

ROMA

The programme concerns the areas of Tor Bella Monaca, Torre Angela, Rocca Fiorita, Prato Fiorito and Capanna Murata (with a total of more than 90,000 inhabitants) situated in the eastern periphery of the city, outside of the GRA ring road.

In the two largest districts, Tor Bella Monaca and Torre Angela, which adjoin each other, there is a general lack of services, even though they are different. Tor Bella Monaca is an area of public housing estates (28,000 inhabitants), dating from the early '80s, with a unitary design and intensive building typologies, characterised by widespread social malaise. Torre Angela is an area of settlement that arose illegally in the post-war period.

The objectives of the programme

The district of Tor Bella Monaca, outside of the Outer Ring Road (GRA), in a vast area between the Via Casilina and the Via Prenestina, is of a typically residential character, subdivided into five nuclei served by a central thoroughfare running right through it.

The Plan of Tor Bella Monaca was devised according to an internal breakdown into autonomously functioning nuclei of buildings.

The housing emergency of the time induced the carrying out of a plan of almost exclusive public building, with the result of concentrating in this area a good part of the social malaise, marginalisation and consequent tensions stemming therefrom.

The old "borgatas" (suburbs) have been flanked by a more stable settlement, socially and culturally diversified, participating more in urban life but weaker as a community. The environmental conditions (of infrastructures, organisation, administration) have remained dramatically negative, preventing the full and positive development of the human and economic resources.

The objective of the Rome Municipality is therefore to create new job openings, especially for the young, by promoting enterprise and self-employment, and to improve the image of the project area by means of upgrading works, putting the piazzas into shape, careful maintenance of the area and the environmental quality of the buildings and the existing facilities.

In other words, to promote forms of participation inside the districts with a view to breaking that "isolation" created in the course of time through lack of places for aggregation.

The aim of the measures is twofold. On the one hand, with a social fabric that presently appears broken up, it is necessary to consolidate and develop social relations within the area, fostering processes of aggregation and strengthening the links among the various public and private associations operating in the territory. On the other hand, to integrate the entire district more effectively with the metropolitan area, so that the inhabitants no longer regard Tor Bella Monaca - Torre Angela as an area cut off from the urban context, but on the contrary as well integrated and able to provide a range of services on a par with those in more developed parts of the city, so that it can itself be a place of attraction for events of metropolitan level.

Through the URBAN programme for Tor Bella Monaca and Torre Angela the municipal administration acts as a catalyst for local development by means of pilot projects intended to improve on a lasting basis the quality of life of the inhabitants of the poorest and most socially degraded districts.

URBAN has been the point of reference for the expectations of the citizens and its contribution should be developed within the broader commitment made by the Administration to the peripheries: the measures programmed and in the course of being carried out regarding public transport, urban upgrading works, and connection with the city centres of economic, scientific and cultural production will enable the peripheral districts to assume a new role in the city.

The question of the peripheries, several times at the centre of the European Union's attention, represents for our city a way of reaching agreement with other European cities. The work of transformation, rehabilitation and creation of urban quality, in which it is daily engaged, is in fact a challenge that can be won only bearing well in mind an overall idea of the city in which the peripheries must take on a decisive role.

The action typologies

The area has a relatively weak fabric of small firms and of craftsmen, on which the municipality has carried out actions of local animation and with real services in both the financial field and that of technological innovation, productive organisation and marketing of products.

The support offered by experts and by well-established companies, together with the financial contributions, have moreover underpinned the starting of fresh entrepreneurial activities.

Attention has been devoted to the delicate sector of employment with particular reference to the weaker population groups through the opening of a job and training centre.

Through processes of "participated design", projects have been defined and put forward for the definition of social-educational services and social animation initiatives.

Overall, space has been provided for the prevention of alienation and for strengthening the solidarity networks.

Particular care has been devoted, furthermore, to enhancing and making the most of territorial resources and to upgrading infrastructures and environment.

The construction of a quality theatre, to be inserted in the city and national circuit, the upgrading of theatre and exhibition spaces and the preparation of areas for sports in municipal schools, the redevelopment of buildings to be used as a "games centre", a day centre for juveniles and youngsters with handicaps, and an old folk's centre, are the much appreciated outward sign of the new presence of the municipal administration in Tor Bella Monaca and Torre Angela.

Managerial aspects

The vast size of the territory and the large number of residents, in relation to the many-faceted demand for services, have posed serious problems of management for the approval and

implementation of the programme, which however possessed all the features required for success.

The Special URBAN Office has been responsible for the entire programme in question, from the design and planning of the measures to the drawing up of the official documents, the start-up and carrying out of the works, and subsequently two-yearly maintenance and territorial control.

The European procedures were a tough test for the Office but the continuous exchange of experience among the municipalities in the URBAN Italy programme was an opportunity for learning, innovation and development of methodologies, procedures and forms of organisation. Hence the exceptional fact of the achievement of the programme and the results obtained has led to the will to establish a Network of URBAN Italy cities so as not to waste the know-how, experience and professional capacities brought to bear over the years. This will act as a support for the conclusion of the operational stage of the programme, verifying procedures, making the most of the results obtained, and, in short, will be the value added of Italian cities in their relations with each other and with other European networks.