic and symbolic meanings of the arcades.***



International competition to create a logo and a payoff for the city of Bologna

The Bologna city branding Project coordinated by Urban Center Bologna, after having conducted thorough research on the perceived and desired image of the city has launched of an international **competition for ideas to create a logo and a payoff for the city of Bologna.**

The competition, promoted by Bologna City Council, is organised by Urban Center Bologna and AIAP (the Italian Association of visual communication design) **with the partnership of UniCredit.**

The aim of the competition for ideas is to **find a logo that represents all the special features and elements that make up the face of the city** as they emerged from the "Bologna City Branding" study carried out in recent months.

The chosen logo must be accompanied by a **payoff** where the communicative intentions offered by the logo take shape in verbal form.



International competition to create a logo and a payoff for the city of Bologna

Thanks to the **partnership with UniCredit** it is possible to award the creator of the winning **logo and payoff** a prize of 14,000 Euro, while the second and third place winners will be awarded prizes of 6,000 and 4,000 euro, respectively.

Participation was open to **graphic designers** and **design** and **communication** professionals.



International competition to create a logo and a payoff for the city of Bologna

The international competition to design the logo and payoff for the city of Bologna is closed.

The winning entry will be announced no later than 30 November 2013.

### **More than 500 proposals from international creatives**

We've received 514 ideas from Malaysia, Hungary, Germany, Spain, UK, Portugal, Netherlands, France, Russia.

The brand / logo and the payoff will be used in all the city's promotional communications throughout the media (press, internet, TV, brochures, etc.) and may be used in other sectors and by different entities (associations, companies and all those involved in promoting the city) with the agreement and supervision of those holding the rights.



*Bologna City Branding*

Thank you

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