



**Topic:** To disseminate civic sense, should we repress misconduct or teach and encourage virtuous behaviors?

Civic sense is often discussed, but in particular the disregard for it: we see widespread episodes of trash being tossed on the street, public transport being damaged, parking spaces for the disabled being illegally occupied... Cooperating for the improvement of the society in which we live is a principle at the basis of good social relations: this requires the dissemination of civic sense, but how? There is a heated debate among those who believe it is necessary to tighten the sanctions against misconduct, and those who think it is better to educate people on virtuous tenues.

**Argument PRO:** "Prevention and education are enough to spread civic sense, there is no need to focus on combating misconduct".

**Argument AGAINST:** "Prevention and education are not enough to spread the sense of civic responsibility, it is necessary to focus on combating misconduct".

### Current situation, scenario, and context.

Article 4 of the Italian Constitution states the duty of individuals to contribute to the material and spiritual progress of society, but this is not always the case. Frequently, episodes show how much respect for others and for the "Public Thing" fails to be a widespread value among citizens. It is necessary to encourage virtuous behavior, but how?

According to some, the answer comes through education and prevention: Italians think that the areas best motivating the sense of civic responsibility are the family and the school, the latter being considered the subject that does most to stimulate it. Strengthening the teaching of civic education would contribute, in fact, to make the citizens of tomorrow more aware and respectful: deepening the knowledge of the values at the basis of our constitutional charter would certainly be useful for children. In addition, a greater participation of citizens in the choices concerning common spaces would increase the sense of belonging and would prevent harmful attitudes.

Others believe that these actions would not be sufficient to promote the dissemination of civic sense. A stiffening of the penalties provided for those who adopt deviant or incorrect behavior would be an excellent deterrent for the respect of others and the Public Good. For this strategy to be effective, controls on the territory would need to be increased.

### Arguments pro:

- Civic education in family and school stimulates virtuous behavior.
- Participation in the decision-making process calls for a greater involvement of everyone in respecting the Public Thing.

### Arguments against:

- Stiffening penalties acts as a deterrent to harmful behavior.
- Increasing control contributes to greater respect for civic sense.

### Further Insights:

- Parwarish: [Inculcating Civic Sense In Children](#)
- Data Stories: Civic sense: [Towards a better tomorrow](#)
- Center for Civic Education: [The Role of Civic Education](#)