SULIEIA

MED-ASA
MEDITERRANEAN ADVANCED SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

TNE PROGRAM 2023
INTER-UNIVERSITY COURSE FOR GRADUATING STUDENTS

SoilSpace

The Design for Risk in Public Environment

research booklet

SULIEIA

TNE PROGRAM 2023 – NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN (PNRR)
MISSION 4 “Education and Research” COMPONENT 1 “Enhancing the Offer of Educational Services: from Early Childhood to University” INVESTMENT 3.4 “University Teaching and Advanced Skills”, Sub-investment - T4 “Transnational Education Initiatives”. (Notice D.D. No. 167 of 03/10/2023)

Med-ASA Mediterranean Advanced School of Architecture
INTERUNIVERSITY COURSE for GRADUATING STUDENTS

Università degli Studi “Mediterranea” di Reggio Calabria – **UNIRC**
Università degli Studi di Napoli “Federico II” – **UNINA**

Partners
Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje, North Macedonia – **UKIM**
Polis University, Tirana, Albania – **POLIS**
University of Montenegro, Podgorica, Montenegro – **UCG**

Scientific Committee
Marina Tornatora (**UNIRC**), Federica Visconti (**UNINA**)
Ottavio Amaro (**UNIRC**), Renato Capozzi (**UNINA**), Ledian Bregasi, Elona Karafili and Flora Krasniqi (**POLIS**), Aneta Hristova Popovska, Blagoja Bajkovski and Elena Damjanoska (**UKIM**), Svetlana Perović and Irena Rajković (**UCG**)

Tutors
Maria Lorenza Crupi, Giacomo D’Amico, Wegdan Faydullah, Eleonora La Fauci (**UNIRC**)
Oreste Lubrano, Salvatore Daniele Lombardi, Parastou Mollahosseinali (**UNINA**)

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Max Cavallari, Tempostretto.it, Marco Bertorello

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SoilSpace | The Design for Risk in Public Environments
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summary

Tipology

INTERUNIVERSITY COURSE
Graduation Project Studio - Final Thesis

Scientific field of the Coordinators

Architecture

Department

Department of Architecture and Design, University “Mediterranea” of Reggio Calabria
Department of Architecture, University of Naples “Federico II”

Coordinators

Marina Tornatora (UNIRC), Federica Visconti (UNINA)

Partners

Polis University, Tirana, ALBANIA
Coordinator of the associate country: Dr. prof. Ledian Bregasi (ledian_bregasi@universitetipolis.edu.al)
Manager of the associate country: Dr. Elona Karafili (elona_karafili@universitetipolis.edu.al)
Internationalization office of the associate country: Dr. Flora Krasniqi (flora_krasniqi@universitetipolis.edu.al)

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Faculty of Architecture, Skopje, NORTH MACEDONIA
Coordinator of the associate country: Prof. Dr. Aneta Hristova Popovska (hristova.aneta@arh.ukim.edu.mk) and Prof. Dr. Blagoja Bajkovski (bajkovski.blagoja@arh.ukim.edu.mk)
Manager of the associate country: Prof. Dr. Aneta Hristova Popovska (hristova.aneta@arh.ukim.edu.mk)
Internationalization office of the associate country: Ms. Elena Damjanoska (edamjanoska@ukim.edu.mk)

University of Montenegro, Podgorica, MONTENEGRO
Coordinator of the associate country: prof. Svetlana Perović (svetlana.perovic@ucg.ac.me)
Internationalization office of the associate country: Prof. Irena Rajković (irena_arhi@yahoo.com; irena.rajkovic@ucg.ac.me)

Duration

The course will run in the academic year 2025–2026, **from October 2025 to February 2026** with a **kick-off in the summer 2025 (30th June-6th July)**, and comprises **500 hours, equivalent to 20 CFUs (university credits)**. The program includes a masterclass and a workshop. Attendance is mandatory, with a maximum allowable absence of 20% across all classroom teaching and traineeship activities.

CFU

20

Number Students

N. **15** max (5 per partner)

Examination/ evaluation criteria

academic year 2025-2026
student’s **5th year** - single-cycle degree course
student’s **2nd year** - master degree course

Introduction

The **Mediterranean Advanced School of Architecture (Med_ASA)** is an “add-on” training program for graduating students, designed to enhance the design skills of architects and landscape architects. The program combines design and research activities, immersing students in the complexity of architectural projects currently being undertaken in various European and non-European contexts.
Med_ASA targets talented students selected based on their academic background and overall performance.
The program aims to equip participants with the necessary expertise to design contemporary cities in their metropolitan dimensions, focusing on areas outside or at the edges of consolidated urban centers. It emphasizes intervention techniques and methodologies tailored to these newly developed contexts, which require distinct approaches and solutions.
The general aim of the course is the training of technicians with specific competencies to deal with the complex design problems of metropolitan rank both with regard to the clarity of settlement principles, to the attention to environmental and resource-saving issues, and to social and participative instances as well as the related complex infrastructural, implementation planning and construction problems.
The course will be articulated in mono-disciplinary or integrated courses and didactic workshops aimed at deepening the study of tools and techniques related to the contemporary landscape, the built environment, environmental and territorial sociology, legitimising urban planning/planning techniques, infrastructure and construction-related aspects, the definition of settlement principles, and the characteristics of public space and urban centralities by means of appropriate design hypotheses/verifications.

MedASA is an international advanced school coordinated by the University of Naples Federico II and the Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria, in partnership with the Polis University (Tirana, Albania), the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Faculty of Architecture-Skopje (Skopje, North Macedonia), and the University of Montenegro (Podgorica, Montenegro).

The course is aimed at **students enrolled** in the **5th year** of a single-cycle degree course or in the **2nd year** of a master's degree course in Architecture for the **academic yea**r **2025-2026.**
Med_ASA is scheduled to take place **from October 2025 to February 2026**, with a kick-off next summer (30th June-6th July) to be held in Reggio Calabria, in the presence of all the professors involved and the selected students, five from each partner.

The educational program of Med-ASA comprises 500 hours, equivalent to **20 CFUs** (university credits).
It is based on two types of training experience:

1. **Master Class (16 CFU)**
2. **Workshop (4 CFU)**

Master Class
The Master Class is organised in three Laboratories and is designed to provide students with a comprehensive training experience on crucial contemporary issues, confronting the different dimensions of an 'advanced practice' of design.
The Master Class is planned over two phases.
The **first session** will take place from **October to December 2025**, with one week of lessons for each partner and blended learning for the others. In total, there are three weeks, one per month, and one for each partner.
The **second phase**, from **January to February 2026**, includes plans for students to exchange mobility for 2 months in Italy.

Workshop
The **Intensive Workshop** will be held in presence at the Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria with a part at Federico II University of Naples.
It is a "learning by doing" experience in which students will be called upon to develop projects on the general issue in the countries involved, under the guidance of the lecturers.

COLLABORATION WITH PUBLIC INSTITUTION AND PRIVATES
Collaborations with public institutions (Region, Metropolitan City, Municipalities) and private companies (Acen, FederCostruzioni, Unione Industriali) are foreseen to be regulated by special agreements.

Annual Issue

SoilSpace.
The design for risk in Public Environments

The increasing frequency of **extreme weather events** and the resulting greater **fragility of the soil** make inhabited spaces more vulnerable. This highlights the urgent need to define design tools for **mitigating and adapting urban forms to the effects of climate change**. The progressive expansion of built-up and impervious surfaces, combined with the engineering of infrastructure—particularly water systems—that fails to align with natural dynamics, exacerbates the soil's inability to respond to diverse conditions, leading to risks such as flooding, pollution, and more.

These challenges are deeply intertwined with the **public spaces of cities**, which are undergoing significant transformations in meaning, configuration, and usage. This calls for a new design approach capable of connecting places with themes of preservation, safety, health, mobility, and access to services. Public spaces, which continue to serve as urban condensers in both historic city centers and peripheral areas, can act as bridges between collective spaces, environmental concerns, and emerging needs. This is achievable through innovative design strategies that investigate the "space-soil" dimension.

At various scales, this dimension demands fresh perspectives and conceptual spatial frameworks to experiment with **new ways of living**, diverging from the models of the 20th century and aligning with the United Nations' development vision (Agenda 2030).

The course aims to provide knowledge and **tools for designing "space-soil"** as a fundamental element of the design process, where environmental, energy efficiency, and circularity issues are interpreted as architectural operations within a framework of **complex sustainability**.

This approach recognizes the **spatial opportunities** created by **technical needs**. The concept of "**space-soil**," which encompasses and accommodates diverse uses and articulations, is not merely a two-dimensional plane. Rather, it is a **complex and active element** whose role as a component of ecological balance ensures the continuation of natural dynamics.
In contrast to the unstructured, generic urban sprawl of recent years, the approach is based on the idea of a "città nova sed antiqua" **a new yet ancient city**. This approach seeks to guide and rationalize recent **peri-urban contexts or suburban agglomerations** that **lack formal identity or recognizable uses**. By emancipating them from their peripheral physical and social conditions, disconnected from the body of the city and its civic life, the goal is to **reconnect them with natural spaces and new ways of living**.

The concept of an "**open city**"—which establishes a balanced and sustainable relationship between residential areas, ecological networks, facilities, collective spaces, infrastructure, and geography—is central to this theory of urban design. It treats **urban design as a specific way of shaping the architecture of the city**.

The overarching goal of the course is to train professionals with specialized skills to address the **complex challenges of urban-scale design**. This includes clarity in settlement principles, attention to environmental issues and resource efficiency, responsiveness to social and participatory demands, and the intricate challenges of infrastructure, implementation, and construction design.

The course is structured into workshops that delve into tools and techniques related to contemporary landscapes, the built environment, environmental and territorial sociology, legitimization of planning, urban planning techniques, infrastructural and construction aspects, settlement principles, and the characteristics of public spaces and urban centers. These will be explored through appropriate project hypotheses and verifications.

Master Class

The Master Class is structured as a three-week laboratory consisting of lectures and seminars interspersed with individual study, research, and reflection on the topics covered in the lessons and seminars—one for each partner—in a blended learning format.

Through the project-based experiences of the Master Class, students will explore various dimensions of an “advanced practice” in design.

16 CFU = 400 hours

Lectures and Seminars 5 CFU
6 hours per day, 6 days a week
36 hours per week x 3 laboratories = 108 hours

Practical Exercises 3 CFU
75 hours – 3 weeks (4 hours per day)

Individual and Group Learning Activities 5 CFU
Individual study, research, and reflection = 144 hours

Final Examination 3 CFU
The training program concludes with a presentation and discussion

Workshop

The Intensive Workshop, lasting one week, will take place in person in Italy. It is a “learning by doing” experience in which students will develop projects in the participating countries under the guidance of faculty members.

4 CFU = 100 ore
(8 ore al giorno per 6 giorni, 2 settimane)

Expected Learning Outcomes

Students will have to return the completeness of their experience in the form of a “Logbook”, with a critical text illustrated with sketches, drawings and photographs.
Consistent with MedASA’s mission to strengthen and develop the figure of the architect-designer, the degree thesis must be a project thesis (Research by Design), the elaboration of which may possibly begin within the Master Classes and workshop.

Laboratories

Lessons, seminars **5 CFU**
Group learning activities **5 CFU**
Exercises **4 CFU**

Workshop

Workshop **4 CFU**
Final exam **3 CFU**

Teaching Activities (lessons, seminars and exercises)

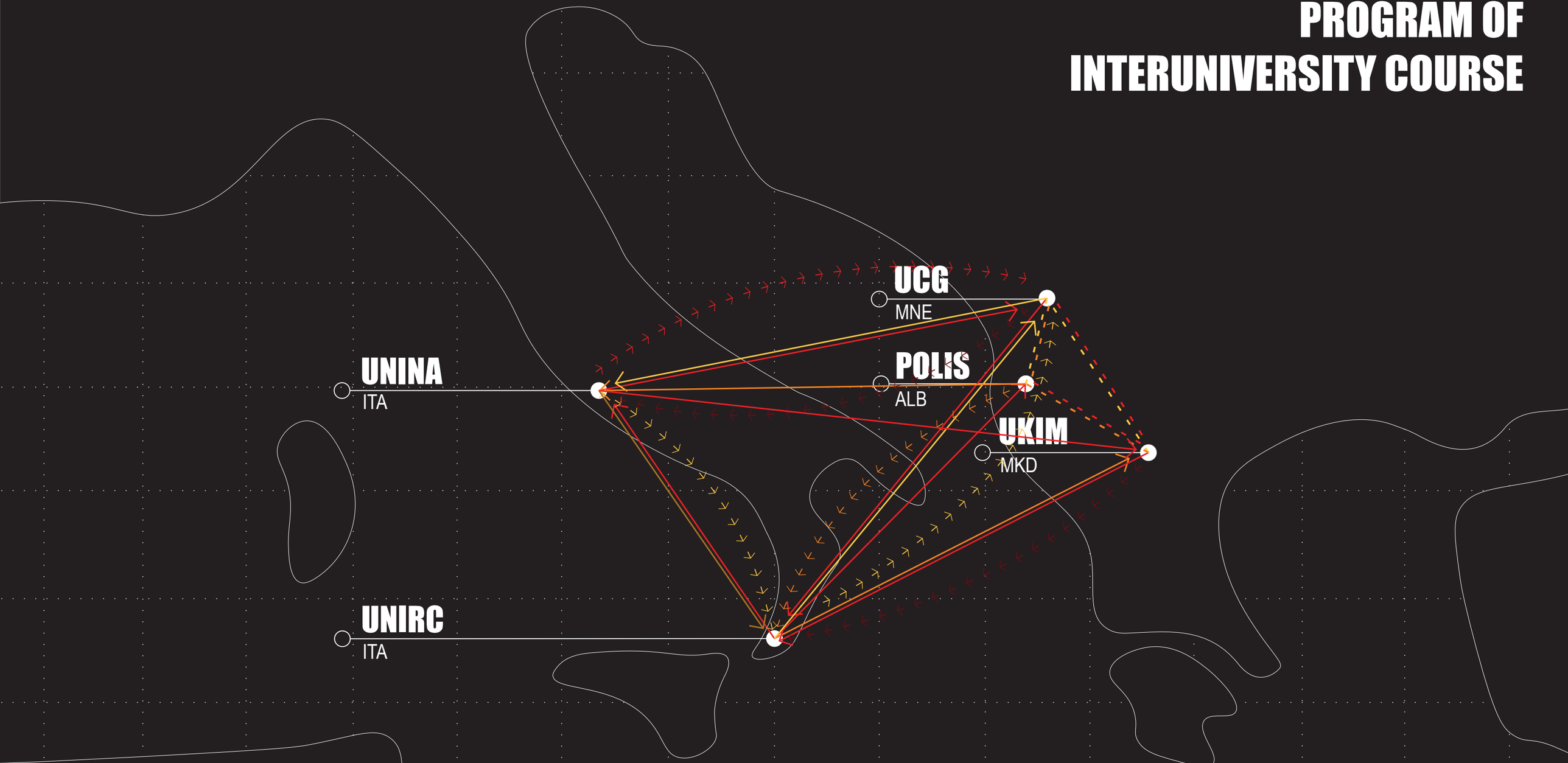
Architectural And Urban Composition **8 CFU**
Landscape Architecture **2 CFU**
Urban Planning **2 CFU**
Architecture Technology **2 CFU**
Agriculture **2 CFU**
Multidisciplinary seminars **2 CFU**

Educational Activity

The educational program is based on the development of an experimental and multidisciplinary design approach and is structured around **Interdisciplinary Laboratories**. These laboratories aim to address the design of at-risk spaces comprehensively, through lectures, seminars with national and international guests, site visits, and opportunities for discussion and debate with professors, tutors, and Master’s participants.

The **Masterclass** is organized into **three thematic Laboratories**:
The first examines the design process of soil as infrastructure for risk mitigation.
The second focuses on energy-environmental protocols, highlighting their characteristics and potential applications to ensure efficient resource management.
The third Laboratory centers on design approaches and practices for modeling public spaces as a means to promote social engagement, cultural identity, and environmental protection.

PROGRAM OF INTERUNIVERSITY COURSE



July ‘25 Kick-off meeting

October Laboratory 1

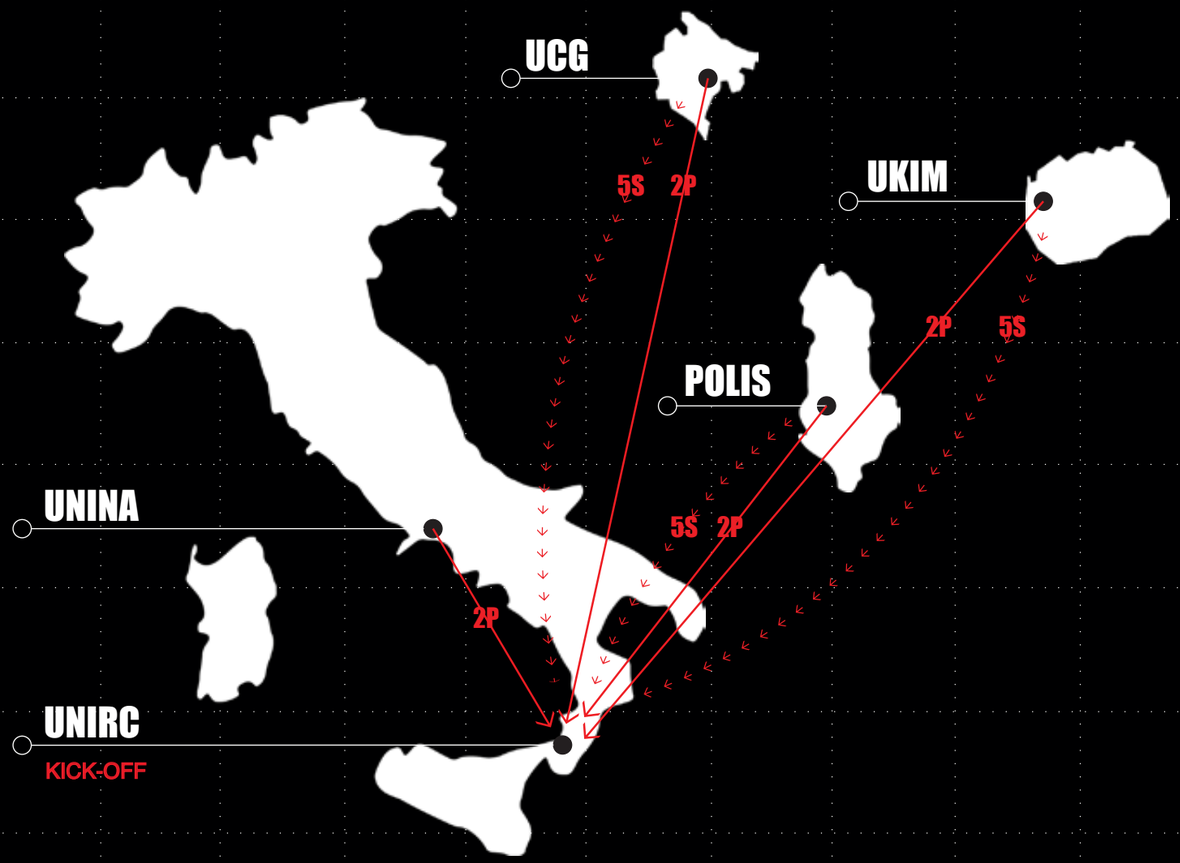
November Laboratory 2

December Laboratory 3

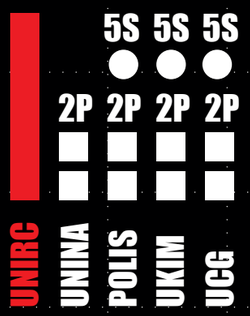
January
February ‘26 Laboratory 1-2-3 + Final workshop

International Thesis Laboratory
Mobility MAP

KICK-OFF MEETING



JULY - 5 DAYS



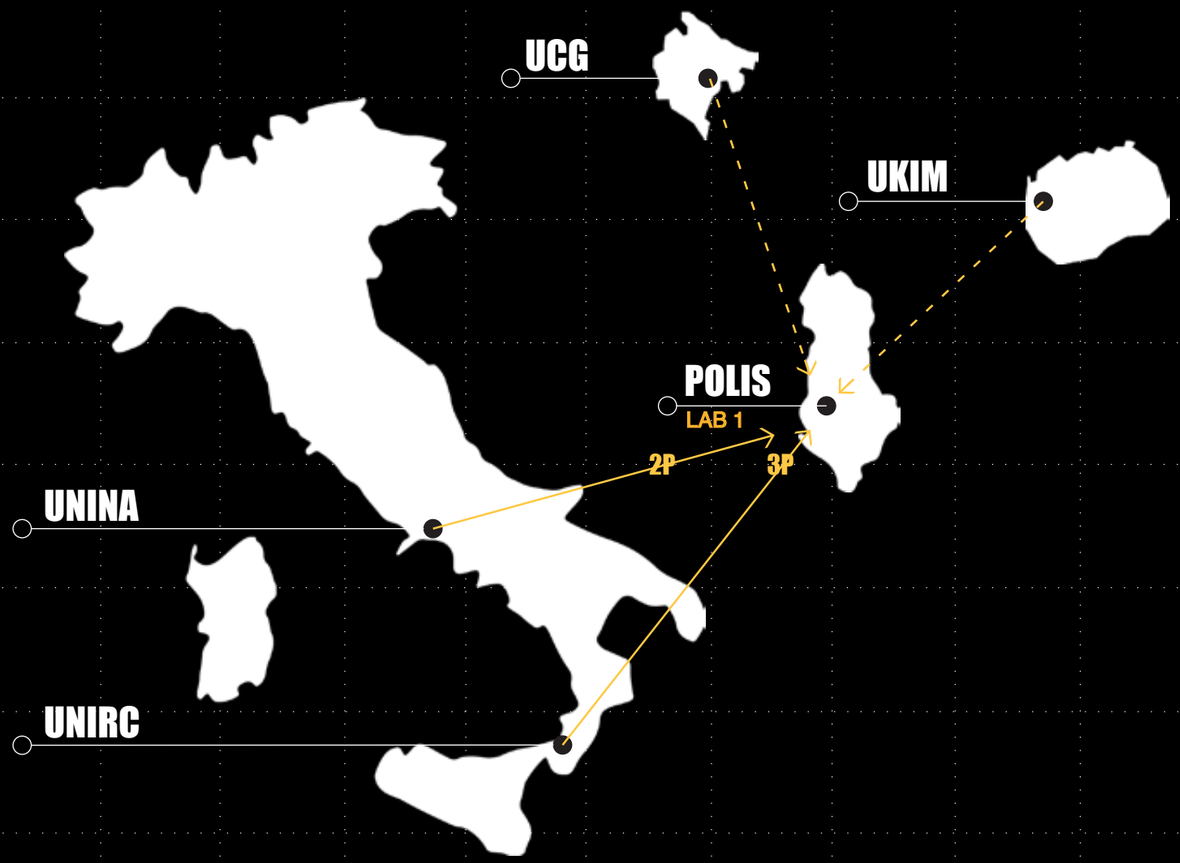
00.
Kick-off meeting

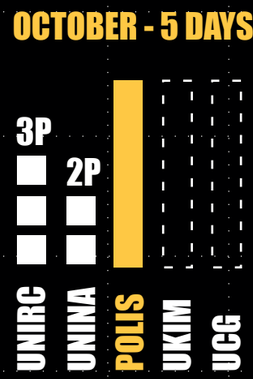
The kick-off is scheduled for next summer (from 30 June to 6 July) and, as already mentioned, it will be held in Reggio Calabria in collaboration with the Federico II University of Naples.
The kick-off meeting is the first opportunity for the partner universities to get together and start working.
The meeting will last five days, during which the partners will have the opportunity to get to know each other, discuss the different activities and present the programme.

The focus will be on the presentation of the general theme of the Masterclass and the project sites proposed by each partner for the development of the theses.

The meeting will involve the mobility of 2 teachers from each partner and the selected students, 5 from each countries.

LABORATORY 1





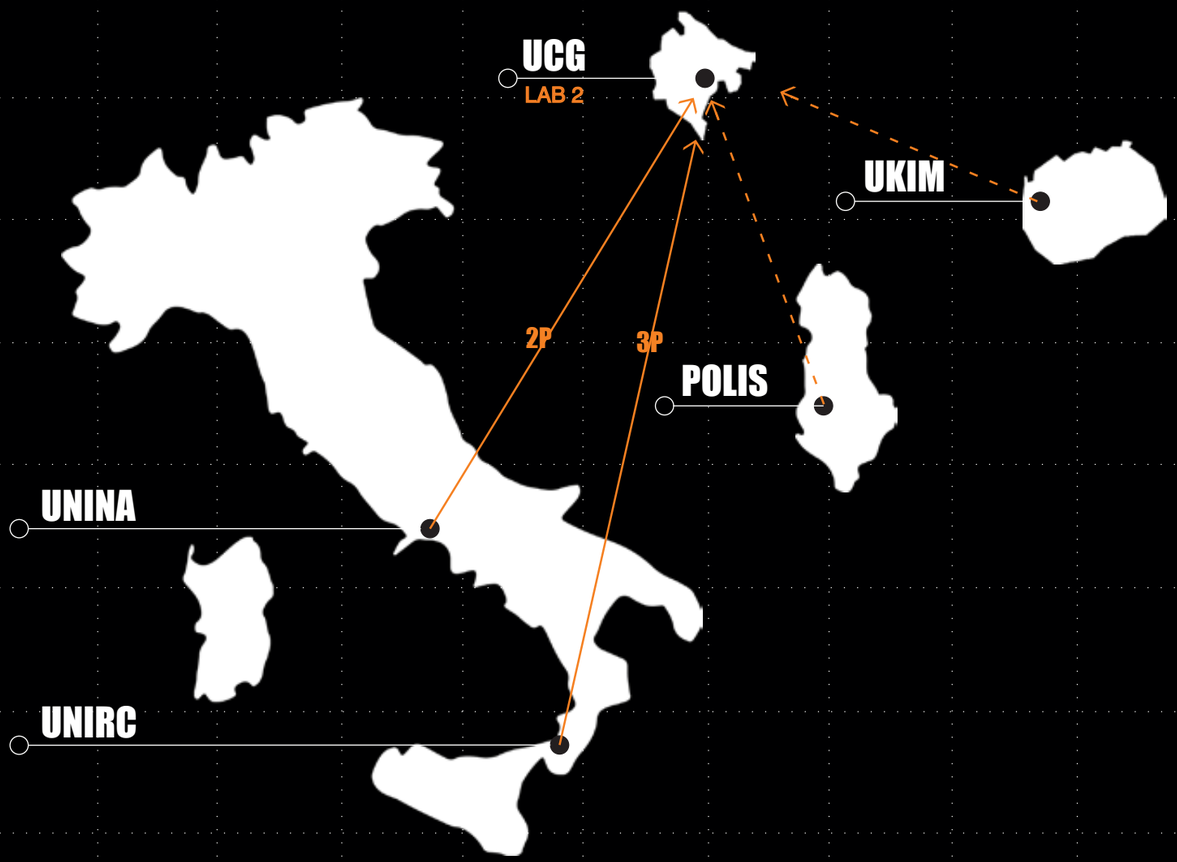
1.
Soil as Infrastructure: Designing Public Spaces in Metropolitan Areas

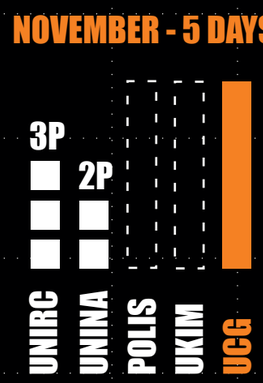
The program of MedASA is scheduled to take place from October 2025 to February 2026. The first Lab. is scheduled for **October at Polis University in Tirana**.
The plan is for Italian professors to travel, while Skopje and Montenegro will follow online.

The laboratory proposes soil as an **active infrastructure, strategic in addressing urban challenges related to risk management**, including those associated with climate change. The focus is on design tools for public space in relation to adaptation practices, geomorphological specificities, local communities, economic systems, and infrastructures.

Courses:
- Soil Design in Metropolitan Areas ICAR/14
- Soil Design in the Context of Multi-Risk Management ICAR/14
- Knowledge and Climate Adaptation Actions for Soil Management. Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) for Urban Adaptation to Flash Floods ICAR 12
- Soil as Urban Infrastructure. Green and Blue Infrastructures for Ecosystem-Based Regeneration of the Contemporary City ICAR 21
- Urban Reforestation Programs AGRI-03/B
- Landscape Soil Design: Analysis, Interpretation, and Intervention Strategies (ICAR 15)

LABORATORY 2





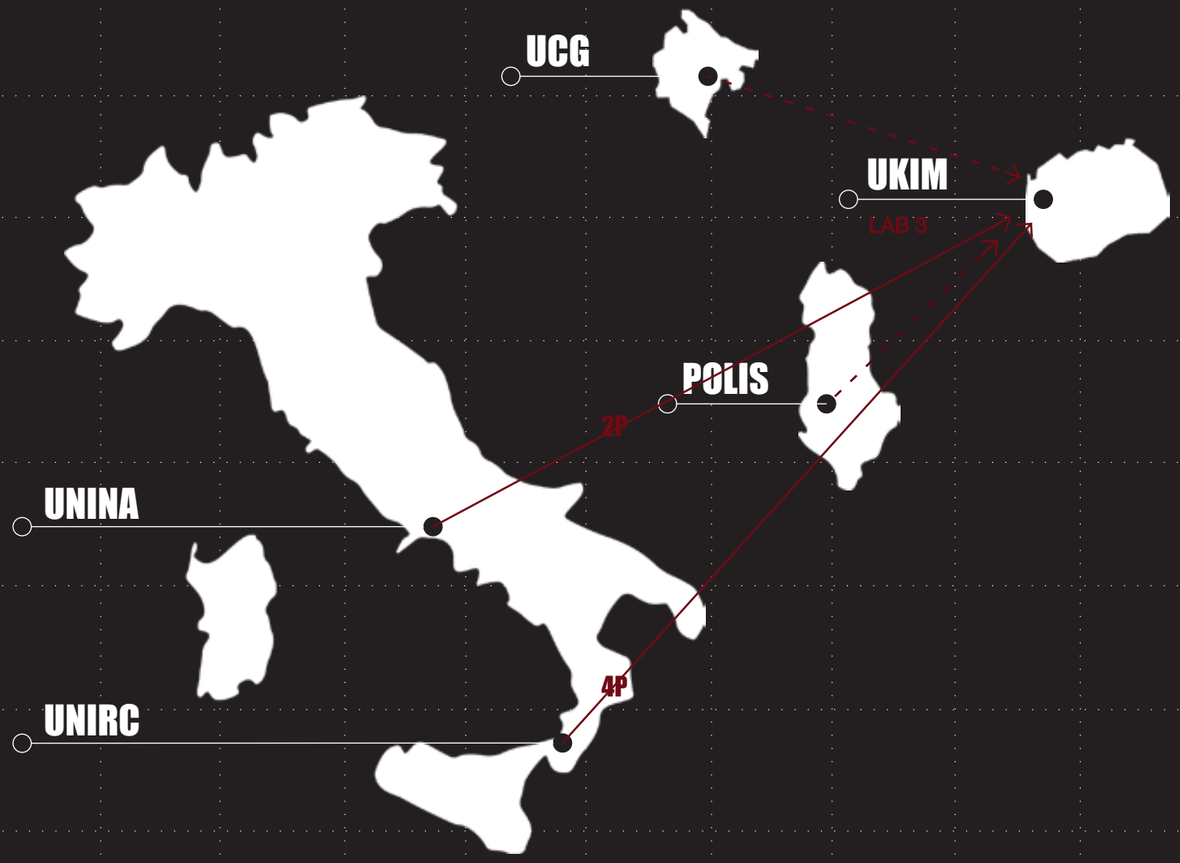
2.
Soil Urbanism: Protocols and Management of Metropolitan Soil Systems

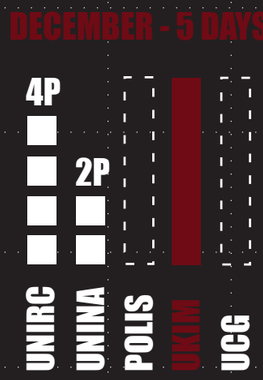
The second Lab. is planned in **November at University of Montenegro, in Podgorica**. Also in this case only Italian professors will be on mobility, while the other partners will follow online.

The laboratory investigates the **role of soil in urban and territorial design**, focusing on energy-environmental protocols and their design implications. The goal is to ensure efficient resource management, reduce urban sprawl, and integrate soil conservation with city design strategies.

Courses:
- Public Space and Urban Form ICAR 14
- Soil Design and the Idea of the City ICAR/14
- Performance Parameter Analysis and Certification Systems ICAR 12
- The Relationship Between Urban Planning and Climate Change: Urban Form and the Specificities of Urban Systems. Interaction Between Relational Spaces and Environment in Planning ICAR 21

LABORATORY 3





3.
Living Ground: Soil, Public Space, and Social Interaction

The third Lab. is planned in **December at Faculty of Architecture, Skopje**.
Also in this case only Italian professors will be on mobility, while the other partners will follow online.

The laboratory explores how soil can shape public spaces, becoming an interactive device between social engagement, cultural identity, and environmental protection. The goal is to explore **the potential of soil design in urban and social dynamics**.

Courses:
- From Climate Change to Social Transitions: Designing Public Spaces in Degraded Areas. ICAR/14
- Designing Public Spaces in Urban Regeneration Processes. ICAR/14
- Climate Change and Contemporary Public Space: Designing Playgrounds and Community Gardens. ICAR/15
- The Structure of the Public City: Urban Environmental Quality and the Collective Use of Spaces. ICAR/21
- Urban Forestry Projects. AGRI-03/B

EXCHANGE

LABORATORY 1
LABORATORY 2
LABORATORY 3

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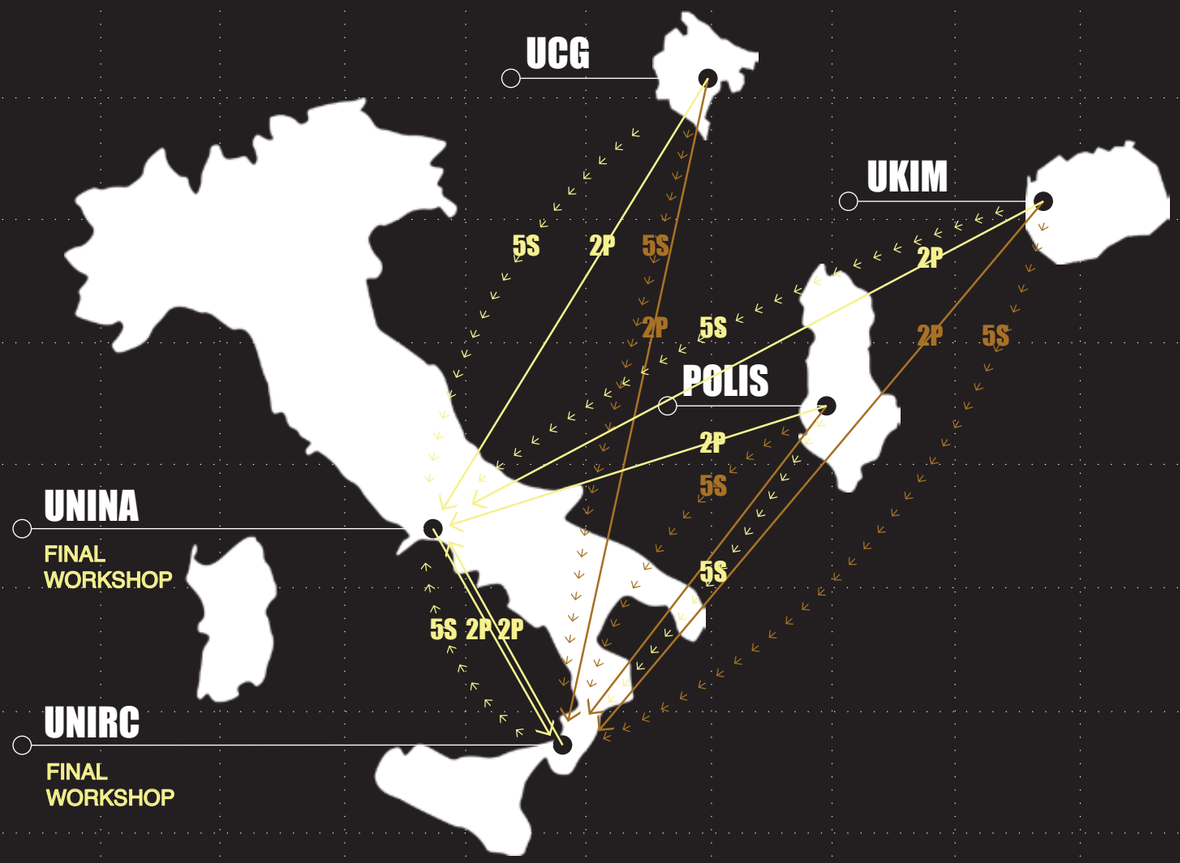
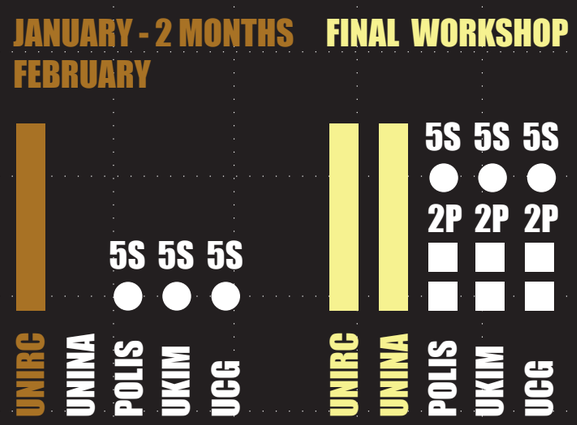
FINAL WORKSHOP



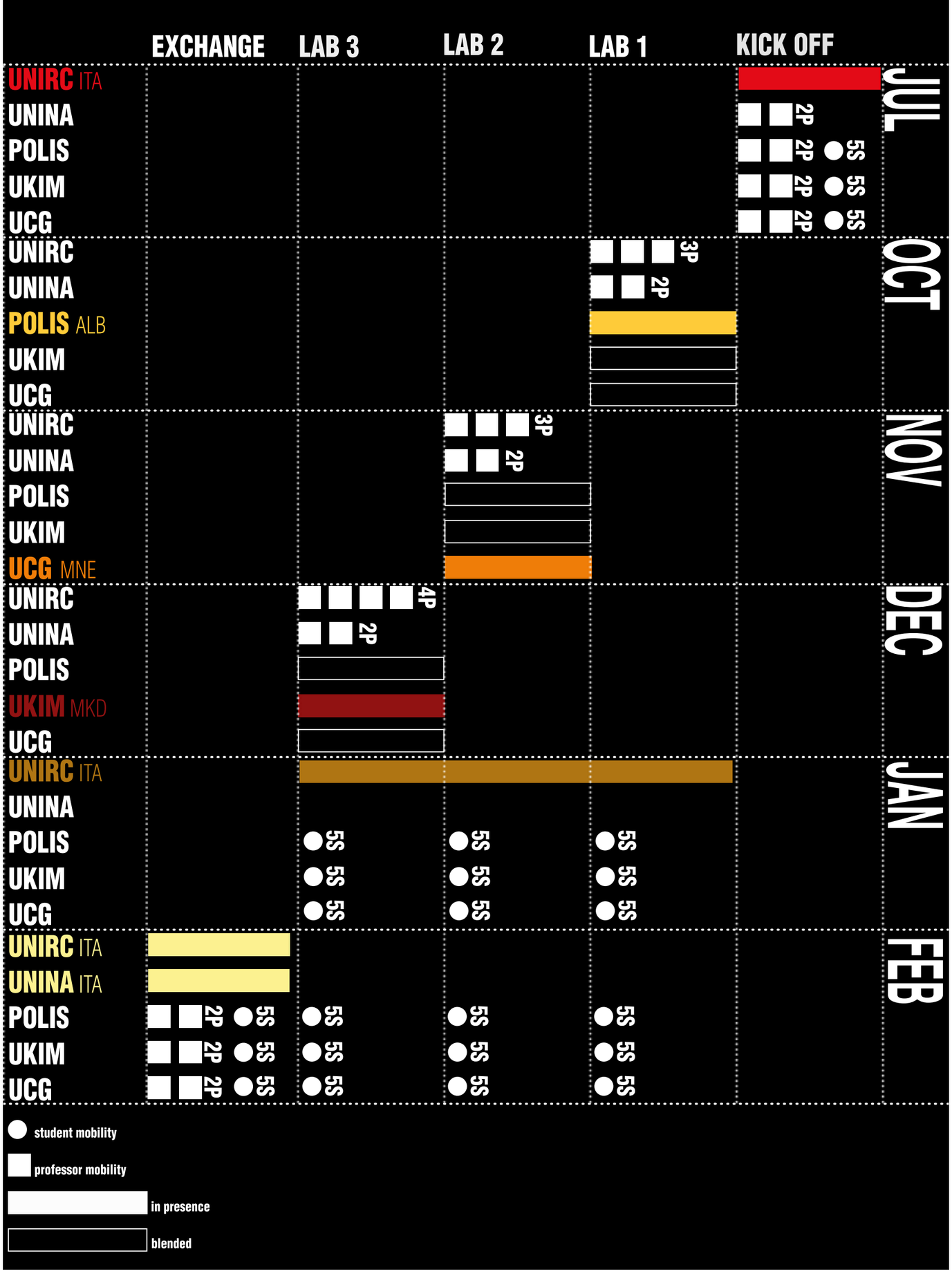


4.
Exchange - final workshop

From January to February 2026, the program undergoes the **second phase**, which involves a **2-month student mobility** exchange in Italy.

During this period, the lessons and activities of the three Lab. continue, culminating in the **final workshop** when it is scheduled the second mobility of professors from Montenegro, North Macedonia and Albania, in Italy.

The students' final result will be a project on specific sites, one for each country involved. The work will take the form of **final thesis** that each student will be able to discuss in their own countries.



- **July '25** — Kick-off meeting (5 days)
- **October** — Laboratory 1 (5 days)
- **November** — Laboratory 2 (5 days)
- **December** — Laboratory 3 (5 days)
- **January '26 – February** — Laboratory 1-2-3 + Final workshop (2 months)